

## Stimson Notes on Placement

I have read the pearls of wisdom written by Mike MacKuen and Virginia Gray before me and I agree with everything they say. These documents should be taken to heart. Below are some of my own thoughts, focused on issues not covered by Mike and Virginia.

The placement director (PD) gets in the act after nearly all of the most important events and decisions have been made. You are what you are at this point. It is too late to tell you what you should have done to prepare for the market. I think of it as a little like being a mortician. They start with a corpse and are charged with the task of making the cheeks look rosy and providing a nice hair-do. But everyone understands that bringing the corpse back to life exceeds their abilities.

So it is with the PD. The market cares overwhelmingly about the tangible facts of your c.v., articles published, articles submitted, papers given, dissertation chapters completed. We'll do our best to give you rosy cheeks, but cosmetics don't matter much. Most of your success or failure will be determined by what you did or did not do before this process started.

### 1 Letters of Recommendation

You control what goes into your placement file. And probably you underestimate how much control you have. That is because what is usually most important is the factual claims that occur in letters, not their evaluative component. Letters of recommendation have a Lake Woebegone quality, "... And all of the children are above average." They are filled with effusive praise of the candidate's wonderful personal attributes and claims of confidence in (1) dissertation completion, and (2) future professional success.

It is probably not true that these things have no consequence—because if they were absent people would notice the absence. *But nobody believes them.* We have all been lied to enough times in this connection that nobody grants credulity to evaluative claims unless they are backed by tangible evidence.

So, what is tangible evidence? Well to a very large degree the letters are important in telling potential employers how to read the facts on the c.v. That is, the letter writers turn to the c.v. and its storehouse of facts to look for things they can use to praise you. You can influence this process by making sure that the letter writers know the right facts. Is a paper submitted for publication? Your recommenders need to know, and they need to know anything you know about its status, e.g., where?, under what conditions?, whether the editor was encouraging or not in an R&R letter?. Do not be modest. They can't make factual claims about facts they do not know.

It is pretty standard in letters to address dissertation completion. What does it mean if your professor writes, "A has completed three chapters in a seven chapter dissertation?" It means essentially nothing, because everybody understands that a dissertation prospectus may be turned into three, more or less bull-dung, chapters on introduction, theory, and literature overnight. Three (unspecified) chapters equals zero, a dissertation not yet started, with no basis for extrapolating completion. What the world wants to know is how many analytic chapters are in the dissertation and how many of them have been (a) completed, and (b) approved by the principal advisor. If these facts help your case, make sure that all letter writers know them. If not, start writing, even though it is already too late to have much influence on the packet.

If you list your expected completion as April, May, or August, 2009, that will be read to say—usually accurately—"I really have no idea of when, if ever, it will be completed." If you are close enough to completion to list an earlier date—or better yet schedule a defense on a specific day, do it.

As a grand summary, do not assume that professors writing for you will know the relevant facts. Make sure that they do.

## 1.1 Letters: Who?

Obviously your dissertation chair will write—or your case is hopeless. Who else to choose? I don't have any general rules to propose, but I'll be happy to engage in a case by case discussion.

Beware of sending bad signals. Occasionally a candidate is hindered by suspicion that somebody who should have written for him or her did not. And that raises questions, usually quite false, about why. "What's wrong with A that professor B did not write a letter?" The solution for avoiding this trap is thinking about the external professional reputations of the faculty and making sure that some person who is an obvious letter-writer, given your specialty, does not fail to be included. The problem of such false suspicions is that you are not on hand to correct the false impression that something is wrong. The correction is to err on the side of making sure that those who work in areas close to your own write letters, and not to go beyond until you have covered your area.

## 2 Which Jobs Are Worth an Application?

Hopeful job prospects generate many plainly inappropriate applications. The idea is that a clever cover letter can convince a hiring institution that against all of the evidence of your c.v., your real primary interest is an (advertised) area in which you have chosen to do no work. Field boundaries generally are absolute. If you are doing a dissertation in American politics, no one will respond to a claim that you are really a comparativist at heart—and equally in the other direction. Save your energy and stamps for something more worthwhile.

*Caveat:* Small teaching oriented colleges who are looking for someone who might teach in more than one field might hire someone outside the advertised field. Research universities will not.

But within fields things get a lot more complicated. When you read a job advertisement, it is helpful to understand the political process that produced it and the processes that will play out when recruitment begins. Departments often do not know their own minds. That is, the fact that they have agreed on a particular specialty does not necessarily mean that they will hire in that specialty. That is true (a) because the support for particular specialties is often by the slimmest of majorities, with others wanting to go in different directions, and (b) because the talent pool might be poorly fit to the advertised specialty. In this department we have, for example, on many

occasions advertised in American institutions only to discover that most of our applicants and most of our best applicants are more political behavior types—and we have ended up hiring outside our advertized specialty. The narrower the specialty definition, the more likely it is to be the case that an ad attracts no well qualified applicants. And the better your credentials, the more you might consider applying for a position that is not a strict fit.

In most departments there is internal disagreement between (a) focusing on narrowly targeted needs, and (b) just hiring the most talented person who applies (a.k.a. “best athlete.”) The fact that an ad has been written that tilts in one or the other direction does *not* mean that that disagreement has been resolved. When real candidates present themselves, standing decisions often come undone.

**A Dose of Realism** How to do you get typed as a person who does a particular thing and not other things? Do not delude yourself into thinking that what you say about your interests matters much, or often even at all. Typically people doing screening for a search committee will look (a) at your dissertation topic, and (b) at your dissertation chair and make a hard and fast judgment about what you do. These are useful heuristics for people reading a couple hundred files, but like all heuristics they lead from time to time to false inferences. From my own informal poll of the matter, about half of all people who screen files read cover letters and half do not. (I don't.) And if there is a crucial message in that cover letter, it is best not to bury it in an over-long letter full of platitudes.

Occasionally, for example, a cover letter will make some allusion to the desirability of a particular job or location due to personal factors, e.g., my family lives in the area. There are circumstances where such messages have a real impact—because rational employers are concerned that their chosen applicants will decline their offers, and so knowledge that you might be more likely to accept is valuable.

**When Not to Apply** The available jobs in most cases will form something of a rank order, from too elite to be realistic possibilities to jobs you would not want to take. In the case of the latter, how low should you go? Bear in

mind the huge uncertainty about this year's (and every year's) market. So it is hard to forecast your ultimate success. But when do you reach the point where you should say no to an initial application? I propose a test. Imagine that it is May, 2009 and, with no other offers in prospect, you receive an offer from a school very low on your rank order. If, in that circumstance, you conclude that you would probably say no and remain a graduate student for another year instead, then you should not apply in the first place. This is not quite as easy as it sounds, because the process of interviewing can often change your rating of a particular school or job.

### 3 Symmetry and Asymmetry of Knowledge

It is tempting for an applicant to think that this is a game in which he or she is very uncertain about the market, but potential employers are well informed about their own preferences and their ability to recruit desired candidates. That is not true. There is huge uncertainty on both sides. The political science market lurches up and down from year to year, rather than hewing to some stable equilibrium. And thus everybody is uncertain. You naturally worry that your credentials might not attract the kind of offer you want, or even any at all. Employers are equally uncertain about whether they can recruit the kind of people that they want.

But to say that other actors in this game are uncertain does not mean that they are dumb. Whereas the applicants are usually playing the game for the first time, we (with my other, hiring, hat on) on the other side of the process have been playing it for many years. We have seen all the little deceptions that candidates try—probably tried them ourselves—and know how to see through them. We are looking for hard evidence, articles published, chapters finished, teaching awards won, and looking beyond soft claims.

## The Practice of Placement

By Michael MacKuen, as amended by Virginia Gray, May 2005<sup>1</sup>

### Getting an Interview

Most search committees face an overwhelming information problem. They have scores, maybe hundreds, of applicants for their posting. A small number of busy committee members must find 3 (or so) people to interview.

The first stage is a sort, in which the field is narrowed considerably. Sometimes this is a two-stage process to produce a short list. This might include 5-10 names from which the committee might ask more information or writing samples or some such.

Your goal is to make it into the final list. There *are* things that you can do to affect your chances.

- Your own letter should explain very quickly why you fit the department's needs. You should take some care with this document. Tailor it to the specific job that you are seeking.
- Your materials should be punchy in the sense that they make all your accomplishments stand out. You want to be sure that a harried committee member will see your virtues.
- Your vita should "lead with strength".<sup>2</sup> If possible, the first page should tell the busy committee member how to contact you, your education vital statistics, your dissertation topic and adviser, your teaching interests, and list of publications. Knowing that you do what they need, that you have an interesting thesis underway, and that you have published, the committee member may be motivated to turn to page 2 of your vita. On page 2 you can finish listing your publications, then list any papers submitted (no need to say where), then go to convention papers, and any other work in progress. Finish with Research Experience (who you worked for, on what projects, in what role. Then switch to Teaching Experience (list of courses you have taught on your own, courses where you were a TA, any teaching workshops you have completed). If on page 1, you only had room to list broad teaching fields, then here you would list names of actual courses you want to teach. Other typical categories on the vita are Awards and Honors, Professional Service (to the department or as manuscript reviewer), and Professional Memberships. Last section is References, with full title and contact information.
- Typically a school will ask for teaching materials, ranging from student evaluations to course syllabi to a statement of your personal teaching philosophy.

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<sup>1</sup> Plus material originally prepared by Holloway Sparks for her Spring 2002 talk with the graduate cohort. Thanks to Holloway.

<sup>2</sup> You might look at *The Curriculum Vita Handbook*. Rebecca Anthony & Gerald Rowe. 1998. Rudi Pub: ISBN 0945213263

In working with the Center on Teaching and Learning in 03-04, we found that preparing a teaching portfolio in advance seemed to meet the needs of all schools. In this portfolio you state your overall philosophy in a few paragraphs, you describe your teaching experience thus far and what kinds of techniques have worked for you, you discuss your teaching interests in the future and if there are any new techniques you anticipate using. If you have experience with online courses or using PowerPoint in the classroom, be sure to emphasize that. And you include the student evaluations from one or more courses that you have taught, not the raw printout but a typed up version of the questions and your mean score on each item.

- Many schools will also ask for a research statement or statement of research interests. Here you can elaborate more on the dissertation, but also take the opportunity to describe any other research you are doing or have done in grad school. And importantly, you will discuss your plans for future research. The search committee is looking for candidates who will have lots of good research ideas beyond the dissertation.
- If the ad asks for a writing sample, limit yourself to one or two self-contained *short* pieces. No one will read all the chapters of a dissertation so pick the very best that you have. If you have a publication, that is probably a good bet to put in your packet. And when you make the short list, then by all means send along more of your very best work. (Do not necessarily wait for a request. If you think you may be on a short list, call and ask if you might send more.)
- Your own letter-writers need time to do their work. You want to provide them with every resource to write a good letter. At the very least, you should give them a current curriculum vita, your completed dissertation chapters, and a written summary of your dissertation progress to date. Do not be modest. And you want to be sure that they get their letters into the packet. (They *are* busy people.) You might nag.
- You should ask your faculty members to contact people they know at the departments in which you have special interest. (This can be especially important for getting some “notice.”) You might want to talk with all the faculty you know, not just your committee. We are talking “weak ties” here. The “good ole boy” network exists only in shadow form nowadays. But sometimes getting the word out on the informal network can make a real difference.

However, do not *expect* this to work. Please do not push your people to call. Some individuals are more forward than others—and willing to make such calls. And of course, the relationship between your faculty and the distant faculty may not be conducive to such a telephone call.

## The Interview

You want to know this process before you go out. So talk with others and get to know the scuttlebutt.

## The Call

Typically, the department chairman or the search committee chair will call and ask if you can come next Tuesday. The answer is YES. If you cannot make it on Tuesday, try to accommodate the search committee's schedule as well as you can. Do not expect to have much choice about dates. In general, when the committee says "jump" your response should be "how high?".

Expect the interviewing department to pay for your visit. But expect a reimbursement for expenses after the fact. (That is, you will probably have to pay for the flight yourself and then get paid back by the interviewing university. Sometimes the interviewing department will offer to schedule and pre-pay the flight.) So go into the interview season with a zero balance on your credit card.

All departments will ask for an academic presentation. Most will want a research talk, others a classroom presentation before students, or both. If it is not already clear what the department wants, this is a good time to find out. Some departments expect a twenty minute talk and others a forty minute talk. This makes a difference for your presentation. Some will tell you the talk is informal; ignore that advice. It is formal to you; your future depends on it. You should ask plenty of questions about what will be expected of you during the interview.

## Getting There

Get some rest on the day before your trip. The interview days are among the most stressful days in your academic career.

Pack extra copies of your CV, handouts and overheads, and a computer disk of your talk and presentation. Do not expect the latest hi-tech disk to fit into their old disk drive nor your cool color map to project with their ancient projector. If it works, great; but be prepared with the low tech overhead transparency version of everything. And have handouts for those who can't see the overheads. Bring two copies of your talk—one in your carry on and one in your checked bag.

Bring cash and a credit card (with some room on it). Some schools expect you to pay for everything up front and then get reimbursed later.

Snacks. You sometimes won't have enough time to eat well during an on-campus interview. In particular, your job talk may take place over lunch—their lunch, not yours. So take some snacks along—power bars, dried fruit, candy bars—in your briefcase. Also carry bottled water, any drugs that might be necessary (e.g., Pepto-Bismol), and for the ladies, extra pantyhose.

## The Job Talk

You know this is critical. So prepare carefully.

*Give a practice job talk!!!*

As part of your participation in the placement process, you will be *required* to give one or more practice talks *before* you go out on an interview.



See *Notes on a Job Talk* document for suggestions on how to prepare a Job Talk that will help you get an appropriate offer. Maybe read it more than once.

Since the job market starts early in the Fall, we should start these talks right after APSA.<sup>3</sup> If you are not ready to give a talk this early, then maybe this is not your year to be on the market.

*Come to every presentation that you can.* Be sure to attend all job talks this year. We owe this to each other. And also attend job talks when UNC is hiring faculty—all of them, not just the ones in your own field. If you cannot see the payoff of seeing other job talks, then you should not be reading this document.

### Teaching a Class

Some schools will use the job talk as a teaching exercise. Others will have you actually teach a regular class. Needless to say, prepare the lecture and practice.

### One-on-One Conversations

You will spend the day talking in half-hour sessions with the departmental faculty. Be prepared. Jenny Wolak has prepared a “cheat sheet” of questions for you to use.

- In general, they are trying to find out how you would fit into the department; what kind of a colleague will you be.
- Also they want to know, what are your teaching interests? (If they ask about a particular course, the answer is YES.)
- What is your research agenda over the next few years?
- Women should be thoughtful about handling inappropriate questions having to do with family and professional commitments.

To deal with these questions, please consult the school’s website and study the department faculty bios. Identify their teaching and research interests and the department’s overall philosophy. You might also take a look at the department’s course offerings, both undergraduate and graduate. Do as much work as you can *before* you show up. They will be favorably impressed.

Be prepared to run the interview yourself. Academics are not always equipped with the best people skills, and they will often not ask questions that allow you to shine. Find ways to offer information about your work, your teaching experience, your interests, and your abilities even if they don’t ask you.

Try to create little breaks. You will usually be whisked from appointment to appointment and may not have time to catch your breath. Don’t be shy about asking to stop by the restroom for a few minutes. You can use the time alone to regroup, look at your notes on questions to ask, refresh your memory on what the

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<sup>3</sup> If you have already given a practice job talk, you should do so again. Every time you give a practice talk, it will get better.

next person's area is, and so on. Also be rather insistent that you have some quiet time before your talk to review your notes and to set up the equipment in the room as well as to eat lunch if the talk is at noon.

For specific hints on interviewing at liberal arts colleges, see the article in the December 2001 issue of *PS*.

## Social Life

In these one-on-one conversations, and during the lunch and dinner sessions, you should aim at being socially adept. This *is* a formal part of the interview. If you feel a need to practice lunch, we can do that. In particular:

- Obviously, mind your table manners. Follow the lead of your hosts (when it comes to appetizers or expensive entrees) and avoid ordering foods that are difficult to eat neatly. Learning to use chopsticks for the first time on an interview can be dicey (just ask me for stories). If you drink, limit your alcohol consumption to just one or two glasses of wine or beer. The departmental people may in fact drink quite a bit more than that, but for obvious reasons, you should not.
- Look others in the eye when addressing them, shake hands with a firm grip, and smile a lot. I know people who didn't get jobs they really wanted because they never made eye contact with anyone on the interview.
- Stress how much you would like to be in Farmersville as a place to live and work. (Ask questions, explore options, etc.)
- Find the positive side of everything you can. People typically appreciate enthusiasm more than cynicism.
- Enjoy yourself, but this is not a good time to share an off-color joke or get into a party spirit or to gossip.
- In general, be an adult.

Ask plenty of questions. Remember that just as they are interviewing you, you are interviewing them. Meals are generally more relaxed; this is a good time to ask about departmental life, the nature of the university, the quality of the students, and the attractions of the area.

Be strategic, though. It is realistic to assume that everything *you* say will be reported back to the department as a whole or at least the search committee, but that everything *they* say might not be. Ask the same questions over and over to look for trends or divergences of opinion.

## Meeting with Students

Do not underestimate the importance of meetings with students, particularly at liberal arts colleges. While undergraduates rarely have an equal voice in hiring

decisions, there are places at which they can veto a candidate. Again, show them that you are interested. Ask questions about their favorite classes, why they like the political science department, what they hope to do when they graduate. You will often find out very important information about the department this way.

Meetings with graduate students can provide similar opportunities. Find out what they like and don't like about their program. Find out what their expectations are for the new hire and what their career aspirations are. Again, be strategic. As you know, they may have an important voice in the hiring decision.

### Try to see the area

Sometimes departments forget that they should show junior people around the area (senior people often have an appointment with a realtor to look at houses). If you do not see a tour on the schedule, ask someone if they could show you around. Walking tours of the campus are also a good way to get some much needed fresh air.

### Professional Life

- Dress appropriately. If the room has only one person decked out in a gray business suit, then that person should be you. If the room has only one person in a sweater and slacks, that person should not be you.
- Listen to your conversational partners. You want to express yourself properly, but do not feel that you need to dominate conversations. Show an interest in your partners—ask about their current work and have real intellectual discussions. You are being tested as a *colleague*. (If nothing else, success on this front will make the entire process more rewarding.)
- You want to be a serious professional at all times.

### Administrative Interview

At some point you will probably have an interview with the Dean or Associate Dean, depending upon the size of the school. At a liberal arts college the interview probably will be with the Dean and will be a meaningful part of your evaluation process. At a university the task will probably go to an Associate Dean who may make small talk for half an hour in a seemingly meaningless interview. In any case you should be prepared with some questions that you could ask--about the college and its plans for the future, how the Dean views the department, the standards for tenure in the college etc. Once you are on campus and have a chance to review your schedule, you can ask the search chair or the dept. chair more about the Dean and what kind of questions to expect.

### Exit Interview

At the end of your visit, you will spend a half-hour with the Department Chair talking about the interview. This session can be important—but it can also be misleading—so pay attention.

- Get some sense of timing for the departmental decision.
- Express real interest in the job. This matters.
- Don't play "hard to get." You want to encourage interest, not fend it off.
- If you have other offers or interviews scheduled, tell the Chair. You do need to coordinate the Department's schedules and your searches.

### Follow Up

On the plane ride home, write down everything you learned (pros and cons) on the trip, particularly if you have multiple interviews. The details will fade as your adrenaline levels return to normal.

Within 2 or 3 days, email or write thank-you notes to the Search Committee Chair, the Department Chair, and anyone else with whom you felt a special bond or who went beyond the call of duty in entertaining you. You need not write every single person in the department. If you promised to send cites or papers, do that within the week.

### The Offer

You are now at advantage. The department has made a choice (and the Dean has signed off), so the Chair is now charged with landing you.

- Do not accept right away. Express enthusiasm and real interest (when appropriate). But say you need a few days to think it over. This is good professional practice.
- Formally, under APSA ethics rules you have two weeks from the time of the written formal offer—which may not arrive until several days after the telephone call. This will give you some time to "bridge" opportunities. This may or may not be important.
- Bargain for resources that are available (and that matter). Salary, research budget, set up costs, moving expenses, reduced teaching load (in the first year). Be aware that what is available and what is unavailable will vary across universities. Find out what is *possible* before you start deciding on what you pursue.  
Consider:
  - spousal/partner employment concerns
  - salary
  - computer equipment
  - travel/conference expenses
  - moving expenses
  - research support
  - summer money
  - teaching load/teaching content/course reductions
  - service expectations
  - how previously published articles will be counted for tenure

- You may have to balance this week's offer against possible offers to come in the future. Worry about this some.
- Spend some time with your advisors thinking through different ways to deal with contingencies.

Do not rely on verbal promises from the chair. Get everything that you have negotiated for included in the contract letter. That is, *get it in writing*. This is your only opportunity for real negotiating power for the next several years, and you want to be sure to use it wisely.<sup>4</sup> At the same time remember that you have to get along with your new chair for the next several years so don't push so hard that you ruin a good working relationship (or so hard that he withdraws the offer; trust me, this happened to one of my advisees).

Accept in writing; repeat in your letter the essential elements of the contract, any additional details worked out via email or in separate letter, and any verbal assurances about office space etc. (Imagine that the Chair is run over by a truck next week; how will you convince the new Chair of all the promises you were made?) Some details might be left to correspondence between you and the department chair; when you mail your contract to the provost, you don't send along the memo about the color of paint you must have for the office. The point is to get things clear ahead of time; the way you do that is to write them down. Other assistant professors are usually good guides about what needs to be written down.

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<sup>4</sup> As a junior faculty member, you will have little power. (This may be the lowliest position in a university.) Now, when you get your next job offer...

## Notes on a Job Talk

Michael MacKuen

(with lots of help from colleagues)

As Amended by Virginia Gray

May 2005

Here are some thoughts on preparing a job talk. These are obviously incomplete—you want to think about lot more than these few issues. Yet, these are crucial elements that determine whether you can translate your important intellectual work into a polished presentation.

### Frame an Interesting Question.

Understand that you are talking to a “general audience” in political science—not your own area specialists. You want to motivate your question in a way that all political scientists will find interesting—you will need to explain why all this is so very important. Then show how your research answers your question. You should have some analyses or empirical results that will go right to the point of your talk. (Or, at the very least, some preliminary analyses or results.)

### Establish a Melody.

You want your audience to leave the room whistling your tune. This means you need to establish a main-line melody throughout your talk.

Pick your main theme and organize your talk around that theme. You may want to add a few elements, a few harmonics, to enrich the presentation. But the main point is to establish that melody early, return to it from time to time, and the end the talk with the main theme uppermost.

### Theory.

This may seem so obvious that it’s not worth saying. Perhaps...

Your theme should be rooted in theory, not in your particular research project. You should set out an interesting theoretical proposition, develop a theoretically motivated empirical question (or questions), and then suggest that you have a way to answer that question.

Then lay out how you have developed your answer. Your research project is only as interesting as the question you are asking and it is useful only to the extent to which it answers the question.

You surely want to create *tension*. Show how different theoretical positions make different predictions—and how the conflict can be resolved by your own research. You must keep your listeners on the edge of their seats waiting for your conclusions. (This can be very important.)

You do not want to get bogged down in the minutiae of your specific project. The details are absolutely important (and you are now buried in them as you do the dissertation). But the audience is judging your ability to develop interesting ideas and really doesn’t care about the fine print. (You

should be ready to answer questions on the details—and you should take advantage of the Question and Answer period to show your command of the specifics.)

### **Staying on Message.**

In your presentation, lay out the theory, the research question or puzzle, and your answer. Do this right up front! You need to keep your audience motivated throughout. You want to provide them with enough structure so that they know what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Then constantly focus on the theory and the answers as you go through your materials. (Obviously, you need to walk a line here—your audience is pretty smart so you don't have to treat them as though they didn't get your introduction. But you do want to figure out ways to elliptically point toward your overall theme from time to time.)

At the end, when you are finished with your own research, you want to tell the audience how you have answered the theoretical question. You may want to add a few "I'm still working on this" phrases if your work is yet incomplete (as is likely). But you want the audience to feel that they *have learned something new*. So be firm where your work allows you to be firm. If they don't leave thinking they have learned something, then may well conclude that you won't be a good teacher.

In the final crescendo, you want to link your work, and the theoretical question you have answered, to much broader themes in political science. Here you merely want to establish your ability to think more broadly. This is where you answer the "So What?" question. If you don't provide an answer here, someone will ask it at the end. You want the audience to leave not only whistling your tune but also wondering if they can use some of your themes in their own work.

### **Tell a Story.**

While you clearly want to focus on your theoretical contribution, you do want some empirical stories to give your theory some content. Pick instances in your "data set" and turn them into anecdotes. Different people think differently. Most serious scientists do think abstractly, and that is the norm that I want to emphasize. But many people also think concretely as well. So add some concrete examples so that those people have something they can wrap their minds around. [This trick may be especially important for the members of the audience who are in different subfields—for whom your subfield's theoretical framework may not come so easily.]

If you have good theory, it should apply to specific instances. So try to develop some specifics in the presentation. Do not focus on the specific instances even if you enjoy the story—you are doing generalizable science. Instead, use this trick as a presentational device to convey your theoretical advance.

### **Think Colleagues.**

You want to adopt a mindset that says that the members of the audience are your colleagues. (That is what they evaluating, if unconsciously. Will you be an interesting person to talk to for the next forty years?)

Treat questions as though they were offered by your colleagues. *Do not be defensive; do not shut down.* Instead, treat the questions as useful suggestions or as invitations to have a dialogue. The audience is comprised of very intelligent professionals who might have very interesting things to say. So when a member pushes you a bit, frame your response in terms of how the question and implicit answer can move your (and the community's) science forward. It is important that you show that you take ideas seriously.

This attitude is most helpful when you are being challenged by a belligerent person. In some parts of the discipline, aggressiveness is the norm. Expect this. You do want to be able to stand up under pressure. [Every once in a while you will run into a "bully" who will ask a question with the intent of testing your mettle. Respond genuinely, always keeping in mind that the target for your response is the audience in the room, not the bully herself.] When you understand the questioner's point, respond. You must respond no matter what—as a polite evasion will leave the remaining members of the audience with the idea that you don't know what you are doing. But your response should be in terms of showing how the question can move the work forward.

If someone misunderstands your argument, or suggests something that you have already done, be kind. Retain your confidence and gently rephrase the point or revisit the point to insure that everyone appreciates what you have said. If someone in the room misunderstands, then others probably do so as well. Again, treat these as attempts to be helpful (even if the questioner does not). A sharp answer hurts everyone.

In general, the Question and Answer part of the talk will give you an opportunity to shine. I don't know how many times I've reviewed a job talk with colleagues who say that the presentation itself was only ok but that the applicant really showed his/her talent in the Q&A. You have considered your topic much more deeply than anyone else in the room—take advantage of this chance to enjoy a real intellectual conversation on your own turf.

### **Command the Physical Situation.**

You need to stay in command. Arrive early and assess the room and the situation. Walk around a bit, move the podium to the right spot. Test the microphone, turn on the overhead projector and focus it; test the chalk or white-board markers, and otherwise case the room until you are comfortable. Set up the laptop and projector and make sure that the PowerPoint slides will run. Get a bottle of water.

Decide how you are going to integrate the "visual aids" into your talk. Use transparencies or handouts or whatever you want. But be sure that you think about how these will be more helpful than not. You must organize your materials beforehand—you cannot be shuffling through your slides in the middle of the talk. (Hint. Put page numbers on the lecture notes and the transparencies so that you can recover if—*when*—they get out of order.) Decide when you want the audience to focus away from you and on the visual aids. And decide when you want to recapture their attention. (At the end, when you have finished, turn the overhead projector off so that the audience turns toward you.)



It may be useful to prepare a few extra sheets or transparencies (and a marker) that you can use to answer questions that you anticipate. That is, you might have some things you might say but cannot fit into the job talk. You might anticipate people will ask you about your methodology or the details of your theory. If you have well-prepared answers, with accompanying visual aids, you will impress the audience. [If you are *very* clever, you can set the presentation so that it invites particular questions for which you have slick answers!]

Move around a bit. Look members of the audience in the eye. Engage people personally. Practice the teaching arts that you have acquired. Many of the same tricks and skills are directly transferable to the job talk.

### **Practice, Practice, Practice.**

Your chances at getting a job depend on your presentation. And your presentation will get better and better each time you give it. You will learn more about pacing of the talk, about how the audience reacts to different themes and evidence, about the questions that the presentation stimulates, and so forth. Really!

So give your presentation several times. Pick on your advisor to listen to your work—in a “job talk” setting. Perhaps do this more than once. Then give a symposium to the UNC faculty and your graduate student peers. After each time, *learn from the experience*. Then, after giving the talk at your first interview, return to the presentation for further improvements. Remember, the audience reactions you get inform you about how well you are doing.

Think about both substance and style. Many of the comments and suggestions will indicate that you want to do more science. *This is exactly the feedback that makes good social science*. Relish in the reactions. Your work will get much better.

In terms of style most people these days use PowerPoint slides in their talks. Prepare slides carefully: convey information in short bullet points; use a background color that enhances, not obscures, text (blue is good); use a font that is visible to your elders on the back row. Do not put up a table of results that takes up a page of text and expect that anyone will be able to see it. Make up a slide of one model's results; then another. Use color graphs effectively. Use pictures or cartoons to begin or end your talk. Practice slide transitions and practice the correlation between your notes/text and your slides until the whole show is very natural and well-integrated.

In addition, pay attention to the character of people's responses. Many will suggest changes in your science that will make the project much better. Many will indicate that your science is fine but that you need to work on your presentation. Take advantage of any opportunity to improve your show.

In all cases, *listen* to what people have to say. *You will have to make changes in your presentation as you go along*. If you do not, then you are not listening.

## VIRGINIA'S TOUGH TALK FOR THOSE CONTEMPLATING LEAVING THE "SOUTHERN PART OF HEAVEN"

### HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM READY?

In 2003 the first packet was mailed out for an August 15<sup>th</sup> deadline; the first interview was Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>. In order to be ready for this early market, you will need to get letters of recommendation as early as Aug. 1. Most advisers will require one or more completed dissertation chapters before writing a letter. You should go to APSA and interview with employers there, which means that you have to be able to talk coherently about your dissertation and convincingly about its completion date. Within a month after APSA you should schedule a practice job talk in APRG or another forum of faculty and graduate students. This talk should include **results** from your research. Also by mid to late August you need to prepare all of your placement materials.

If you are not far enough along on your thesis to envision yourself **doing all of the above activities by these dates, then you are not ready to go on the market.** Do not fool yourself that you will go on the market later in the fall; there is no late market. Also do not entertain a "selective" market strategy: "I'll just send out a few files to really good schools this year and see what happens." What happens is you waste everyone's time; if you aren't ready to be on the market, then you need to be working on your dissertation, not dissipating your energies applying for jobs.

The Placement Service is available for all graduate students satisfying the above criteria who are seeking their first tenure-track job. In your first job search year if you land a one-year job, then you may continue using the Placement Service until you find a tenure-track job.

### WHAT DO I NEED TO PREPARE THIS SUMMER?

- 1) Short Bio for Department Placement Web Site
- 2) Vita
- 3) Generic Letter of Application
- 4) Research Statement
- 5) Teaching Portfolio
- 6) Writing Sample
- 7) Line up 3 Letters of Recommendation
- 8) Submit items 1-5 to Placement Director for comment and revision
- 9) Obtain transcript for Chris Reynolds
- 10) Turn in Short Bio to Kyna Lewis by early August for posting
- 11) Bug letter writers to turn letters well before the first deadline so that the Placement Director has time to write Cover Letters and Chris has time to assemble packet and mail. **Do not tell them the real deadline; tell them a date 10 days ahead of the deadline. They will be late; I can't write your cover letter until I have all three letters in hand, and Chris can't mail the packet until it is complete. The department does not pay for express mail.**

- 12) Sign up for Placement Service at APSA and attend convention. This is good interview practice; several students have gotten campus interviews as a result of their convention interviews.
- 13) Write A Dissertation

#### WHAT DOES THE PLACEMENT DIRECTOR/DEPARTMENT DO FOR ME?

Spring of prior year: I provide an "orientation to the market" meeting with veteran student presentations, various handouts etc. Throughout the year I circulate pertinent information about job openings, interview advice appearing in the Chronicle of Higher Education, market analysis articles in PS etc.

Over the Summer: I review and help you revise everything you send out in your packet: vita, your letter of application, research statement, teaching portfolio as well as short bio. The department will pay for a set number of these packets to be mailed out; over that number you pay. This year the limit was 20. If you have a standard packet, Chris will handle the mailing for you; if it is customized, then you handle the mailing.

Department packet: Includes Placement Director's cover letter, letters of recommendation, and transcript. It is sent out by Chris at department expense; this year the limit was 40 packets at department expense.

At APSA: Before the convention I provide faculty members with short bios on grad students; at the convention I monitor Placement Service and students' interview experiences

Fall: "Practice job talks create job interviews", MacKuen rule: practice talk **must be** scheduled early in the fall semester during APRG or similar forum, with Placement Director and adviser in attendance and as many faculty and grad students as you can assemble. Often you will have done a practice run alone with your adviser first. Right before the first interview, it's a good idea to schedule another practice talk with your adviser and a few friends. "Practice makes perfect."

Throughout the Year: I provide coaching on all aspects of the job search process and counseling with kleenex as needed.

Offers: I can advise on how to negotiate with the chair.

#### WHAT DOES THE PLACEMENT DIRECTOR EXPECT FROM ME ?

- 1) The Placement Director expects that you will **communicate regularly** about your interviews, job offers or rejections, acceptances etc. Do not assume that I will "hear about it" through the grapevine. You are responsible for telling me directly what is going on; that seems like a minimal expectation and simple courtesy.

- 2) A UNC candidate behaves as a professional and as an exemplary representative of the institution and the department at all times. **This is very important.** When you go out on the market, you are not just representing yourself. You have the UNC Department of Political Science “logo” stamped on you. How you behave may well determine if another UNC candidate this year or next gets an interview at all. Believe me, I have seen this happen in my 30+ years in the profession. In a few years how you behave will reflect only on yourself. But right now you are on the market under our sponsorship; your behavior reflects on all of us and affects the next generation of students. If you decide to use the department’s Placement Services, then you need to make a commitment in return.
- 3) You must be well-prepared for each interview: your job talk should have been presented multiple times before tough audiences; you have done your homework on the department, you have questions about the area etc. It doesn’t take seeing many unprepared UNC candidates before School X decides not to interview any more UNC students.
- 4) You must be serious about each interview: an invitation to interview is a commitment of time and money on the part of hiring institution. Your acceptance of the interview slot (which could have gone to an equally deserving but more interested student) should indicate your commitment to consider, in principle, an offer from this school. It is not an opportunity for a free vacation in a part of the country you haven’t seen before. Such behavior can easily trigger a complaint about you to UNC and can jeopardize other students’ chances to interview there.
- 5) You should understand that acceptance of a tenure-track position is a serious commitment. Once you have landed one, the expectation is that you will stay a decent amount of time, not treat it as a one-year job while you look for something better. The rationale is the same as above, but the opportunity costs are even higher for the school, the harm done to other candidates more severe, and the embarrassment for UNC greater as they will assume we condone this behavior. Once burned, this school may not be interested in interviewing UNC students for quite a while. Do not assume that you can look for the next job in secret because there are no secrets in political science. And do not think that you will use the department Placement Services for this purpose. Once we have found you one tenure-track job, you are on your own.

#### WHAT’S THE PAYOFF?

In 2003-04, 17 students used the Placement Service. They had a total of 47 interviews. Ten students now have tenure track jobs; two have one-year jobs (by their own choice as they wanted to stay in the area); one has a non-academic research position; one continues in a research post-doc position, for a total of 14 placements. Of the three students not yet officially placed, none are in residence. One applied for relatively few jobs and has not communicated with me at all this year. Two others are already on one-year jobs; I believe that one has secured another one-year job but hasn’t informed me.

In 2004-05, 16 students used the Placement Service. They had a total of 54 interviews. Thirteen students were placed in tenure-track jobs; three in non-tenure-track jobs, for a total of 16 placements (100%). Of the three temporary placements, one was already in a one-year job and took another; the second took a one-year job and stayed in her area of residence; the third took an adjunct job.

CHRISTINE A. KELLEHER  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Research Statement

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH INTERESTS

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My general research focus is on the quality of democratic governance, representation, and policy responsiveness in the American federal system. Additionally, I am interested in the processes associated with both the formation and implementation of public policies at the national, state, and local levels. Why are certain policies enacted? How do institutional structures and environmental factors influence the relationships between citizens and government at the local, state, and national levels?—What role do elected and appointed officials play in the process of representation and policymaking?

In my dissertation, I address broad issues of representation in local governments. More specifically, I examine how institutional contexts mediate the relationship between citizen opinion and public policy outputs in urban settings. Other research I have completed investigates questions related to the effect of urban political institutions on both citizen satisfaction and political participation. Additionally, my primary substantive policy area of interest and expertise is social welfare. I have significant statistical training, and both my dissertation and other research projects reflect my interest in serious quantitative research, especially in the domain of urban politics. I strongly believe in the importance of both theoretically rich and methodologically sophisticated work. Below I give greater detail on my dissertation, my specific research interests, and future plans.

DISSERTATION

*Representation and Responsiveness in American Local Governments*

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*Do local governments respond to public opinion?* I am interested in the quality of representation in American local governments. While a direct causal relationship has been established between opinion and policy in the national and state governments, we know little about the process of representation at the most decentralized levels of the American political system. This is a critical oversight, and in my dissertation, I examine this puzzle of representation.

*How do the design of government and the nature of the environment facilitate or impede policy responsiveness?* Because cities, towns, villages, and townships all vary a great deal, I argue that it is also necessary to investigate how institutional and environmental factors temper political responsiveness in local governments. Ultimately, a focus on local governments allows one to ask questions and probe topics that are inaccessible at the national and state levels and, in doing so, to determine what the optimal tools are to enable the most effective representation of citizen preferences in the policy process. The central argument of my work is that not only is the opinion-policy connection a viable expectation in local domains, but that context is a critical determinant of the strength of the relationship between public opinion and government policy. My primary explanation focuses on three specific contextual influences on policy responsiveness — electoral/political systems, media coverage, and external environmental influences.

Specifically, I examine the relationship between citizen opinion, public policy, and context in 26 cities across the United States at two points in time — 1999 and 2002. To explore these concepts, I use a combination of empirical measures — including public opinion survey data, media content analyses of local newspaper editorials, information from the 2000 Census, and other measures of political and institutional characteristics. I utilize pooled cross-sectional time series methods and change models for the majority of my analyses.

In all of my models investigating representation in local governments, the dependent variable is the *Index of Composite Local Policy Liberalism* — a cross-sectional measure of local public policy for the 26 cities for 1999 and 2002. Most existing measures of policy at the local level either examine only one policy area or use survey data of government officials exclusively to operationalize municipal policy outcomes. The measure is constructed primarily from city budgetary data, and is the first of its kind that examines multiple local issues on a liberal to conservative dimension.

In my dissertation, I pursue two major angles of analysis. First, I investigate specifically how well the ideological system that operates at the national and state levels operates in local (urban) governments. The second pursuit tests my expectations regarding how representation is facilitated and/or constrained by contextual factors such as electoral procedures, institutional structures, and the vitality of the local media environment.

## URBAN POLITICS RESEARCH

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My work in urban politics is closely related to my general interests in representation and policymaking. The focus of our research is on the impact of metropolitan political institutions on two broad issues – citizen satisfaction and political participation, and David Lowery is my co-author on these projects.

Our work on citizen satisfaction, which was published in *Urban Affairs Review* in 2002, engages a key assumption from the Tiebout model about variance relative to citizen satisfaction in local fragmented governments. Our research on political participation addresses the effect of metropolitan institutional context on citizens' political behaviors. We identify four dimensions of contextual influence, and test their implications with turnout data from local legislative elections in 336 municipalities in 12 metropolitan areas. Ultimately, we find that these contextual influences interact in significant ways, and overall, the results lend far greater support to those favoring the consolidation of urban political institutions than those supporting further fragmentation of local government.

## WELFARE RESEARCH

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My primary substantive area of interest is welfare policy, and over the past 4 years I have been intimately involved with the *Tracking County Responses to Welfare Reform* project at UNC. As Project Director and Assistant Project Director, I have been involved with all stages of this project, including initial project planning, grant-writing and management, survey construction, data collection, data analysis, and the dissemination of results. Specifically, this research investigated the role and decisions of elected and appointed officials in North Carolina after the 1996 national and 1997 state welfare reform legislation. Our research has generated a significant amount of policy-relevant research for practitioners across the state and beyond who are interested in issues related to devolution and welfare reform.

Additionally, our project also spawned a significant amount of scholarly research. We have written two major papers which are currently under review. These papers examine county level responses to welfare reform, and investigate, among other things, the success of counties in reducing welfare caseloads and poverty rates. Additionally, we explore the contextual, attitudinal and administrative characteristics that help to explain higher level(s) of perceived welfare reform accomplishments in implementing welfare reform at the local setting.

## OTHER INTERESTS AND FUTURE WORK

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I have recently begun a project examining the presence and role of women as state administrators and state legislators over time. Using a combination of survey data and information on the composition of state legislatures, we examine trends and patterns in the representation of women in positions of power in state governments. This project is currently in its early stages of data collection and early analysis. My primary contribution to this co-authored project to date has been the survey data analysis. In the coming weeks, we will be writing this paper and preparing it for presentation at the Southeast Conference of Public Administration (SECOPA) in October.

Finally, I have also pursued projects that investigate the role of political communication at the national level – specifically, how media coverage influences presidential approval. I fuse previously distinct arguments related to media priming and the presidential approval decision process, and argue that priming must be explained as a conditional phenomenon because its effects are dependent upon the specific issues towards which the attention of the press is directed. The central analysis of this paper provides a specific macro-level test. The results preliminarily indicate that priming is a conditional phenomenon, with certain issue areas appearing more susceptible to the effects of priming than others.

In the future, I plan to continue my research in each of these areas and to pursue new questions that also address the interconnectedness of citizens, government, and public policy. While my primary focus will be on urban/local governments, I also plan to examine these issues at both the state and national levels as well. I plan to expand upon the work in my dissertation to incorporate individual-level analyses to examine trends in political participation. I hope to continue my investigation of the role of women in local and state politics over time, and also examine how the presence of women legislators and bureaucrats influences the representation of citizen interests. With the reauthorization of the welfare reform legislation in the coming months, and the necessity of state responses, I also plan to continue my work on social welfare policy and devolution – perhaps expanding to a multiple state study, or moving more towards a focus on results. Finally, I hope to broaden my research in the field of political communication at the local, state, and national levels. I have done some minor work looking at the effect of media coverage on Congressional hearings, and would like to continue to explore similar questions.

**CHRISTINE A. KELLEHER**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Teaching Statement

**TEACHING INTERESTS**

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At the undergraduate level, I am interested in teaching introductory courses in American government and state and local politics. Additionally, I am interested in teaching upper division courses such as Urban Politics, the Presidency, Congress, Media and Politics, Interest Groups, and Policymaking. At the graduate level, I am interested in teaching an introductory seminar in American politics, American political institutions, or Public Administration. I would also enjoy teaching more specialized seminars in urban politics, intergovernmental relations, and social welfare policy. At both the undergraduate and graduate levels, I would also welcome the opportunity to teach introductory courses in political science research methods as well as introductory and intermediate statistics. I am also very willing to develop any other additional courses related to American politics, public administration, or public policy.

**OVERVIEW OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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My teaching experience to date has been quite varied. I served as the primary instructor for Introduction to American Government in both a traditional classroom setting as well as through the Friday Center for Continuing Education in the "Carolina Courses Online" program at UNC-CH. Both experiences presented their own set of unique challenges. My classroom course was offered during summer school from 8AM-9:30AM, five days a week, for five weeks. In order to keep the students excited and energized each day, I incorporated many different activities, debates, and discussions into class. In addition, I utilized movies and music to supplement the course material, which they enjoyed a great deal.

In an online course, the major challenge is communication. All class business is conducted via e-mail or on an online discussion forum. Therefore, as the instructor, it is very important to provide clear and concise instructions and feedback for all assignments. Often, many nontraditional students are enrolled in these courses, and I very much enjoyed interacting with these diverse and unique individuals. Because many have full time jobs or family obligations, being an instructor for this type of course means being flexible and understanding in order to help all of the students to be as successful as they possibly can be.

I also served as a Teaching Assistant/Grader for two courses – Introduction to American Government and Introduction to State and Local Government. My responsibilities included leading discussion sections, writing assignments, and grading papers and exams. Finally, I served as the Instructional Assistant for a graduate-level seminar in Economic Development. For this course, my primary responsibilities were organizational – gathering articles and other course readings and organizing guest speakers.

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

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I believe that the most important job of teacher is to make courses both informative and accessible, yet at the same time interesting and exciting. I want my students to feel intellectually invigorated by class lectures, readings, discussions, and activities. I hope that my classes will encourage students to ask questions, exchange ideas, and most importantly, to think critically about the world around them.

More specifically, my goals in the classroom are threefold. First, I want students to learn why the questions of political science are important to understand and how they relate to their own lives. I want my students to recognize the importance of being an informed and involved citizen, and the necessity of challenging themselves as well as the status quo. Second, I want my students to improve their reading, writing, and presentation skills. I want them to speak in class and debate with their fellow classmates while at the same time learning to recognize the value of listening to others. Additionally, I want them to know how to read and comprehend academic writing. Third and finally, I want students to gain an understanding of and appreciation for how political science research is conducted. In more advanced courses, I hope to work with students to develop and complete their own research projects.



**CHRISTINE A. KELLEHER**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Teaching Statement

**EVALUATIONS**

Instructor: Introduction to American Government, Summer School 2003

<i>The instructor usually:</i>	<b>Mean</b>
Demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching.	4.70
Communicates clearly and logically.	4.50
Promotes a climate of mutual respect.	4.70
Encourages student questions.	4.90
Emphasizes critical thinking.	4.70
Uses teaching strategies that promote active involvement.	4.65
Clearly communicate expectations for student performance.	4.25
Regularly provides constructive criticism of student performance.	4.05
Provides a fair evaluation of student performance.	4.60
Provides timely feedback on student performance	4.65
Is available when needed.	4.55
Is well-prepared for instruction.	4.75
Overall, considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and the course, I would rate this instructor as "excellent."	4.60
Course goals and objectives are clearly specified.	4.65
Course requirements (e.g. assignments, attendance, and student responsibilities) are clearly specified.	4.60
Course assignments are clearly related to the course objectives.	4.70
Instructional methods in this course facilitate my learning.	4.35
In general, the course is well-organized.	4.55
Course materials stimulated critical thinking.	4.30
I know significantly more about this subject than before I took the course.	4.65
Overall, considering its content, design, and structure, I would rate this course as "excellent."	4.25

Teaching Assistant: Introduction to American Government, Fall 2001

<i>My teaching assistant:</i>	<b>Mean</b>
Was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.76
Did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.71
Was well-prepared for the class.	4.81
Displayed mastery of the material.	4.76
Was available for help during office hours.	4.85
Made useful comments on my paper.	4.33
Overall, my teaching assistant did an excellent job.	4.89

All questions were on a 1 to 5 scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
AT  
CHAPEL HILL

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June 03, 2005

Dr. Maurits van der Veen, Chair  
International Relations Search Committee  
Department of International Affairs  
The University of Georgia  
Candler Hall  
Athens, Georgia 30602

Dear Members of the Search Committee:

Please find enclosed my application for your advertised position in international relations. I am a Ph.D. candidate in international relations with a minor in comparative politics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I will defend my dissertation, *Cooperation under Duress: Explaining the Violation and Enforcement of International Agreements*, in Spring 2005.

I believe that an active research program and excellence in teaching are interconnected. My commitment to a diverse and active research agenda would help me teach a wide range of courses at the University of Georgia in the areas of conflict processes, international relations theory, security studies, and American foreign policy. My training and proven abilities in quantitative methods also prepare me to teach a course in research methods as needed by the department. You can find evidence of my diverse interests and my methodological training in my published and ongoing research. My recently published work examines the factors affecting the duration of interstate wars and the link between democracy and military effectiveness. In an article appearing in *International Interactions*, I argue that pairs of states with histories of violent conflict have a more difficult time terminating their wars because of the effects of such histories on key domestic constituencies, adding new explanatory power to the dominant model of war duration. In a 2004 article appearing in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, I find evidence supporting my argument that the military effectiveness bonus previously attributed to democracy can be explained by traits that often coincide with but may not be the result of democracy, challenging the existing wisdom on the topic.

My dissertation, *Cooperation under Duress*, also reflects my diverse research interests, addressing questions with implications for many subject areas in international relations. When do we expect states to violate formal international agreements? Does the spectre of tough enforcement prevent states from breaking their agreements, or does enforcement escalate tensions and lead to violation? In turn, do states behave as if a tough enforcement record is a worthwhile investment? I draw hypotheses from two views of the role of historical enforcement behavior on decisions to violate or honor agreements. The first view, based on the game theoretic literature on reputation-building, suggests that states can decrease the probability that their agreements will be violated by investing in a record of tough enforcement. The second view suggests that, as in other areas of interstate interaction, increasingly hostile historical relationships escalate tensions between states and make aggressive actions more attractive, increasing the probability of violation. I compare these predictions to those of existing research using large-n quantitative analysis on data sets describing

formal economic and security agreements, providing insight into the role of strategic expectations in states' decisions to violate a wide range of formal agreement types. Additional empirical work addresses the question of whether states respond to violations by changing their later enforcement behavior. The implications of the study are broad and important because examining the factors that affect states' decisions to accept the distribution of benefits from their agreements addresses one of the core questions of international relations: why do losers in international politics accept their position, and how do winners secure their gains?

In addition to having an active research agenda that would help me advise and teach undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Georgia, my philosophy on instruction and advising fits very well with mission of your university. I believe strongly in a system of education that prepares students for their professional careers, provides them with a broad foundation of knowledge on many topics, and most importantly encourages them to become lifelong learners. Providing such an education to students requires that faculty members devote themselves to teaching both in and outside of the classroom, engaging students in research, and advising students on academic and career decisions. I see the teaching, advising, administrative, and informal time commitments that come with this educational system as a fantastic opportunity to be a part of the intellectual growth of undergraduate and graduate students. The faculty members in your department have been able to pursue research agendas that make major contributions to the field while remaining devoted to teaching and advising graduate and undergraduate students. I have sought to maintain the same balance, and believe that the University of Georgia is the ideal environment in which to continue to pursue excellence in individual and collaborative research while evolving as a teacher and advisor.

On the undergraduate level, my goal in the classroom is to show undergraduate students that the international events that they read and hear about in the news can be traced to identifiable, understandable political processes despite the apparent randomness and senselessness of some of those events. I have pursued this goal during the five semesters in which I have taught an introductory course of my own design, and I received the department's John Patrick Hagan teaching award in recognition of my efforts. In addition to this introductory class, I am able to offer a wide range of upper level and seminar courses for undergraduates in my areas of specialization. I am particularly interested in offering a course in conflict processes focusing on the causes of conflict and cooperation and a security studies course on the interaction between politics and strategy in times of war. An additional course of interest is American foreign policy, especially one focusing on the nature of crisis decision making in our democratic system. I am also able to teach a course on research design and methods, and I look forward to developing a wide range of courses to meet the needs of your department.

On the graduate level, I am prepared to offer courses in international relations theory, conflict processes, and security studies. My graduate courses would focus on the major topics in each literature and new developments in both the theory and methods of international relations scholarship. The courses would be heavily geared toward helping students produce research papers with the eventual aim of presenting their research at a professional conference and possibly submitting their work for publication. In order to successfully prepare for a career in academia, graduate students must learn not only how to identify gaps in what we know about international politics, but more importantly how to make meaningful contributions to the field. They must learn how to forge professional connections by attending and presenting research at conferences, develop networks of associates who will become future co-authors and reviewers, and balance several projects at the same time. I will be happy to put in the time and effort to advise students, serve on committees, and work to create formal and informal research groups to help students develop these

skills and move toward academic maturity. I look forward to working with graduate students in and outside of the classroom to help guide them through this crucial transition.

I have enclosed my curriculum vitae, statements on teaching and research, research samples, a summary of my most recent teaching evaluations, and a sample syllabus for your review. In addition, my department has sent a packet containing my confidential letters of recommendation and graduate transcripts. Additional research and teaching materials are also available on my web site ([www.unc.edu/~sbl](http://www.unc.edu/~sbl)). Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require additional materials from me. Thank you very much for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Stephen B. Long

Enclosures (7): C.V., Research Samples (2), Teaching Evaluations, Teaching Statement, Research Statement, Syllabus

## FUN WITH INTERVIEWS: QUESTIONS TO ASK AND EXPECT

BY JENNY WOLAK

### **DEPARTMENT COLLEAGUES**

What directions do you see the department heading? What are plans for future recruitment?  
What gaps in the department are you seeking to fill?  
How has the department changed since you've been here?  
What do you think are the biggest strengths of the department?  
What do you like best about the department?  
What links are there with other disciplines, other departments? Is interdisciplinary work common?  
Do people collaborate often?  
What kinds of resources are available (tailored to personal needs – experiments, computing, etc.)?  
What kinds of research seminar series exist within the department and in related fields in the school?  
What are you studying these days?

### Teaching

What is the course load? What kinds of courses will I be expected to teach?  
What are graduate students like? How many graduate students are there? Are they engaged in research?  
What is the masters' program like? How many students enroll? Is the curriculum applied or research oriented?  
What are the undergrads like? What is the make-up of the student body at the university?  
What is the average number of students per class?  
How are classroom facilities? Are technology classrooms available?

### Faculty life

What is it like for junior faculty? What are the expectations for new faculty?  
What kind of support do they provide for junior faculty (course release in first year, research assistant)?  
What kinds of administrative responsibilities are expected (student advising, student activities, committees)?  
What kinds of things are negotiable in an offer? (especially ask junior people)  
What is it like for women in the department?  
What is the chair like? How is the dean?  
Are there factions in the department? Are relations congenial?

### Tenure

What percentage of tenure-track faculty get tenure? What has happened to the last few cases? What kinds of records did they have?  
What are the tenure criteria (for research/teaching/service)? Is it a 'book' department?

## The area

What is it like living here? Do you like the area? What are the best parts of living here?  
Is the area around the university safe?  
Is it an expensive place to live? What are housing costs like? Can junior faculty afford to buy homes?  
Where do most faculty live? How is the commute?

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CHAIR**

What directions do you see the department heading over the next few years?  
What is the tenure and promotion process like?  
What is expected for tenure?  
What kinds of resources are available in terms of research support, travel money, research assistants?  
What is the salary?  
How many are being interviewed for the position? When will the department be making a decision?

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DEAN**

What kinds of research support are available? Grants to start projects? Summer funding? Semesters off?  
How do the social sciences stand among other schools in the university?  
How does the political science department stand among departments in the school?  
How has tenure gone in the department? How often does the dean go against the department?  
What is the legislative atmosphere in the state regarding funding for higher education? How does this state compare with other states in terms of funding for higher education?  
How is the economy affecting the financial budget for the university?

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK STUDENTS**

What do you like best about the department?  
What can you tell me about the department that the faculty might not mention?  
How is life for students here?  
What do you like best about the area? Is it expensive? Are there things to do?  
What are you interested in studying?  
What are you interested in doing after graduation?  
What are your favorite classes?

## **QUESTIONS TO ANTICIPATE BEING ASKED**

### Research

Describe your research. How did you get interested in this topic?  
Tell us about your research program. What are you working on currently? What do you plan to look at next?

How does your dissertation research fit in with and extend current work in the field?  
What schools of thought do you see your work as best fitting into?  
When are you going to be done with your dissertation?  
How will you go about revising your dissertation for publication?  
Where do you see yourself in five years?  
Where are your publications? Tell me about the papers that you are currently submitting for publication.  
What do you see as the key directions that the discipline is moving towards?

### Teaching

What courses would you like to teach?  
What would your syllabus look like for [any class mentioned in previous answer]? What would you assign?  
What do you think of [book you have never heard of]?  
What classes have you taught? How did you organize the class? What books did you assign?  
If you could teach your dream course, what would it be?  
How has your research influenced your teaching? In what ways have you been able to bring the insights of your research to your courses at the undergraduate level?  
Describe your teaching experiences for me.  
What classes do you enjoy teaching the most? What was your best teaching experience? Your worst?  
What is your basic teaching philosophy?

### The department

Why do you want to teach here? What attracts you to our institution? Why did you apply to our school in particular?  
How do you see yourself contributing to our department? What assets will you bring to our program?

### About your home department

How big is the department at UNC?  
How big is the comparative/IR etc politics group at UNC? Who are the comparativists at UNC?

### And of course,

What can I tell you about the department?  
Do you have any questions?  
The pressure is usually on you to ask questions of the people you meet with.