

## To the Editor:

The following is a letter which I recently submitted to the President and Council of the Association.

I wonder whether it would be appropriate for our Association to take the initiative for a modest academic reform in the direction of sexual equality.

Reference is to the anti-nepotism rule followed by many colleges and universities in the U.S., and which usually precludes a given department from having both a husband and a wife on their payroll, or at least, on the same academic ladder. In the face of that rule, we all know what usually happens: the wife ends up, at best, as a "lecturer" (or equivalent) in the department, or at worst, she scrounges about for a job in the same city but often in a position well below that for which she is qualified. This may help to create a relatively cheap labor pool from which community colleges and other institutions can draw, but the liabilities seem to clearly outweigh that modest advantage.

One possible solution might be to rule people out of eligibility for such positions as chairman when their spouse is also in the same department, but even that might not be necessary. If such a compromise with the archaic prohibition *is* necessary, it will at least fall equally on both husband and wife.

My proposal is that the Council consider a resolution to this effect, and if adopted, the Association could recommend the abolition of anti-nepotism rules to all schools which have Political Science departments. Alternatively, we might urge the AAUP and/or our sister professional associations to urge the same course of action. In my judgment, there is little justification for its continuation, and I suspect it would fall with little resistance.

In so doing, we'd not only be striking a blow for women's rights, but increasing the availability of a good many talented members of the discipline.

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## To the Editor:

This letter has been sent as an Open Letter to the Officers of the American Political Science Association.

We the undersigned faculty members and graduate students, constituted as the Committee for Rational Recruitment in Political Science (CRRIPS), are writing to you concerning the current academic recruitment practices and the lack of teaching positions for qualified applicants. It is a fact that the present academic recruitment practices are archaic, time consuming, expensive, and too much shrouded in unnecessary secrecy.

The existing academic spoils system resembles the Federal civil service in the United States as it existed prior to the introduction of a merit system by the Pendleton Act (1883). Despite the great increase of academic institutions, applicants, and the ever increasing specialization, which make it impossible to know of most of the vacancies for which one is qualified and potentially interested, recruitment is still on a highly personal basis, with faculty members recommending their friends for positions. Many potential applicants, especially the younger ones, unaware of what is available, are thus denied equality of opportunity in being considered for many of the existing vacancies.

Although there is a problem of knowing what positions are available at what institutions, the major problem is that there are too many qualified applicants for the existing teaching positions. The number of qualified applicants increases at a faster rate than the number of available teaching positions. This is a problem now facing many academic disciplines. Thus, there are now many who cannot either secure a teaching position or improve their status by interinstitutional movement.

We are thus urging the APSA to take immediate steps to improve this situation. Teaching and research vacancies, including part-time, summer, and evening, should be openly publicized, as is being done in Europe and throughout the English-speaking world, except in the United States. This should be done in the Personnel Service's *Newsletter*. It should dispense with its own reference letter and application forms.

Since the major problem is the large number of qualified applicants, it would be desirable for the APSA to urge the four-year liberal arts and state colleges without Political Science Departments to

establish such departments as soon as possible. All Political Science Departments should have at least one faculty member in each of the broad subfields of the discipline. This would not only create more teaching positions, but also provide those students who cannot now secure a satisfactory education in political science with the opportunity to do so.

It would also be desirable for the APSA to urge that there be a reduction in the number of courses that an instructor is required to teach, from the still too common four or three courses to three or two courses. A reduction in the teaching load would improve the faculty-student ratio, enable the faculty to devote more time to research, course preparation, and student contacts, and thus promote the quality of education.

We are also urging the APSA to establish a permanent committee on recruitment practices, consisting of senior and junior faculty members and graduate students near the end of their studies. This committee should have the authority to deal with unfair recruitment practices.

Finally, in order to prevent a recurrence of the present situation, planning based on information is required. The APSA should survey all Political Science Departments, ascertaining the number of instructors, research and teaching assistants, and graduate and undergraduate students. Graduate and undergraduate students should also be surveyed as to their career plans. All of this information should be published and updated annually. On the basis of such information, it will be possible to project future needs for faculty members, research, and teaching assistants.

We hope that the APSA will give serious consideration to our suggestions and move speedily in the direction of solving these acute problems. If there is no action, the present situation will worsen. It is unjust to educate so many for careers in research and teaching and then deny to them the opportunity to engage in these occupations.

In order to secure wider support and publicity for our efforts, a copy of this letter has been sent to the Black Caucus, the Caucus for a New Political Science, the Committee on the Status of Blacks in the Profession, the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, the Conference for Democratic Politics, the director of the Personnel Service, and the Women's Caucus for Political Science.

Communications should be addressed to me at the following address: Department of Political Science, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts 02167.

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