

Dear Colleagues,

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Note: For a printer-friendly pdf version of this newsletter, go to:

http://organizations.oneonta.edu/apt/APT_News/APT_NEWS13.pdf

APT NEWSLETTER

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WESTERN ONTARIO CONFERENCE PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

The Program Committee for the APT Conference 2007 at The University of Western Ontario completed work on the preliminary program in April. The Program Committee chair, Elizabeth Ellis, reports that the Committee has assembled six regular sessions with a total of 26 panels – more than organized for any previous conference. In addition, the Committee has completed planning for two plenary sessions, and is still working on up to two more plenary workshops or roundtable discussions. The plenary sessions planned so far are:

- A roundtable discussion, “Minority (Group) Rights in the Modern Liberal Democratic State,” focusing on a presentation by Jacob T. Levy of the McGill University. Howard L. Lubert of James Madison University will chair the session, with discussion to begin with comments from Daniel Marc Weinstock of the Université de Montréal and Melissa Schwartzberg of Columbia University.
- A plenary session on “Journal Publishing in Political Theory,” featuring James Johnson, editor of *Perspectives on Politics*, and Catherine Zuckert, editor of *The Review of Politics*. Mary Dietz, editor of *Political Theory*, has tentatively

agreed to serve as the third panelist. Dennis McEnnerney of Colorado College will chair the session.

The overall conference schedule will not be made final until budgeting is completed later this summer. However, the conference will likely open on Thursday night, 11 October, with an event at 7:30 p.m., followed by a reception from 8:30 – 10 p.m. As in past years, the conference fee will include lunch and dinner on Friday and lunch on Saturday.

The conference will close with the Association's annual Business Meeting, from 8 – 10 a.m. on Sunday morning. All members are invited to the meeting, during which the members attending will elect an Executive Co-Director and a Governance Committee member to three-year terms.

Please take a few minutes to look over the schedule of conference events before planning your trip. The tentative conference schedule may be found by clicking here:

http://organizations.oneonta.edu/apt/APT_CONFERENCE/2007-London/London_Schedule.htm

To see an overview of the conference program, click here:

http://organizations.oneonta.edu/apt/APT_CONFERENCE/2007/London/London_Program_Times_Short.htm

For a detailed listing of the panels, click here:

http://organizations.oneonta.edu/apt/APT_CONFERENCE/2007-London/London_Program_Times.htm

Note that all of these pages will be subject to revision over the course of the summer and early fall.

CONFERENCE LODGING AND TRAVEL INFORMATION NOW AVAILABLE

Travel and lodging information for the 2007 conference at The University of Western Ontario is now available on the APT Gateway website. Click on "APT Conferences" and follow the links to the "Registration, Travel, and Lodging" page. That page currently contains all the information currently available on conference facilities; the official conference hotels; London tourism; airline connections to the London, Toronto, and Detroit airports; new customs requirements for travel to Canada by U.S. nationals and residents; and ground transportation from the London, Toronto, and Detroit airports.

Information on registration, including fees, will be available on this page later in the summer, once the number of participants is settled and the budget can be made final.

Members may want to visit this page soon in order to reserve a room at the conference hotel. The page includes telephone numbers that members can call, as well links to on-line reservation pages. Members traveling from outside of Canada also may want to look into travel arrangements early, as there only a limited number of direct flights to London, Ontario. Some members from the U.S., in particular, may prefer to fly to Detroit (2 hours, 30 minutes west of London) or Toronto (2 hours east) and either take a scheduled shuttle bus or rent a car.

U.S. MEMBERS JOINING US IN ONTARIO? CHECK YOUR PASSPORTS!

Conferees traveling from the United States are reminded of new customs requirements for travel to and from Canada. In order to enter Canada by air, U.S. nationals and residents must have a valid passport with an expiration date no earlier than six months **after** their return flights (that is, at least after mid-April 2008). The recent suspension of this requirement affects summer travel only and still requires individuals to show that they have applied for a new or renewed passport. The Association encourages U.S. conferees to locate and check their passports as soon as possible.

Routine U.S. passport renewals are now done primarily by mail and take 10-12 weeks for processing, so **members needing to renew a passport before the conference should probably mail their applications to the National Passport Processing Center no later than the beginning of July**. Note that expedited service (2-3 weeks processing time) is also available, for an additional \$60 fee.

Applications for a new passport take at least as long as renewals. U.S. members applying for a passport for the first time are encouraged to check the U.S. passport website in order to locate one of the many post offices and public agencies empowered to accept first-time passport applications. Click here to visit that site:

http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

Note that there are only 15 Passport Agency offices in the U.S., each of which requires an appointment to be of use; and their use is generally restricted to emergency situations. Be aware that the link on the passport agency website entitled, "Life or Death Emergencies," leads to the following statements (**in bold red**) from the U.S. State Department:

- *We are currently experiencing a very high volume of calls. Please expect delays if you wish to speak to a customer service representative. You may have to call several times before reaching a representative....*
- *We are also experiencing a very high volume of emails. Responses to*

emails may take 2-4 days.

In short, members who need to obtain or renew a U.S. passport are advised to act promptly!

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – OFFICER ELECTIONS COMING IN OCTOBER

Last week, the Association solicited nominations, including self-nominations, for two officer openings. As Simona Goi, chair of the Governance Committee, reported in an e-mail message to the membership, the two offices up for election in October are Executive Co-Director and Governance Committee Member. Both offices are subject to election at the annual Business Meeting, currently scheduled for the last day of the 2007 conference in London. Both offices involve three-year terms, with the possibility of re-election once.

The Governance Committee is charged by the APT Constitution with putting together a slate of at least two candidates for each office. In order to do so in a timely manner, the Committee has set July 1st as the deadline for receipt of nominations or self-nominations. If you would like to nominate someone or to volunteer to run for one of the offices yourself, please write to the Governance Committee in care <mailto:apt@coloradocollege.edu>.

Before nominating someone else, however, the Committee strongly recommends that members speak to that person in order to make sure that they are willing to run for the office and, if elected, hold it for three years. It would be helpful to the Committee if any nominations included the nominated person's CV.

To view the full call for nominations, including excerpts from the Constitution explaining election procedures and officers' duties, click here:

http://organizations.oneonta.edu/apt/APT_ABOUT/0-0_APT_NOMINATIONS_2007.pdf

IU PEDAGOGY PANEL – ON TEACHING POLITICAL THEORY

The 2006 conference at Indiana University offered the Association its first opportunity to make good on its promise of promoting reflection on effective ways of teaching political theory. The workshop on pedagogy was well attended despite its 8 a.m. start. In order to encourage more consideration of problems and promise of effective teaching, the Association has solicited a short article summarizing most of the workshop presentations. Alisa Rosenthal, working with Liz Markovits and Bill Simmons, prepared the following article:

This year's APT meeting in Bloomington, Indiana featured a roundtable discussion of pedagogy in political theory. Chaired by Julie White (Ohio University), participants presented a range of pedagogical approaches

specific to the challenges of teaching political theory to undergraduates. This article offers a brief overview of three of the four approaches discussed at the roundtable and includes links to additional resources where appropriate.

Liz Markovits (Saint Louis University) addressed the perennial problem of how to simultaneously develop students' analytical writing skills while avoiding drowning in the massive quantities of grading such work often requires. Using Barbara Walvoord's "Effective Grading" scheme, Liz described a division of assignments in her introductory political theory course. In one set of assignments, students are required to submit a written reading response to broad questions pertaining to each day's reading. These responses reassure the "good faith effort" of the students to come prepared for each class. Each day's assignment is evaluated on a pass-fail basis: did the student make a good faith effort at completing the assignment? The percentage of passing assignments completed by a student is converted into a letter-grade equivalent (90% or more = A, 83% or more = B, etc.). In another set of assignments – a reflection paper, midterm, final exam, and final project – students write essays and papers that receive conventional comments and grades. The final grade for the course is the lower of the two sets of grades (she noted that the two grades are often quite similar, in any case). By reserving grading and commenting only to those assignments directly addressing the most important goals of the course, Liz reported that she was able to commit more time and energy to those activities. But students remained accountable for completing a critical reading of each day's assignment and gained additional practice and experience writing. (Liz's syllabus, sample homework assignments, and final essay assignment are available through the links in the 2006 conference paper archive).

Alisa Rosenthal (Gustavus Adolphus College) discussed the "Reacting to the Past" pedagogy as a method for teaching political theory. Developed by historian Mark Carnes at Barnard College, "Reacting to the Past" explores the collision of ideas by recreating the historical contexts in which the ideas developed and took political form. One game, Athens in 403 B.C., seeks to explore democracy and other theories of governance through an examination of Plato's Republic, Xenophon's Oeconomicus, and Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War. Another, Rousseau, Burke, and Revolution in France, 1791, pits Rousseauian ideas of community and the general will against Burkean conservatism. While recognizing that students find the games extraordinarily compelling and find themselves reading and evaluating classic texts of political theory with excitement, Alisa raised a few reservations about the place of the games in a political theory curriculum. For example, the Athens in 403 B.C. game requires the students to rely on Plato's Republic as the expression of Socrates' ideas. The equation of the ideas of the Republic with Socrates'

own ideas is controversial; in addition, the Republic was not written in 403 B.C. when the game is set. Alisa suggested that the games might be most appropriate in an introductory political theory course where the emphasis of the course is on developing reading and analytical skills and on contrasting a range of political theorists, rather than in a historical survey where historical accuracy and precision is emphasized. Additional information about "Reacting to the Past" (including information about faculty workshops) is available at <http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/reacting/>. Examination copies of "Reacting to the Past" games and instructor manuals are available through Longman (<http://www.ablongman.com/>).

Judy Failer (Indiana University) also made a presentation, "Moving Beyond the Text: Active Learning in Political Theory." For more information, please contact Judy at <mailto:jfailer@indiana.edu>.

Although unable to attend the roundtable, Bill Simmons (Arizona State University) provided an extensive description of "Problem Based Learning in Political Theory Courses." As Bill explains, Problem Based Learning entails requiring students to work in groups to solve authentic problems. For example, in Bill's Political Ideologies course, students working in groups prepare legal briefs used in a moot court of a Guantanamo Bay detainee case, and they develop research memoranda that apply various political theories to specific human rights abuses. In so doing, they actively gather, evaluate, and apply knowledge to specific problems. Bill noted that this approach works best for instructors who do not require strict regimentation in the classroom, can adapt assignments in midstream, and are willing to allow students to explore solutions that are unlikely to address the solution. In the materials posted on the APT website (available through the 2006 conference paper archive), Bill offers a fuller description of Problem Based Learning as well as several examples of assignments and student work.

*-Alisa Rosenthal,
Gustavus Adolphus College*

The materials referred to above may be found by visiting the APT Gateway website, clicking on "Member Resources," logging in, and opening the 2006 conference paper archive.

The Association hopes to encourage members to foster more discussions and workshops on effective teaching. If you have ideas for future conference events or for possible ways to make use of website resources promoting reflection on the teaching of political theory and political philosophy, please feel free to write to the Executive Co-Directors at <mailto:apt@coloradocollege.edu>.

DISPLAY YOUR WORKS IN THE BOOK EXHIBIT

Do you have a published work or published works that you would like to have on display at the conference book exhibit in London this October? The staff at The Scholar's Choice, the company mounting the exhibition, has the following advice to give to authors or editors who would like their work to be available at the conference:

Any members interested in having their book displayed at the upcoming APT meeting should contact their publisher after 15 June. Please keep in mind that the publishers pay a fee to display with The Scholar's Choice and may not have the marketing budget necessary to honor all requests, particularly for older titles. We ask that books be appropriate to the meeting and published in the last three years. It is The Scholar's Choice policy to have one copy of the book on display. We accept orders for the books, and the publisher ships the books to the customer. Reservations from the publishers will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis so reserving early is recommended. Please note that The Scholar's Choice displays on behalf of the publishers and the publisher, not the author, must make ALL requests. Therefore, you are encouraged to contact your publisher as soon as possible after 15 June to check on whether or not your publisher will reserve your title. Please contact your publisher directly – do not call The Scholar's Choice. The person who handles publisher reservations at The Scholar's Choice is Debby Pitts. She may be reached by your publisher at <mailto:djpitts@scholarschoice.com> or at 585-262-2048 x108. Please ask your publisher to contact her.

MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO GROW

Membership in the Association continues to grow! At present, the Association has enrolled just under 700 members, with new applications rolling in regularly. We hope to expand our membership both among philosophers (see below) and throughout Canada in the coming year. Log onto "Member Resources" and visit the Membership Directory to see who has joined recently.

PHILOSOPHY MEMBERSHIP DRIVE STARTING THIS SUMMER

Although membership in the Association continues to grow, the percentage of members holding primary appointments in philosophy departments remains relatively low (slightly over 10%). This disproportion arose partly as a matter of conscious choice by the Founding Committee: almost all were trained in political science and, while committed to developing an interdisciplinary organization, all agreed that the most effective way to build a solid, long-lasting association would

to begin by recruiting as members ten people who were known to the Committee to be scholars willing to commit time and energy to building a professional association that would be more inclusive and enjoyable than most other professional groups. The initial recruitment strategy then involved asking those people to recruit ten more people with similar reputations.

In pursuing this strategy, the Founding Committee knew that their own roots in political science would likely lead to a disproportionate number of political scientist members among the new recruits. However, the Committee decided that developing a vital core of committed members was the first priority.

That initial recruitment drive proved to be more successful than anyone anticipated, giving the Association a solid base of committed members. Now the Association hopes to replicate that recruitment strategy among faculty and graduate students in philosophy programs. Members who are philosophers – expect to be contacted this summer by the Association. The Association needs your help in mounting a drive to recruit more philosophers!

And, of course, members who are not philosophers, but who know philosophers who would enjoy membership in the Association, are welcome to spread the word about APT and to encourage new members to join.

Although the Association does not have the resources to conduct two membership drives simultaneously, we also hope that our colleagues in Canada will alert their Canadian friends in all relevant fields to join us, too – perhaps even in London this October.

IU BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES AND COMMENTS COMING SOON

Minutes from the annual business meeting held at the Indiana University conference last November will be published on the APT website within the next two or three weeks. Similarly, a full copy of the comments received from the conferees at the Indiana conference will be added to the website. Links to both will appear on the “APT Conferences” page, under the 2006 conference rubric, with an announcement of their publication appearing on the website homepage.

-Dennis McEnerney & Emily Hauptmann
Executive Co-Directors

APT Gateway website: <http://organizations.oneonta.edu/apt/>