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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

THE IMPACT OF THE POLITICAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM ON STUDENTS' POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

By

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ABSTRACT

This study examined whether community college students exhibited a change in their political attitudes and behaviors as they progressed through the Introduction to Political Science course. Theories of political socialization and political efficacy were used as a basis for this study's conceptual framework.

This study sought to test the proposition that as students heighten their political knowledge, they exhibit greater political tolerance.

This analysis used a portion of a national survey of attitudes in a pre-post quasi-experimental design to assess change in student attitudes toward political efficacy, political tolerance, political spectrum, political attitudes, and sub-fields as a result of participation in an introduction to political science course. The subjects for this study consisted of students from two Florida community colleges who were enrolled in *Introduction to Political Science.* In addition to the students from the political science course, three psychology classes, one from each college, were administered the same surveys. The psychology

classes were used as the nonequivalent control groups for this study.

The study found that while students were significantly more likely to discuss politics and express a desire to keep up with politics after taking the political science course, they were not any more likely to want to participate in the political structure. The study also found that students who took political science were significantly less likely to express political tolerance after taking the course. The political science course was also more likely to pique students's interest in the academic discipline of political science than the psychology course. This inquiry was useful in identifying areas for further research, particularly the strength of the link between civic education and civic participation.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

University academics tend to relate to what actually occurs in the classroom in a very casual manner. Teaching and its effects on students is an oft-discussed subject at conferences or departmental meetings, yet the change that the course content has on students is not generally a topic of research. The significance of what takes place in the classroom cannot be underestimated. It is here that the skills and knowledge of a particular academic discipline are transferred to another generation. The college classroom tests and trains students to approach problems with enhanced cognitive thinking skills. Academic disciplines recruit new members adding to the scope of their fields.

Why so little attention has been given to this vital area of research is unclear. To many college faculty members, regardless of discipline, the classroom is often viewed as a burden or a means to an end. Research, not the development of students, is the function which is rewarded both in peer acceptance and occupational rewards. The classroom is a by-product that may or may not benefit from diligent research. To even express concern about the

student might draw criticisms of "pandering" or attempting to confuse a process that has remained stable over centuries. To accept that the process which takes place in the classroom could be improved would be to suggest that the system which created its current actors is in some way flawed. However, it is clear that the role of higher education for all disciplines is undergoing drastic transformation. The advent of new technology combined with the changing characteristics of the American college student heightens our need to understand the effects of the classroom on students' behavioral and attitudinal changes more fully.

It was the intent of this study to analyze the presentation of one course: Introduction to Political Science. Building on the methodology and background research found in higher education research and the limited body of literature from political science which deals specifically with teaching, this study attempted to better understand the role that the political science class plays in students' political perceptions and attitudes. By understanding how a single course is taught and by achieving a better understanding of its effects on students, we may get a clearer picture of the problems that are specific to introductory courses within all social sciences.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the role that one political science course played in students' political attitudes and behaviors. The overall objective of this study was to analyze the impression that this course has on its students, and how it might influence their participation in their own governance. The Introduction to Political Science course often offers students the first and only exposure to how governmental systems work. It is hoped that this study will improve our understanding of how students acquire the tools of citizenship and how civic values are learned.

Significance of the Study

R. Freeman Butts defines civic education as "explicit and continuing study of the basic concepts and values underlying our democratic political community and constitutional order" (Butts, 1988, p.184). There are several concepts which are essential to a constitutional society, among them are liberty, justice, and rule of law. These concepts are inherently linked to the performance of citizen responsibilities. Responsibilities of citizenship such as "participation in the political system, acquisition of knowledge about civic life that are sadly deficient in today's educational system" (Patrick, 1991, p.1).

Barber argued that "civic education in a democracy is preparation for sustaining and enhancing self-government ... which means citizen participation based on informed, critical reflection." Barber further stated that civic education promotes "the ability to think critically and act deliberately in a pluralistic world, the empathy that permit us to hear and thus accommodate others." (Barber, 1992). Clearly, it more difficult to hear and accommodate others in a civil society if one does not know the basic competencies to which Barber refers. An American Bar Association Bill of Rights Survey (1991) found that less than one-third of American adults were aware that the Bill of Rights consists of the first ten amendments to the Constitution. Therefore, it is not hard to understand that the majority of those polled did not support the Bill of Rights.

Similarly, reports on civic learning by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicate that the majority of 12th graders have a rudimentary knowledge of government and citizenship in the United States.

> Half of the students in grade 12 fail to demonstrate knowledge needed for responsible participation in the political system. Further, in 1988, only six percent of the high school seniors achieved the highest level of civic proficiency as defined in the NAEP test. A

very disturbing finding was that high school students did "significantly less well" in civics in the most recent assessment (1988) than their 1982 counterparts (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1988, p.13).

That same NAEP study also found wide discrepancies between population subgroups. Males were far more likely to reach the highest levels of proficiency than females. Blacks and Hispanics ranked at the bottom proficiency levels, regardless of gender (Center for Civic Education, 2000). Participation rates of 18 to 24-year-olds voting in public elections lags far behind the rate for those over the age of 25, which also tends to be much lower than desired by advocates of responsible citizenship (Patrick, 1991, p.1).

There are some viable attempts in high schools to teach civics, government, and law related courses (LRE). Currently "formal courses in civics and government are required for graduation from high school in more than thirty-five states, ... normally offered at the twelfth grade (Hoge, 1988, p.1). Since 1975, LRE have been added to the curriculum of more than 50% percent of the states surveyed (Hahn & Green 1983). Currently however, Florida does not require that civics or government be taught in the high school, nor has it added LRE to its high school

curriculum.

As a result of their high school experiences, students who enroll in the Introduction to Political Science class have vastly different backgrounds and capabilities. This lack of consistency and continuity between high school and college causes problems in and beyond the political science classroom. Unlike other introductory courses, the material taught in Introduction to Political Science has the potential to affect a country's civic participation. This potentially places unusually high demands on a college course that is intended to build on the foundations learned in high school.

Given the importance of the Introduction to Political Science course, it was useful to determine what significant differences there are in its presentation as well as the principal factors that shape its teaching. Once these differences are identified, further research can illustrate the relationship between those factors. Unlike any other discipline, a college level Introduction to Political Science is often the first and many times the only orientation that most citizens have about how they are governed.

More than most disciplines, the effects of political science extends beyond the classroom to the role of

citizenship and to the quality of its governmental values. Hahn and Green (1983) explain why political education is so important in an area which completes a student's liberal education, and also determines their role as citizens. These authors conducted a survey research project of randomly selected Villanova University undergraduates in their freshman and senior years, using political science as the independent variable. The study's survey used six scaled variables measuring political participation on and off campus, political knowledge, civic duty, liberalism, and political efficacy.

Hahn and Green (1983) found that students who studied political science not only had a heightened political knowledge and a higher level of political efficacy[1], but the rate of change over the four year was much higher than students who had other majors (Hahn & Green, 1983, p.177). While there should be little surprise that political science majors had a heightened political knowledge, there is significance in the positive relationship with political efficacy and civic participation. Hahn and Green's (1983) study illustrated that political efficacy and civic duty can be heightened by the classroom experience.

---

[1] Political efficacy is defined as a citizen's sense that he or she can understand and influence government (Wilson, 1997, p.123).

The majority of the literature underscores the positive relationship between education in general and a more pluralistic form of government. When examining the basic conditions necessary for democracy, the literature (Macpherson, 1976; Mason, 1982; Pateman, 1970) suggests that there are several requirements for the establishment of a meaningful and effective democratic state. A sense of community identity, education and development of citizenship, and self-determination by those participating are all considered to be prerequisite factors for a pluralistic government. More recently, Rimerman (1991) stated that "increased citizen participation will contribute to the development of the individual's realization of citizenhood, and individuals should participate in the community and workplace decisions that will affect the quality and direction of their lives" (Rimerman, 1991, p.492). Similarly, Barber argued that "political education of the individual, rather than socialization, will be practiced wherever increased citizen participation is encouraged" (Rimerman, 1991, p.492). If a pluralistic government is to function, political education is clearly a prerequisite. The quality of that education must, therefore, be open to analysis and scrutiny.

Definitions

In discussing the specifics of teaching political science, the basic definitions of terms used which are not common in higher education literature may prove to be indispensable. Some of the most basic terms can have several different meanings or a particular word's common usage may have a different definition when used in a scholarly context. An excellent example is the concept of *state*. One normally uses this term to define one of the 50 territorial regions within the United States. However, a more widely used political science definition of the term *state* is, "a territorially bound sovereign entity" (Danziger, 1998, p.106). When used in this way, the United States is the only real *state*.

Some definitions are intuitive but are worth defining for the purposes of clarification. A *government* "consists of those institutions that have the authority to make decisions binding on the whole society . . . a monopoly of the use of legitimate force" (Wilson, 1997, p.5). The United States has a *Federal* government, defined as "a political system in which ultimate authority is shared between a central government and state or regional governments" (Wilson, 1997, p.440).

The term *democratic* form of government is not as

specific. The word *democracy* has been used to describe several different types of political regimes. At one end of the spectrum, democracy has been defined as a centrally controlled economy. The Chinese and Cuban governments would define any governmental body whose interests serve the true interests of the people as democratic, regardless of whether the constituency had any input in the decision-making. This form of regime is normally referred to as *democratic centralism*. At the other end of the spectrum is a pure democracy where all decisions are a product of those affected by them. This form of government is defined as a *direct democracy*. The United States is somewhere in the middle of this spectrum, having what is referred to as a *representative democracy*, or what the framers of the Constitution called a *republic* (Wilson, 1997).

Closely related to the focus of this study is the concept of *political participation* which is defined as an "activity by private citizens designed to influence governmental decision-making"(Huntington, 1976). The amount of participation is dependent on "a citizen's sense that he or she can understand and influence politics" (Wilson, 1997, p.123) and is termed *political efficacy*.

The Center for Civic Education (2000) articulated *civic education* as "an increased understanding of the institutions

of American constitutional democracy and the fundamental principles and values upon which they are founded, the skills necessary to participate as effective and responsible citizens, and the willingness to use democratic procedures for making decisions and managing conflict" (p. 1). Civic education can further be expanded to beyond the role of political institutions. The American Political Science Association's Task Force on Civic Education (1997) succinctly defines *civic education* as the "motivation and competence to engage actively in public problem-solving" (p. 2). The task force supported the Center for Civic Education's (2000) definition to include the "importance of teaching the liberal aspirations to freedom, dignity and equality embedded in our political history and traditions"(p. 2).

However, The task force's definition expands their definition to emphasize the "importance of learning the practical wisdom settings, many of which, e.g., corporate management, labor union organization and church governance, have no necessary connection to the affairs of national, state, and local government"(p. 2). Clearly, *civic education* can be advanced well beyond the traditional political spectrum. For the purposes of this study, the more limited definition put forth by the American Political

Science Association's Task Force on Civic Education (1997) which defines *civic education* as the "motivation and competence to engage actively in public problem-solving"(p. 2) will be used as the functional definition of civic education.

The process of civic education falls under the broad definition of what political scientists call *political socialization* specifically defined as "the learning process by which people acquire their enduring political beliefs and values" (Patterson, 1995, p.37). Those collective political beliefs and values are described as *political culture*. The culture is a different experience for Americans than it is for other Western industrialized democracies. Americans do not "formally join political parties except by voting for their candidates. Americans [unlike other Western industrialized democracies], keep their social, business, working, and cultural lives almost entirely nonpartisan" (Wilson, 1995, p.101).

The two most basic, and ironically, confused terms in any discussion of politics in the United States are the concepts of *liberal* and *conservative*. The modern definition of a *liberal* is "one who favors a more active federal government for regulating business, supporting social welfare, and protecting minority rights, but who prefers,

less regulation of private social contact" (Wilson, 1997, p.442). Alternatively, the modern definition of a *conservative* is a "person who favors more limited and local government, less government regulation of markets, more social conformity to traditional norms and values, and tougher policies toward criminals" (Wilson, 1997, p.438).

These modern definitions become confused when the classical definitions of liberalism and conservatism are employed. *Classical liberalism* believes in "human nature being essentially good or altruistic and people are therefore capable of mutual aid and collaboration . . . war is not inevitable . . . and can be reduced by eradicating the anarchical conditions which encourage it" (Kegley, 1995, p.4). If human kind is essentially good, then the size of government need not be large and controlling, thus distinguishing the classical definition of liberal from the modern term. The opposite side of the spectrum, *classical conservatism,* views the need for government as great, that "the possibility of eradicating the instinct for power is a utopian aspiration" (Kegley, 1995, p.4). On this side of the political spectrum humankind's desire for power makes the need for a broad controlling government a necessity. Hobbesian and Machiavellian philosophies dominate this side of the spectrum.

In most social sciences today, there is the desire to present a more scientific approach to the discipline. The application of the *scientific method,* is defined as the "presentation of theory, operationalization, and observation in chronological order" (Babbie, 1995 p.50). This simple application, however, has created a centuries old debate in the study of human behavior. The origins of this debate can be traced to the emergence of *positivism.* The positivist paradigm was the creation of French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798-1857) who distinguished "the analysis of social affairs from religious inquiries to the use of scientific objectivity" (Babbie, 1995, p.42). According to Babbie (1995), Comte felt that society was something that could be studied with scientific precision, "in this optimism for the future, Comte coined the term positivism, to describe this scientific approach in contrast to what Babbie regarded as negative elements in the Enlightenment" (Babbie, 1995, p.42).

Positivism has led to a distinct methodology within the study of social sciences called *behavioralism.* Behavioralist, or formal political theorists, are political scientists who emphasize the scientific application to the study of politics (Mayer, 1989). Behavioralism includes "any study that aims to discover such patterns and is based on

reproducible comparisons . . . procedures so clearly defined that any qualified scientist, in addition to the original researcher, can carry them out and come up with the same results . . . " (Ray, 1998, p.69). Mayer (1989) described the process of moving to behavioralism as simply moving from the "goal of understanding, . . . to explanation, the ability to demonstrate why phenomena occur and the ability to predict future occurrences with a known probability of success" (p.16). This trend has not been without controversy however. Caldwell (1982), when discussing the parallel shift in economics, pointed out that "most of the philosophy of science with which economists are familiar was written with the natural sciences, and particularly physics, in mind; its application in a social science like economics can and should be questioned" (p.3).

Sub-Fields Taught in the Political Science Classroom

The introductory course in political science is distinct in that it presents several sub-fields within the study of politics. While these sub-fields can be categorized by different means, for the purpose of this study, five classifications will be used: political theory, the classical approach to the study of politics which builds on the historical perspectives of past authors; comparative politics which compares different political systems;

international relations which seeks to analyze the economic and political relationship between states; state and local government, which focuses on regional politics; and finally public policy, which examines the bureaucratic actors and functions of the state.

Political Theory

Political theory should be distinguished from what is often referred to as formal political theory, the latter being "those investigations that measure political phenomena precisely and mathematically" (Scott, 1997, p.358). By contrast political theory finds its origins in ancient Greece. From Plato to Francis Bacon to Karl Marx, political theory had always occupied a place in the study of politics, but its application has been problematic within the study of political science. Kenneth Minogue (1995) found;

> A second development resulted from the growth of political science as an academic discipline, especially in the United States toward the end of the nineteenth century. There were rather miscellaneous theories of all those who had written, in one idiom or another, about politics. Words like 'theory' and 'doctrine' lacked the requisite technical panache for a developing inquiry . . . (p.106).

Empiricism and "theory" continue to compete in the

classroom, even at the introductory level.

Comparative Politics

Comparative politics can be described as a macro-approach to political science. Comparative politics compares different political systems. Jackson and Jackson (1997) explain to students that "only by comparing can one understand and evaluate the merits or problems of a particular political system . . . and . . . comparison is an integral part of all scientific inquiry" (p.30). As in most of the sub-fields of political science and other areas of the social sciences, comparative politics is in a period of transformation. Mayer (1989) found that

> We no longer seek to understand a place or nation as such but to use nations as settings or groups of contextual variables seeking to explain processes and generic patterns of behavior. The field has moved from the goal of understanding, a term generally refers to an intuitive feeling that one knows why phenomena occur, to explanation, the ability to demonstrate why phenomena occur and the ability to predict future occurrences with a known probability of success (p.15).

Against the backdrop of these changes, the sub-field of comparative politics seeks to understand and explain why different political systems function (Bertsch, Clark, and

Wood, 1991).

International Relations

International relations, unlike comparative politics, is the analysis of relations *between* states rather than relations *within* states. The sub-field of international relations can be further broken down into two broad categories. One category of international relations deals with conflict resolution in the international arena and is concerned with how peace may be achieved and war avoided. The second category is that of international political economy which looks at economic relations between states and how they affect both national and international political systems (Scott, 1997).

The focus back to the Vietnam war began to link factors related to conflict with factors which drive economic markets (Ray, 1998). Ray (1998) believes that American political leaders associated the conflict in Vietnam with the economic survival of the United States. Concern for "foreign markets, fields of investment, and sources of raw material . . . essential to capitalist economic systems . . . accounted for the determination the government demonstrated in Vietnam" (Ray, 1998, p.70). Today international political economy is extensively researched and taught.

State and Local Government

State and local government is a sub-field of political science which deals with 50 state systems and more than 87,000 cities, counties, towns, villages, school districts, water-control districts and other governmental entities (Burns et al., 1996). In the Introduction to Political Science course, the treatment of the state and local government section can be contrasted with either the federal system (the balance of power between the states and the federal government is described as *federalism*) or emphasis can be given to America's regional form of government. The regional emphasis is significant considering that "the role of states and localities is increasing in domestic policy questions, not only in absolute terms even in relative terms compared with the national government"(Burns et al., 1996, p.5). Burns et al.(1996) have gone on to point out that "two-thirds of the expenditures for domestic functions are made by the states and their subdivisions" (p. 5). Growth areas in regulatory policy such as environmental policy are taking place predominantly at the state and local levels (Burns et al., 1996).

Public Administration

Public administration is a traditional sub-field of political science but has become increasingly distinct.

Public administration consists of civilian, police or military bureaucrats whose task is to assist in the development and implementation of the country's public policies. In composite, these individuals are called the public administration of their country, and they constitute what is often referred to as the bureaucracy (Jackson & Jackson, 1997).

Public administration is a rapidly growing area of study for two primary reasons. First, "modern state development has become more extensive in the scope of its activities, complex in its organization, and expensive to run" (Jackson & Jackson, 1997, p.274). Secondly, economic tasks earlier associated only with the private sector, have shifted to the public sector. Jackson and Jackson (1997) exemplified this in their description of Britain, "the politicians and civil servant determined what employment people could accept, controlled the industrial sector, and rationed goods and services as well as carry out the industrial sector's normal functions" (Jackson & Jackson, 1997, p.275).

Questions Raised in The Study

This study examined whether community college students exhibited a change in their political attitudes and behaviors as they progressed through the Introduction to

Political Science Course. After taking the course, were these students more likely to have gained a higher degree of political efficacy, would they become politically more tolerant, and would their opinions move closer to either the liberal or conservative political spectrum? In teaching this course, are college faculty increasing American civic education and in what way?

Limitations of The Study

There are several limitations which must be acknowledged in this study. There are general limitations applicable to any empirical analysis within the social sciences. Empirical analysis was first developed for use by the hard natural sciences. Many authors suggest that its application in areas which are not easily quantifiable should be closely scrutinized. Mayer (1982) highlighted this issue when explaining that;

> in a deterministic science we may say that if the principle were true the explicandum must follow. In the behavioral sciences, we are only able to say that it is more likely to follow than if the preconditions did not exist. The precise probability of the occurrence of the explicandum can frequently be stipulated through the statistical method (p. 31).

As an empirical study, this particular analysis can only

attempt to offer alternative preconditions which will result in competing explicandum. "Social scientists do not believe all human actions, thoughts, and feelings are determined, nor do they lead their lives as though they believed that. The deterministic model does not assume that the causal patterns are simple ones" (Babbie, 1995, p. 66).

It is not within the scope of this analysis to predict instructional outcomes within the classroom. While this inquiry examines perceptions prior to instruction in the classroom and changing perceptions over time, it does not consider the outcomes of the classroom experience in general. As in any deterministic model, we assume that the "characteristics and actions are determined by forces and factors operating on them" (Babbie, 1995, p. 66). Determining all factors that affect the outcomes of education would exceed the scope of this study. As a practical limitation of this study, it can also be assumed that students take specific courses for a variety of reasons; based on time-slot availability, credits needed to graduate, taking the course with a friend, or the reputation of a particular professor. This study made no assumptions or speculations as to "why" students take a specific course, rather it was concerned only with student expectations once in the course.

Limitations related to the factors discussed in the possible sources of error sections must be acknowledged as well. This methodology can not eliminate all the effects of a pre-measurement bias, rather it can only seek to mitigate and control for possible sources of error. Questions regarding extraneous variables affecting the analysis can not be underestimated. These questions must be readdressed in the discussion of the results of this analysis, and may act to restrict conclusions reached in the study. As in all empirical analysis in social science, the possible sources of error must be acknowledged and weighed against the cost of not pursuing the study. In the case of this study, the benefits of a better understanding of the political socialization process in the classroom and thereby improvements in civic education are perceived to be weighty benefits of analysis.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

The body of literature pertinent to teaching introductory political science may be divided into two broad categories: the relationship between political attitudes and education, and the composition of the Introduction to Political Science course itself. This review will be divided into those same two sections.

The first section examined the literature concerning current political attitudes and recent trends in political participation. This section then turns to the relationship between these political attitudes and education, focusing on the distinct role that *political* education plays in the formation of political behavior.

The second section examined the teaching of the course Introduction to Political Science. Literature from political science related to this study offers substantive analysis of the sub-fields of the discipline. The Introduction to Political Science course is one of the best indicators of the emphasis that is placed on each of those sub-fields. This review will examine both the body of literature from higher education and research from political science which

focuses on the classroom. Each of the following sections is followed by a synopsis chart of the literature presented and an examination of areas that need further research.

The Relationship Between Political Attitudes, Political Education and Democracy

Current State of American Political Attitudes

Much of the literature finds that American college students have greater levels of political apathy than others in the general constituency, lower interest in political issues and consequently much lower voter turnout rates (S. Bennett 1997; S. Bennett & Rademacher, 1997; Rahn, 1998). Rahn (1998) goes on to conclude that the current generation of college students has the lowest level of "citizenship". When compared to adults, college students today are considerably more disenfranchised from political structures than are adults (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Significant contributions to the literature regarding the state of political attitudes and behavior are the surveys of 238,000 college freshmen which have been conducted by the University of California at Los Angeles' Higher Education Research Institute since 1973. Other useful sources include the series of Times Mirror Center Report Surveys, which survey all ages and demographic backgrounds of Americans. The Times Mirror survey can be substantiated by The Harward

Study. The latter study involved ten focus groups that met in the early 1990s in ten different cities. These focus groups were conducted under the auspices of the Kettering Foundation and the Harward Group.

Much of the data compiled in the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute survey can be attributed to Alexander Astin. Current political behaviors and attitudes and how they have changed can best be measured by comparing Astin's summary of the results in 1977 with more recent 1998 data.

The degree of political attitude change in the student brought about by exposure to the college experience in general constitutes a significant part of what Astin (1977) referred to as "net effect". Many researchers in the field of higher education have sought to discover the impact of college attendance on students' personal, social, and vocational development. Astin's (1977) discussion of the limitations of several types of analysis is a major contribution to higher education literature in that Astin suggested that "the real question is not the impact of college, but the impact of different collegiate experiences" (p. 6). In a comprehensive longitudinal survey of college students, Astin dealt with several of these impacts including political activism and political liberalism. Astin looked at both activities and to self-concept for

explanation. Astin used a survey instrument and regression analysis techniques to determine students' political self perceptions. Astin (1977) found that a positive correlation (regression coefficient =.42) between the college experience and movement along the political spectrum toward liberalism (it is assumed that Astin defined liberal in the modern, American context, not in a classical, libertarian context). Of the groups tested, students who showed the greatest shift toward liberalism during college were children of Jewish parents, Black students, male students, students having Roman Catholic background, followed by students indicating no religious preference. High correlations were also found among students having high academic ability and high scores on artistic interests, altruism, hedonism and drinking (Astin, 1977). Consistently, all of these groups were initially more liberal on the pre-survey and also showed a much greater shift toward liberalism.

Astin (1977) concluded that students "majoring in the social sciences were more strongly associated with greater-than-average increases in liberalism, than those majoring in either engineering, mathematics, or physical sciences" (p. 38). Astin (1977) attributed much of this shift to peer-group effects. This finding contradicts a substantial portion of the literature, particularly in political

science, which attributes this shift to predominantly liberal faculty in the social sciences (Ladd & Lipset, 1975). Astin (1977) defended the position by simply pointing out that students in the social sciences, like faculty, tend to be more liberal than students and faculty in engineering. Astin (1977) found other factors that were positively associated with political liberalism. Those students who "receive support from parents and from scholarships, live in a dormitory, and students who attended highly prestigious and highly selective institutions" were found to have greater shifts toward liberalism than their peers (Astin, 1977, p.38). Students who attended institutions in the South, or more technological institutions, showed smaller-than-average shifts toward liberalism (p.38).

When Astin (1977) asked about "activities pursued during college", specifically whether the students discussed politics, Astin found that there was a decrease in the amount of politics discussed by students. However, during the middle of their second year of college this trend reversed. This reversal however did not significantly make up the negative figures in the first year and a half. Some other trends found by Astin's (1977) research may offer a possible explanation for this effect. Student changes in lifestyle and rapid increases in other social behavior

(described as "hedonism") may account for students not being as interested in political events for the first year and half of college.

In summary, Astin (1977) confirmed the trend found in the political science literature (Ladd & Lipset, 1975) that college had a liberal effect on students. However, Astin (1977) did not accept the notion that faculty are the sole cause, suggesting instead that out of class experiences and student peer groups have a powerful influence. This would imply that the political science classroom has little direct effect on political attitudes. Astin (1977) found that initially college has an overall negative effect on students' willingness to discuss politics. Astin's (1977) findings would suggest a closer scrutiny of the total college picture.

Compare this to the results Astin reported in the more recent 1993 study which found "that the percentage of college freshmen who say paying close attention to political affairs is important has declined to just 16%, its lowest level in 29 years (Astin, 1998). The vast majority of students reported not discussing politics in the past year. While most students reported being well-off financially and raising a family were important, most felt that community action and influencing the political structure was not

important. This figure is less than half of what it was in 1966 (Astin, 1998).

In a recent essay on trends in American college students' political interests for the American Political Science Association, Mann (1999) reviewed some of the current literature related to students' attitudes. Mann found that the Astin (1998) survey, which focuses on both two and four year institutions, illustrated a reasonable difference between institutional types (see Table 2-1). Historically Black colleges and university students show the highest level of political interest. Community college students showed the highest levels of desire to be financially well-off, and the lowest levels of political involvement among any institutional category in higher education. Only 18% of community college students stated that they tried to "keep up to date with politics" compared to 26% of college students at all other institutions. Only 13% of the community college students felt they could "influence the political structure" compared to 16% of the overall average (Mann, 1999).

While Mann (1999) offered some explanations for institutional differences, she did not discuss the lowest figures, those related to the community college student.

Table 2-1
Important Objectives of the 1998 Freshmen

	ALL INSTIT.			2-YEAR COLLEGES			4-YEAR COLLEGES			BLACK COLLEGES			UNIV.		
	ALL	**M**	**F**	**AL**	**M**	**F**	**AL**	**M**	**F**	**AL**	**M**	**F**	**AL**	**M**	**F**
Political Influence, Information															
Keep up to date with politics	26a	29	23	18	21	14	29	32	26	38	39	37	33	35	31
Influence the political structure	16	19	14	13	15	11	17	21	15	28	29	27	17	20	16
Community Action, Leadership															
Participate in community action	22	18	25	16	15	18	25	20	29	43	38	46	24	18	30
Be a community leader	30	30	30	21	22	21	34	35	34	49	48	49	34	34	35
Professional, Financial															
Become an authority in my field	60	62	59	55	56	53	62	65	61	75	73	77	64	65	63
Be well-off financially	74	76	72	76	76	77	72	76	70	88	85	91	74	77	71
Be successful in my own business	34	45	33	40	47	33	38	45	33	63	66	60	38	44	34
Family, Social Assistance															
Raise a family	73	71	75	70	65	75	75	75	74	70	74	68	74	74	74
Help others in difficulty	60	50	68	53	42	63	65	55	72	73	65	79	61	52	70
Promote racial understanding	30	26	32	24	22	26	32	30	35	57	55	56	31	27	35
Influence social values	36	32	40	33	28	37	40	36	43	50	45	53	36	31	40

Mann (1999)
a. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Astin's (1998) latest study found fewer students (50%) who described themselves as political centrists. In contrast to the 1972 data that showed that 60% of the students considered themselves centrists. The majority of the gain was on the right side of the political spectrum. In an interesting point specific to this study, Astin (1998) discovered no significant difference between two-year and four-year institutions regarding the shift in political attitudes. In addition, the survey showed that almost 70% of the students responding performed some type of volunteer work. However, more than 60% of the students still put personal goals ahead of public or civic goals[2].

The Times Mirror Center Report (1990) surveyed 3,800 subjects to determine political participation. The Times Mirror Center found a public that was "angry, self-absorbed, and politically unanchored" (p.5). The report found resentment toward immigrants and the poor, and heightened general cynicism toward government institutions and political parties (p. 5). The Times Mirror found much of the blame for the distrust of political structures was placed with the media. Respondents were very wary of bias in the

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2 The American Freshman College survey refers to civic or public goals as keeping up to date with politics, promoting racial understanding, and influencing the political structure.

media (interestingly, both right and left bias) and inordinate amount of negativism. Lugar and Scheuerman (1993) reported that earlier Times Mirror Surveys concurred with the 1990 survey in concluding that students entering college know less and care less about politics than any other previous generation (Times Mirror, 1990).

The Times Mirror study argued that because American students have either an incorrect perspective or no perspective at all, they do not have the ability to understand how American political institutions function (Lugar & Scheuerman, 1993). The authors came to this conclusion after focusing on several domestic issues and time frames which they believed were crucial to the understanding of American politics.[3] Lugar and Scheuerman (1993) reported that the Times Mirror survey found that students were unable to accurately identify socioeconomic problems in the United States such as income inequality.

The study also found that students were unable to

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[3] Luger and Scheuerman (1993) found that "only 50% [of students surveyed] could accurately say that during the Great Society of the 1960s government programs increased; less than half (43%) know that Medicare and Medicaid became law during the 1960s. Less than half (43%) know when most environmental legislation passed, and 25% could accurately state that most public interest lobby groups originated in the 1970s. Sixty percent could accurately say that during the Reagan Revolution spending for social programs decreased" (p 751).

accurately compare socioeconomic circumstances in the United States with other western democracies. The majority of students who were surveyed in the study thought that "Americans had the highest tax burden of all western democratic nations" (Lugar & Scheuerman, 1993, p. 750).

Another significant contribution to the literature related to the current state of political behavior and attitudes is a recent book by David Mathews (1994), *Politics for People*. This text included a discussion of several focus group studies known as the Harwood study. A number of general viewpoints were highlighted by the study. It was demonstrated that what is generally considered as apathy is in fact the result of frustration and anger with being left out of the political debate. Citizens generally felt that the process of voting was insignificant when compared to other forms of political expression, especially lobbying by special interest groups and campaign contributions. Unlike some other forms of political expression that allow for many different alternative responses, voting only allows for a "yes or no" response (Mathews, 1994). Mathews further suggested that much of the low level of participation in politics may be explained in the misunderstanding of terms, particularly in the classroom.

Misdefinition of basic terms in itself can cause mis-

perceptions between faculty and students. An essay by Robert Cox (1993), an authority in the field, commented that American students, when learning comparative politics, were at a disadvantage which influenced their perceptions of the course and its presentation. Part of the reason for this disadvantage was that terms commonly used in political science have different definitions in the United States. Terms such as "government, regime, the state, liberalism" have different meanings to American students than to students in other parts of the world (Cox, 1993). This misuse of terms can result in inaccuracies and confusion when attempting to classify governmental institutions. Political literature around the world refers to a common definition such as the *state* as "a territorially bound sovereign entity" (Danziger, 1998, p. 106). However, when political science students in the United States refer to a *state* they are more likely to be describing one of 50 regional divisions within the United States.

During the most recent presidential election, the term "liberal" was used as a criticism at almost every available sound byte opportunity. Imagine then the confusion when Jack Kemp, the Republican vice-presidential candidate, in his concluding remarks during the vice-presidential debates in 1996 correctly referred to the United States as a "liberal

democracy". In a study of media accuracy, Cox (1993) surveyed Americans, their perception, and the use of political terms in the media, and concluded that while American students and the majority of adult Americans grew up with the idea that "*regimes* are a bad form of government, normally associated with Latin America, few understood that the United States is a type of regime referred to as a republic" (p.70). This confused terminology places American students at a disadvantage.

Cox (1993) also suggested that misperceptions caused by inaccuracies, specifically used by journalists, who are untrained in the use of basic political terminology. Cox (1993) found that there was significant misuse of terms used by the political figures quoted by the media. Cox (1993) inferred that if the news-source uses terminology incorrectly, journalists can hardly be expected to correct their origin. In conclusion, Cox (1993) also suggested that the educational system has allowed concepts "to be treated as user-friendly commodities that may be defined in any way the user wishes and that need not bear any relationship to any other circumstances" (p.71).

There can be some explanation for the misuse of terminology in the United States. It has been often noted that Americans lack the wide spectrum of politics that other

countries experience. Cox (1993) cited an essay by Lois Hartz (1955) which contends that "the American political system is predominantly liberal [correctly defined] and relatively void of ideological diversity"(Cox, 1993, p. 69). Cox's (1993) study not only suggests that American students study comparative government differently, but that they are not able to study it as well as their international peers. This author's main contribution to the literature is that proper identification of faculty and student perceptions is crucial if we are to understand what takes place in the political science classroom.

While much of the literature suggests a pessimistic outlook for the current state of American political attitudes, a great amount of literature discusses how political education can change the current trend.

The Classroom and Democracy

Much of the literature concerned with political education has focused on the relationship between political science courses and their consequences for the public policy of a nation. The current literature discusses how difficult the relationship between education, public policy and the role of citizenship is to study. The correlation between students' political change and a change in a nation's politics involves several intervening variables such as

government type and the amount of political institutionalization (Huntington, 1976).

There are few studies which have been able to successfully isolate political education. Steiner's essay (1991) indicated that there were few studies that focus on the effect of education and its ability to promote citizenship. Those studies that did exist found that there was a positive relationship between education and the ability to promote citizenship. Steiner (1991) cited studies by Gutmann (1987) who contended that "democratic education should promote a capacity for . . . political pluralism" (Steiner, 1991, p.498). Additionally, Chubb and Moe (1990) argued that a lack of democratic education leads to a "lack of sensitivity to local circumstances" (Steiner, 1991, p. 498). Referring to the process of education in general, and drawing on Rousseau, Steiner (1991) found that "public education divorced from communal histories and communal sanctions was simply a recipe for chaos"[4] (Steiner, 1991, p. 499). Steiner (1991) argued that the process of education actually creates a sense of national identification, giving its participants a better ability to "critique contemporary society" (p.500).

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[4] Steiner discusses the works of Rousseau which were translated by Roger D. Masters, in The Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, copyrighted 1978.

Political education is also a component of other political conditions. In a review of the literature, Rimmerman (1991) concluded that if participation in a democratic society is to be meaningful and effective there must be a sense of community identity. This author also finds that "there must be education for the purpose of development of citizenship . . . and self-determination by those participating" (Rimmerman, 1991, p. 492). These conclusions illustrate the need for political education as a vital component of citizenship.

In *Out of Control*, Zbigniew Brzezinski (1993) contended that "an ethos of consumerism now masquerades as a substitute for ethical standards ... and that we must look beyond the disquiet of this moment in history and towards what should and can be done through education to strengthen democracy" (Brzezinski, 1993, p.43). Brzezinski goes on to remind us that political ideas can be a source for consensus building or for conflict, and that strengthening the idea of democracy can only be strengthened through education (Brzezinski, 1993). To accomplish this change, we must first assess where we are and what can be done to improve education to better focus political behavior and attitudes.

The Role of Political Education

With the use of survey research, as detailed earlier in

this review, Jeffery W. Hahn and Justin J. Green (1983) sought to identify the specific effect of studying political science on "student's political knowledge, attitudes and participation" (p. 177). Hahn and Green (1983) argued that a sufficient amount of research illustrating the positive relationship between a college education in general and the level of political awareness and involvement exists, citing several studies (Campbell, 1975; Converse and Rogers, 1971; Verba and Nie, 1972). Hahn and Green, however, do not cite some earlier research which found little if any effect of education. Albert Somit (1958) conducted a three-year survey research study at New York University, and found no effect on undergraduates "toward political participation after exposure to participation-oriented introductory political science courses. These findings were later furthered by an article by Somit and Schick (1963), *The Failure to Teach Political Activity*. Jaros and Darcy (1975) asked whether students "whose instructors stress politics as conflict will be less supportive of government than those whose instructors stress the outputs of government" (Jaros & Darcy; p. 29, 1975). Students enrolled in the University of Kentucky's introduction to American government course (n=198) were given questionnaires at the end of the semester. In addition, all six of the political science

faculty were given the same questionnaire, as well as a series of open-ended questions regarding the content of their teaching. Identical surveys were given to students not enrolled in the courses (n=64) and their instructors (n=2).

Jaros and Darcy (1975) found that there was little transmission of the instructor's personal values to the students. The authors found the instructors and the students had very different political values. The authors also found that "participatory values were less likely to be transmitted than substantive ones even when overt teaching is involved" (Jaros & Darcy, 1975, p. 42). While this study may offer some insight in different teaching styles, the small number of students responding in addition to the lack of a pre-survey, may suggest that the findings of this study are inconclusive with regard to changes in student's political attitudes and behaviors.

The majority of the literature cited authors who found a heightened level of political efficacy, political trust, and even to a certain extent, liberalism (Feldman & Newcomb, 1971; Jennings & Niemi, 1981; Hyman & Wright, 1979). However few have gone on to distinguish whether this is accounted for by the college socialization experience, faculty, or students' peer groups.

Richard Brody (1994), analyzed the *We the People*

Curriculum Program (developed by the Center for Civic Education) and its effect on students' political attitude. The report was the result of survey responses of 1,351 high school students for the purpose of determining the degree to which civics curricula in general, and the *We the People* curriculum in specific, affected the political attitudes of high school students.

Interestingly, the report showed that in contrast to the majority of adults, high school students exhibited a much higher degree of "political tolerance". The report went on to speculate that political tolerance can be taught. That students who demonstrated a higher perception of participation, either through legislative simulations or an increased knowledge of politics, were less likely to impose limits on civil liberties and accept different forms of dissent. The study concluded that tolerance can be learned by requiring the individual to both explain and defend his or her point of view (Brody, 1994). While the Brody (1994) study is an analysis of secondary school students, and not college students, it is significant to the literature review in that it illustrates a change in the students political attitudes and political tolerance, which can be brought about by exposure to civic education. The Brody study (1994) not only illustrates the importance of tolerance as a

political attitude, but also how those attitudes can be changed in the classroom.

The Brody study confirms an earlier study by Avery, et al.(1991) of junior high school students exploring the linkages between democratic values and curriculum. The Avery, et al.(1991) study found increased political tolerance levels "when a systematic examination of the role of dissent in a democratic society" (p. 18) was presented. The Avery study found that not only was the "content of curriculum significant, but the manner in which it was presented also had a significant effect on the way the student reacted to the subject matter (Avery, et al., 1991).

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) added to the body of literature in higher education by discovering and isolating effects the independent variables within their meta-analysis of the effect of college on students. Their research indicated several effects specifically related to political concepts as well as the teaching of these concepts.

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) cited Plant (1981) who looked at the net effect of changes in students' levels of authoritarianism, dogmatism, and ethnocentrism. Plant (1981) "found that changes were "probably due to general personality changes under way among college-age individuals and were independent of educational attainment level" (p.

232). Further analysis by Trent and Medsker (1968) found that the differences in the degree of change across groups was never tested. Using data from the 1959 high school Omnibus Personality Inventory on non-authoritarianism and social maturity scales the authors conducted a preliminary study of post high school pursuits. This study consisted of "a 20-item survey of academic interests, extracurricular activities, educational and occupational plans, values and goals and family background" (Trent & Medsker, 1968, p. 19). These authors sampled representative high school seniors from 16 communities in the midwest. In the September after the high school students graduated, follow-up surveys were administered to the original respondents. Follow-up information was completed on 9,778 respondents of the original sample. Trent and Medsker (1968) discovered that college men and women were significantly less authoritarian than their employed counterparts in 1959.

A second, longitudinal study was administered by Trent and Medsker (1968) from 1959 - 1963. The authors sought to address the same issues regarding employment, rate of persistence in college for those attending, and relevant to this study, attitudinal changes. As follow-up to the 1959 surveys, the respondents were given questionnaires, as well as personality interviews several times between 1960 and

1964. Additionally, academic records and transcripts were used for those students who attended college. Complete longitudinal data was "obtained from nearly 50 per cent of the original sample; over 70 per cent of those still in college responded (Trent & Medsker, 1968, p. 33).

Even greater differences were found in the second, longitudinal study. Even as the researchers controlled for academic ability and socioeconomic status, changes in social maturity were evident. Respondents who attended and were successful in college, tended to be less "judgmental, intolerant, and conventional in their thinking" (Trent & Medsker, 1968, p. 149). For all groups within the study, men and women, Black and White, there were statistically significant differences in the social maturity scale. Scores on non-authoritarianism were significantly higher in respondents attending college.

These findings were further reinforced when the study was duplicated by Rich and Jolicoeur (1978). These authors sought to test the impact of the college experience on student orientations. A group of 300 students from 12 colleges and universities were mailed questionnaires during the fall and winter of 1975- 1976. The questionnaire consisted of 147 items regarding several factors, including the student's social and political orientation which the

authors defined as dogmatism. The authors use dogmatism in the context as defined by Milton Rokeach, which unlike the term authoritarianism, can be applied to both liberal or conservative political ideologies. The less authoritarian one would be, the more open-minded[5] they would be perceived (Rich & Jolicoeur, 1978, p. 29).

The authors in fact found that the college experience was more apt to produce respondents who were less dogmatic and much more open-minded. While both the Rich and Jolicoeur (1978) and the earlier Trent and Medsker (1968) reflect the college experience as a whole and do not focus on a individual class, they do indicate that there is political attitudinal and behavioral change associated with college.

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found several variables which were significantly correlated to change in college students. The first variables analyzed were those of the "within-college" effects. Pascarella and Terenzina (1991) regarded "within-college" as the differences between the disciplines (divided into colleges) within a particular college or university. Factors that were most significant

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Rokeach defined open-mindedness as "the extent to which the person can receive, evaluate, and act on relevant information received from the outside on its own intrinsic merits, unencumbered by irrelevant factors in the situation arising from within the person or from the outside" (Rokeach, 1960, p. 57).

to the present study were differences found among major fields of study. The majority of the changes were found to be from contextual differences, rather than structural or organizational differences (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). One of the most significant effects was that of peer and faculty interpersonal relationships. Interestingly, while Astin, Green and Korn's (1987) earlier analysis found no effect for faculty contact, studies analyzed by Pascarella and Terenzini did find some significance.

When Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) focused on political attitudes and values, they found that students move "toward more liberal political stances, greater interest in social and political issues, and greater interest and involvement in the political process" (p. 278). This contradicts much of the other literature which found that the liberalizing effect is beginning to diminish and that politically moderate students are increasing in number (Astin, Green, & Korn, 1987). Students who considered themselves conservative remained relatively constant. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) discovered that the liberalizing effect, while significant, was temporary when taking the long term effect into account.

A study by Hyman and Wright (1979) (as cited in Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991) focused on specific

political concepts. These authors found that education level was positively related to:

> "Greater support for the civil liberties of nonconformists, . . . for due process of law . . . freedom from arbitrary legal constraints in personal and social relations; for the free flow of information, whether controversial or not. [Greater support] for social, political, economic equality, and for humanitarian social programs and laws" (p. 279).

By dealing with these specific issues, Hyman and Wright (1979) more clearly identified points on the political spectrum that can be achieved through the general classifications of liberalism and conservatism, defined in the modern sense.

How Does the Political Science Classroom Differ From Other Disciplines?

The present study analyzes one discipline, the discipline of political science. It therefore becomes relevant to ask how political science differs from other disciplines. Chickering (1981) contributed to this aspect of the literature by classifying the norms of academic disciplines arguing that they can be distinguished by the students and who gravitated toward one of four cognitive learning styles.

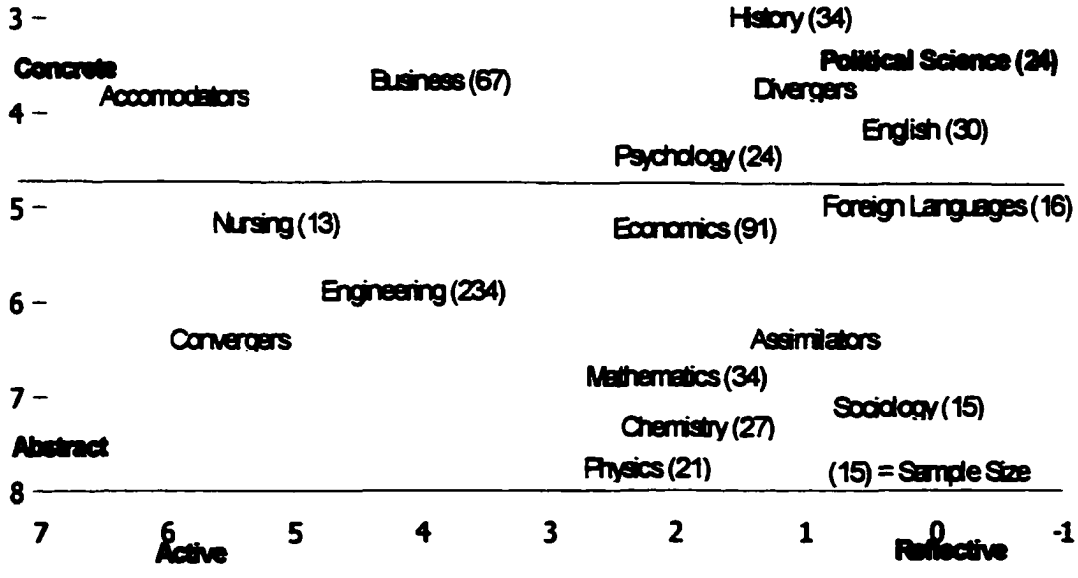
Chickering (1981) distinguished the dominant learning style as the *Converger*. "These persons organize knowledge in such a way that, through hypothetical-deductive reasoning, they can focus it on specific problems. *Convergers* seem to do best in situations such as conventional intelligence tests, where there is a single correct answer or solution to a question or problem" (p. 238). Liam Hudson (cited in Chickering, 1981) referred to *Convergers* as "relatively unemotional, preferring to deal with things rather than people" (p. 238). *Divergers* have the opposite characteristics. Chickering (1981) distinguished *Divergers* as being able to deal with concrete experience and reflective observation. These are the individuals who "perform in situations that call for generation of ideas, such as brainstorming sessions . . . who tend to be interested in people and tend to be imaginative and emotional"(p. 238).

Those students whom Chickering (1981) classified as *Assimilators* dominate in abilities of abstract conceptualization and reflective observation, excelling in the ability to create theoretical models. These individuals "excel in inductive reasoning . . . are less interested in people and more concerned with abstract concepts, but less concerned with the practical use of theories" (p. 238). At

the other end of the spectrum are the *Accommodators*. This group of learners were considered best in situations that involve "concrete experiences and active experimentation" (p. 238). These individuals, according to Grochow (cited in Chickering, 1981), would be likely to "discard the plan or a theory . . . and use an intuitive trial-and-error manner" (p. 238).

With four cognitive learning styles defined, Chickering (1981) then mapped the major academic disciplines into a two-dimensional chart, showing their relative positioning to each other. This chart looks similar to that of Biglan (cited in Chickering, 1981) whose analysis of students at the University of Illinois, disciplines were compared on a hard/soft, and applied/pure spectrum as seen in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2 Chickering's Classification of Academic Disciplines (Chickering, 1981, p.240)



Notably, political science fits into the most extreme side of the *Divergers* spectrum. History was the only academic discipline that ranked higher in the degree to which concrete learning styles were more common. No discipline was found to exhibit more reflective qualities in learning styles. It should be noted that Chickering's analysis in 1981 did not take into account the more recent shift toward behaviorism in political science (Mayer, 1989). This presumably would move political science vertically toward the abstract, without altering its horizontal position on the spectrum of Active\Reflective. Today's political science would probably appear closer to the position of economics.

Chickering's (1981) analysis is relevant to the present study in several ways. The study indicated which types of students would best be recruited into the discipline. Students who exhibit an ability to deal with an emotional, more imaginative approach would be more successful in the study of political science. Chickering's (1981) analysis may also suggests how introductory classes for different disciplines should be taught. It can be extrapolated from figure 2-2 that while the political science class should include a substantive amount of class discussion, an engineering class would benefit less from student

interaction. Chickering's (1981) two perspectives, concrete/abstract and active/reflective, should be kept in mind when interpreting generalizations made regarding introductory classes which normally include all types of learners.

Chickering's (1981) analysis builds on an earlier essay by Perry (1970) who recognized distinct learning styles but used a different spectrum. Perry (1970) differentiated learners by their amount of exposure to higher education. Perry (1970) felt that many students will change their perspective or learning style after significant exposure to college. Perry's (1970) study of students' intellectual and ethical development focused on the *student's* perspective.

Perry contributed to this body of literature by defining what he called "the student's crucial moment in higher education" (p. 38). It is at this point where the student "has his tools: the student has learned how to compare 'models' of thought, how to relate data and frames of reference and points of observation" (p. 38). By students acquiring what Perry (1970) called "multiplicity", they are better able to examine competing paradigms. The student is better able to "examine the way he orders his data and assumptions he is making, and to compare these with other thoughts that other men might have" (p. 39).

The result of this multiplicity is what Perry (1970) called the "liberally educated man"(p. 39). By offering this conclusion Perry (1970) not only explained a vital point of reference in the education of the undergraduate student, he also offered an explanation of what is lacking in the student who is normally present in an introductory class.

Perry (1970) suggested that regardless of learning style, education of the student is dependent on reaching a specific "crucial moment". Perry (1970) found that all introductory classes lacked the quality of multiplicity. Chickering (1981) later demonstrated the difficulty in achieving this crucial moment because of different learning styles.

The focus and the purpose of the present study is to clarify what takes place in the Introduction to Political Science classroom. Both the analysis put forth by Perry (1970), and the later one by Chickering (1981), suggest the concept of "multiplicity" is relevant to the student in the introductory course. Multiplicity is the capability to recognize dominant paradigms which are not absolute truths (Kuhn, 1970). This concept can also be defined as the ability to define theory through competing notions instead of right and wrong. This can be a difficult concept for the student to comprehend, making the curriculum difficult, and

the facts presented hard to follow.

Caputo and Houniak (1982) examined the effects on students taking political science courses at Purdue University and their political participation and activity during the 1980 national elections. With use of surveys regarding the election topics, the authors examined students not only taking an introductory course in politics as well as students pursuing a major in political science. Caputo and Houniak (1982) consistently found that cognitive gains regarding knowledge about the election issues were minimal, and that value changes were almost non-existent.

This study of Purdue University students found that political science majors were notable exceptions and were significantly more affected by their classes in politics than their non-political science major colleagues. The fact that political science majors would be more affected is almost intuitive. However, the lack of an effect on non-majors confirmed previous studies (Garrison, 1968; Jaros & Darcy, 1975; Somit et al.,1958). While the literature in political science examines a single course offering, the literature in higher education looks at the broader picture.

Mann (1999) discussed the selection of political science as a major among college students. While interest in politics is decreasing, Mann (1999) found little decrease

in the selection of political science as a major. Mann discovered that while 8.4% of the freshmen surveyed intended to major in a social science discipline, nearly a quarter of those selected political science (Mann, 1999, p. 2). This was second only to psychology as a selected major.

Mann attributed this higher than expected figure to more females selecting political science (and going on to law school), making the point that this discipline is becoming the most "gender balanced" major in the social sciences. Undergraduate enrollment among females is growing 14% faster than among males (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1998). While Mann made distinctions amongst other institutions, the study did not specifically look at intended majors of community college students.

When examining the high school and university political science classroom, high demands have been placed on both levels of education. Both high schools and universities are pressed to recruit citizens into a participatory form of government, and at the same time heightening critical thinking skills. Political science is distinctive in that it has not been prioritized in high school curricula, and there have been fewer attempts to study its application in the classroom.

In a paper delivered to the International Conference on

Education for Democracy, Branson (1994) reviewed several surveys on American's political beliefs and behaviors. Branson first examined the survey distributed by Phi Delta Kappa, a professional education association, for the past 26 years in cooperation with Gallup Poll. An important result of the 1994 survey was that 62% of those surveyed found that more emphasis should be given to history and United States government in school. In other surveys, Branson (1994) found at least one common theme; the "absence of extensive measures of political information, a dearth of detailed examination of the content and timing of the study of civics and government and a lack of knowledge about school and classroom climate and strategies which are most supportive of education in and for democracy" (Branson, 1994, p.10).

The literature focusing on the mechanics of the course and the sub-fields taught may assist in developing a better understanding of the effect on political attitudes and behavior. Table 2-3 provides a summary of how the articles and research presented in the preceding portion of this chapter contribute to the body of literature concerning political education.

The Composition of the Introduction to Political Science Course

This study will look specifically at the Introduction to

Political Science course. Until 1990, there had been little or no discussion of "teaching political science" in the

Table 2-3: The Relationship Between Political Attitudes, Political Education and Democracy

Author	Contributions and Strengths	Weaknesses
Rahn (1998) substantiated by The Harwood Study	*A good analysis of the current state of affairs	*General Analysis *No student analysis
Astin (1977)	*Defines terms *Source for data *Demographic information provided on students *Differentiates between different types of colleges *Community college data *Large sample size	*Broad approach *Dated study, particularly political section
Astin (1993)	* Uses same data (questions) as earlier study *Longitudinal analysis over 30 years	
Times Mirror Report (1990)	*Provides overall picture of political attitudes *Large sample size	*No student focus
Luger & Scheuerman (1993)	*Adds student perceptions when entering college *Large sample size (n=282) *Replicates earlier Times Mirror study (1990)	*Incremental changes not measured
Mathews (1994)	*Provides some different explanations for apathy *Changes focus to political structure	*No student analysis
Huntington (1976)	*Correlates student attitudes and national politics	*Dated
Steiner (1991)	*Combines political and educational analysis *Definition of terms *Analysis of student perspective	*Very general, broad conclusions
Rimmerman (1991)	*Articulates the need for analysis in this area *Definition of research question	*Subjective and broad approach
Brzezinski (1993)	*Discusses solutions found in education	
Hahn & Green (1983)	*Definition of the hypothesis *Identifies major authors in field	*Bias sample (Villanova students only)

Table 2-3,continued

Author	Contributions and Strengths	Weaknesses
Somit (1958) *Replicated by:* Schick & Somit (1965) Daros & Darcy (1975)	*Addresses change in students after exposure to political science course *Found little impact	*Dated studies
Brody (1994) Replicates Avery (1991)	*Discusses advantages of education *Illustrates distinction between students and other political actors	*Only uses high school data
Pascarella & Terenzini (1991)	*Definition of variables *Isolation of variables of effects on students	*Broad approach
Plant (1981)	Adds other political variables to Pascarella & Terezini (1991) data	
Trent & Medsker (1968)	*Emphasizes the *degree* of change in students	*Dated study
Hyman & Wright (1979)	*Focuses the Pascarella & Terezini (1991) data specifically on political data	*Dated study
Chickering (1981)	*Review of important studies in area of research *Provide definitions of *learning styles* *Isolates political science	*Limited to analysis of academic disciplines
Perry (1970)	*Definition of terms	*Dated study *Broad analysis
Caputo & Houniak (1982)	*Definition of the hypothesis *Isolates political science majors	*Bias sample (Purdue only) *Only political science majors
Mann (1999)	*Isolates political science majors	*No community college data
Cox (1993)	*Introduces the conceptual problems with the definitions used in study of this nature	*Lacks scientific rigor, subjective approach
Branson (1994)	*Faculty perceptive *Distinguishes disciplines *Provides focus to study	

scholarly literature of political science. The exceptions were the journals *Teaching Political Science,* and in 1990, a parallel publication of the *American Political Science Review* called *PS.*

The discipline of political science offers some distinctive qualities which make for an ideal case study. Introduction to Political science is not a course which is taught in secondary schools to any substantive degree. "Civic" education normally consists of the history of American government at the high school level and rarely looks at the current political process. Political science is distinctive in that it related not only to the general education of a population, but also directly to how a population functions within a participatory form of government. Before examining the specific content of political science courses, this inquiry must first address goals of the instructors who have taught the course, and how those goals may change from secondary school to the university level.

The Educational Goals of the Course

Utter (1988) viewed the relationship between political participation and political education as basically a form of propaganda. Utter felt that in order to have political participation there must be a form of political obligation. The reasoning allowed that if obligation is "attitudinal, instruction must be viewed as an attempt to change the way students feel about certain institutions and processes of democratic government. Hence education to foster democratic

citizenship amounts to little more than manipulation" (p. 119).

Utter's (1988) essay pointed out an important dilemma for the political science educator and for this inquiry. If the political science instructor follows a positivist-based form of instruction, Utter felt that there is "no objective foundation for adherence to such principles [democratic principles] . . . therefore, . . . there is no argument for political obligation upon which the political scientist can base his educational goals" (p. 119).

This would leave us with what Utter (1988) called the triumph of the skeptic. Should the political scientist put aside all positivist's inclinations to question democratic principles, as any good democratic citizen should be educated to do, or should "education to democratic citizenship amount to little more than manipulation" (Utter, 1988 p. 119)?

Utter (1988) pointed out that most innovation in political education has been in the area of analyzing strategy and power. Little has been done to question the bases of authority, because to do so, would defeat the idea of political obligation, and thereby, democratic participation. Utter went further, stating that "nothing meaningful can be said about the status of values within a

social scientific discipline" (Utter, 1988, p. 120). It cannot be overstated that the author pointed out a very important dual role for the political science educator. One very significant role of the instructor is to "act as a support mechanism for the existing political order", that is, the process of political socialization (p. 120). However, the other significant role is that of the positivist, to question and skeptically approach the idea of the role of authority.

As Utter pointed out, "with knowledge, authority based on tradition crumbles to the ground" (p. 120). It is clear that the same educational institution cannot function in both the role of the positivist, and that of the "citizen trainer" in a democratic state. If the latter role has been successfully accomplished at the secondary level, the logical role of the college instructor is the positivist approach. However, it is impossible to ask students to question their idealistic view of democratic institutions if no knowledge of institutions exist. It is equally as difficult to ask the college professor to introduce the political institutions, and then to question those same institutions.

Clearly, if the role of the positivist is to be met, the political obligation must already be in place before the

student goes to a university. While this role can be accomplished in post-secondary education, it is at the expense of a positivist education. Rarely is this distinction of goals ever noted in the literature. Secondary schools are often chastised for their inability to teach both the structure of politics and critical thinking skills. This clearly makes it difficult for them to accomplish the primary goal of citizen (civic) education.

Seigel (1987), in a review of the current literature analyzing how political science is taught in secondary schools, found that while constitutions and structure were introduced to the students, political processes or political behavior were rarely discussed. Seigel cited a 1971 study by the American Political Science Association's Committee on Pre-Collegiate Education as finding:

> A romanticized approach to the study of political life which confuses the ideals of democracy with the realities of politics, an undue focus upon historical description, an ethnocentric preoccupation with American society and a failure to transmit to students an adequate knowledge about the political systems of other societies, a failure to provide students with an understanding and skill in the process of social scientific inquiry, a failure to develop within

> students an understanding of the capacities and skills needed to participate in politics (Seigel, 1987, p. 90).

This lack of political science in the curriculum was confirmed in a 1977 study by the National Task Force on Citizenship Education which found that "young people are offered a steady diet of classroom lectures and discussion on topics which seldom touch their lives" (National Task Force on Citizenship Education, 1977, p. 137). Seigel concurred with several earlier authors, such as Osborne (1982) who found that governmental structures are normally presented as very hypothetical or are presented idealistically. The secondary school's inability to present an accurate picture of politics may explain the lack of participation in a democratic system. Osborne, when attempting to explain political apathy in the Canadian system, found that "it may not be too far fetched to link people's political apathy and sense of powerlessness with the way they have been taught about politics" (Osborne, 1982, p. 2).

The National Task Force (1977) and Seigel (1987) both find fault in a secondary school system based on a basic assumption, that the "citizen" will only receive a secondary school education. Two points overlooked are that first, a

basic schooling in political structure, even falling short of a critical view, will create better citizen education than attempting to satisfy both roles and filling neither. Secondly, it is widely accepted that citizens educated to a post-secondary level will be able to perform better within a participatory form of government (Huntington, 1976). Clearly, the literature indicates that secondary schools are unable to satisfy both goals of teaching critical thinking and teaching civic education.

Historically, the avoidance of controversy, particularly at the secondary school level, has been the norm. Seigel cited a study conducted by Zeigler (1967) which surveyed 803 high school teachers and found a desire (or structural requirements) that controversy be avoided in the high school class. In a study conducted in the mid-1960s, Seigel found that "73% of classroom instructors surveyed indicated an unwillingness to explain to their classes their reasons for preferring a particular candidate in a presidential election and 69% felt that they should not allow classroom dissemination of John Birch Society anti-Communist literature" (Zeigler, 1967, p. 67). A later study by Zeigler and Peak (1972) confirmed what Hunt and Metcalf (1955) found in their study in 1948. They described six areas of inquiry that were closed to high school social

studies curricula; economics, race relations, social class, sex, religion, and patriotism. The literature indicates that students were not exposed to these areas of inquiry until reaching the college level.

In recent years, technology has opened the classroom to issues which can touch student lives. Cardenas (cited in Academe, 1998) wrote that "technology is the way of the future [in higher education] . . . It may enhance our students appreciation of the material they are learning" (p. 28). By that same token, recent years have also exposed secondary school administrators to legal concerns over constitutional challenges from community groups sensitive to issues of controversy. Vehicles such as distance learning will subject academics to regulation by some different entities than those to which they are normally held accountable.

> The 1997 Committee R on Governmental Relations (as cited in Academe, 1998) found that the Supreme Court upheld the [Federal Communications] Commission' regulatory Power in *FCC v. Pacifica Foundation*, 1978 case involving the notorious comedy monologue featuring seven particular words . . . The Court has not ruled specially on any similar case involving educational or instructional purposes, but the Association

> [American Association of University Professors] has historically held that academic freedom principles are paramount in the educational context (Academe, 1998, p.33).

Fear of legal and political reprisals have effectively restricted academics (particularly secondary schools) from exploring the areas of inquiry which Hunt and Metcalf (1955) found in their survey of high schools in 1948, despite the vast improvement in one of the means of delivery technology. If secondary schools are still unable to examine issues which cause students to critically view political issues, then the burden must fall on higher education. The literature continues to split into two roles for the political science instructor: the positivist who teaches critical thinking, and the civic educator who teaches political structure. Clearly, the secondary school is much more able to facilitate the latter, leaving the positivist training to higher education. What takes place in the college classroom is first determined by what has (or has not) taken place in the high school classroom.

Quo, Quie, Covell, and Hightower (1981) administered a survey consisting of open-ended questions at the *Simon Fraser* University and found that students are presented with the results of research in various fields; however little,

the process by which the results were created receives no emphasis. By contrast, at the university level students are likely to be exposed to the "processes of knowledge creation and to the possibilities of conflicting interpretations" (Quo et al., 1981, p. 20). This level of critical thinking, which Perry (1970) called "multiplicity", creates vastly different expectations among students, and can result in some difficulties for faculty who teach introductory courses. Faculty must consider "making a balanced presentation that does not leave the less sophisticated and less informed students behind while managing to hold the interest of the more advanced students"(Quo et al., 1981, p. 20).

Sub-fields Taught within the Course

Studies such as the one previously discussed by Seigel (1987) suggest that college either may be the first exposure that students have to the study of government and politics, or may offer a unique aspect of politics not offered at the high school level. Students may have been well versed in the basics of mathematics or history, and only become exposed to more advanced courses at the university level. However, as Osborne (1982) and Seigel (1987) found, high school students were rarely given curriculum in political theory and the methods by which politics is studied. This created a unique

opportunity of first exposure. Students were able to see a new field of study as it is presented by the instructor rather than by preconceived notions or ideas.

Introductory courses are distinct in that they offer a broad view of an academic discipline, illustrating its different sub-fields and trends. It is at the introductory stage that general education curriculum programs are most commonly offered. The community college offers a good example. In their review of the literature, Cohen and Brawer (1989) found that many community colleges offer integrated courses that span the behavioral and social sciences. Cohen and Brawer (1989) argued that "the form of freedom gained through general education means that the individual citizen could make up his *own* mind in political affairs . . . shape his *own* decisions by the dictates of his *own* conscience" (p. 330). These studies not only focused on the teaching of the course itself, but also attempted to identify trends within the discipline of political science.

In their research utilizing content analysis, Quo, Covell, Covell, Hightower, and Jill (1981) examined five political sub-fields offered in the introductory course and found substantial differences in how each sub-field was presented and the degree to which each was emphasized. When first examining the sub-field of political theory, Quo et

al.(1981), found that despite the so called "triumph of the behavioralist" there was very little behavioralism in Introductory to Political Science course syllabi. The authors discovered that political theory was the most commonly found sub-field in the syllabi analyzed (32%). Political theory is normally seen at the opposite end of the philosophical spectrum from the behavioralist approach. James Danziger (1998) reviewed the literature and affirmed that the discipline has made further shifts toward behavioralism. Danziger (1998) found that "much of the work done in political theory is based on the methods of rationality or authority or on an appeal to moral truths, rather than on the scientific method" (p. 18).

In a literature review focusing on the sub-field of comparative politics, Mayer (1989) wrote that "the field of comparative politics extensively underwent a conceptual and methodological revolution in the early 1950s, a revolution that accompanied and, in many respects, led a similar revolution in political science as a whole" (p. 14). Further updates are necessary to see if this shift is reflected in the introductory classes, and whether the post-behavioralist movement (as discussed in Chapter 1) has had a pronounced effect. Quo et al. (1981) found that there was little emphasis on the professional side of political

science. These authors discovered that the majority of the courses sought to "train observers or participants, and did not recruit political scientists" (Quo et al., 1981, p. 14). The research in the Quo et al. (1981) study discovered that 76% of the content of syllabi were devoted to the academic subject and to intellectual activism, but only 23% was devoted to the discipline itself. This may also challenge the classic argument that the benefit of research is seen in improved teaching.

When looking at other sub-fields covered in the teaching of political science courses, Quo et al.(1981) found that the second most commonly discussed sub-field (23%) was that of foreign government. This would be more generally classified as comparative government in an updated classification. The authors identified comparative government studies as the modern trend in political science, and theory as the traditional trend. These trends would suggest that course syllabi should include an increasing proportion of more comparative government studies. An updated review of syllabi is needed to see if such trends exist within the discipline of political science.

Quo et al.(1981) discovered that there was little interest in non-Western nation-states, with the exception of the breakup of the USSR. This obviously dates the Quo et al.

(1981) study. The sub-field of comparative politics today reflects much more literature written in the context of post cold war politics. However, it clearly illustrates that very little literature on the subject found its way to the introductory class level during that time. The Quo et al. (1981) study aptly found this void in the undergraduate classroom.

Quo et al.(1981) discovered that the third most common sub-field was international relations, with only 13% of the content of the syllabi being dedicated to this area. Quo et al.(1981) suggested that little international relations was evident because of the need "to move to a level of analysis and to a body of theory different from those used in the study of national political systems, given the discipline's [international relations] lack of an accepted unifying theory" (p. 17). A more recent study by Robles (1993) confirms the absence of international relations, but explains this void not by the lack of unifying theory and too many competing approaches, but by the existence of a monolithic, ethnocentric bias.

The Robles (1993) study found that international relations was not being given full consideration in the introductory level classroom. Robles (1993) discovered that the majority of international relations presented was very

rarely the study of international relations, but in fact the study of United States foreign policy. Robles confirmed what Hoffman (1977) found; "that theories about the United States' behavior have conferred universal and scientific status"(p. 526). Robles (1993) concluded that there is little international about the majority of course syllabi analyzed. Robles (1993) cited K.J. Holsti (1985) who noted that 80% of references found in American texts were American authors. Holsti (1985) also found that the United States is the hegemon in the discipline because of the high number of pertinent references to American authors published in many other countries.

With the use of the American Political Science Association course syllabi collection, Robles (1993) found not only a country bias, but bias in the approach to studying international relations. While Quo et al.(1981) and other authors discovered little of the behavioralist approach in most introductory materials, Robles (1993) found that 70% of international relations materials "were in the behaviorist tradition" (p. 526). Course syllabi rarely presented alternative ideas or competing paradigms. There was very little deviation in philosophical thinking. The perspective known as realism was rarely questioned as being the dominant paradigm.

Concurrently, "because of realism's central focus on conflict, the majority of the syllabi devote most of their time to the traditional issues, international relations, and national security"(Robles, 1993, p.527). There was very little time devoted to international political economy, north-south issues, and issues relevant to the environment (Robles, 1993). It is logical to conclude that in diminishing the presentation of international relations, students are not only cheated of a globalist approach to politics, but are also not taught the existence of competing paradigms such as idealism.

The majority of the literature focusing on the composition of a political science course has contended with only one sub-field. While the Robles (1993) study contributes analysis of the *American Political Science Association* syllabi collection, the focus of the study confines itself to the study of international relations. Similarly, Mayer (1989) reviews only the literature concerning comparative politics. The literature that takes a broader approach was written during the height of the Cold War when the focus was not so much concerned with educational value, as with the conflict between competing political philosophies. With the exception of the Quo, et al. (1981) study, which lacked methodological rigor, few of

the studies look at the curriculum and its effect on the attitudes and political behavior of students.

By utilizing some of the conceptual frameworks, methodologies, and historical data provided previous researchers, this study intends to obtain a clearer picture of the effect of the political science classroom on student's political behavior and attitudes. Table 2-4 provides a summary of how the articles and research presented in the latter portion of this chapter have contributed to the body of literature concerning the composition of political science courses, educational goals, and their sub-fields at the post-secondary level. If analytical research is to be successful, a specific conceptual framework must be adhered to and specified. This study will adhere to a framework based on the concepts and research included in this review of the literature (See table 2-4).

Conceptual Framework

Theories of political socialization and political efficacy will be used as a bases for this study's conceptual framework, as will models of civic education that illuminate student political attitudes and behaviors.

The principles and assumptions of political socialization imply that effective political instruction in

the classroom should increase a citizen's political participation, and can thereby strengthen a democratic state. Given the process of political socialization, students are afforded the opportunity to acquire their enduring political beliefs and values, and to develop a "political culture" (Patterson, 1995, p.37). Students exposed to civic education will increase their political knowledge and achieve a higher level of political efficacy (Feldman & Newcomb, 1971; Hyman & Wright, 1979; Jennings & Niemi, 1981). As students heighten their political efficacy, they will exhibit greater political tolerance (Avery, 1991; Brody, 1994). As the process of civic education takes place, student acceptance of dissent increases, while support for imposing limits on civil liberties for others decreases (Astin, 1993). Civic education is said to have a "liberalizing" effect in college, as students' political opinions shift during their exposure to higher education (Astin, 1993). In particular, there appears to be a relationship between the students' knowledge of politics, and their desire to be community leaders, to participate in community action, and to influence the political structure (Astin, 1993). Such examples clearly illustrate the relationship between political socialization and political efficacy. As students become exposed to the political

structure and political ideas, they become more likely to believe that they can have an effect on the community in which they live. Students who keep current with politics are also more likely to participate in voluntary services

Table 2-4

Literature Relating to the Composition of Course

Author	Contributions and Strengths	Weaknesses
Utter (1988)	*Focus on Goals *Issue of Propaganda *Sees distinction of political education *Broad application	*Subjective
Seigel (1987)	*Draws together major contributing authors in this area	*Subjective, lacking scientific rigor
Supported by: Zeigler (1967) Ntl. Task Force (1977) Zeigler & Peak (1972)	Sets the stage *Opens for discussion of teaching goals *High School education introduced as an issue in curriculum development	*Dated study *Cold War agenda
Hunt& Metcalf (1955)	*Raises same research questions as this study	*Cold War agenda
Quo et al. (1981)	*Defines and ranks the sub-fields taught	*Specific to Canada *Questionable methodology
Cohen & Brawer (1989)	*Adds community college literature *Isolates the introductory courses	
Danziger (1998)	*Defines the sub-fields *Same definitions as Quo, et al., but different methods	*Subjective *Single (education) discipline approach
Mayer (1989)	*Definition of terms *Explain change over last two decades *Leading author in comparative politics	*Comparative politics only, no educational data
Robles (1993)	*Use of APSA syllabi collection *Definitions *Strong international relations focus	*Lack of scientific rigor *International relations only

in the community and are more likely to help others in difficulty (Hyman & Wright, 1979). In a broader context,

political socialization also impacts national politics. As political socialization increases, so does the strength of national identity the capacity for political pluralism (Steiner, 1991). Rimmerman (1991) discovered a distinct link between civic education and self-determination. Participation in a democratic society, both at the local and national level (Chubb & Moe, 1990) is, therefore, related to civic education.

There are several factors which effect levels of political socialization among students. There are clear variations, for instance, with regard to the type of college that the student is attending. Students at two-year community colleges exhibit the lowest levels of political socialization among all college students (Astin, 1993). Community college students are the least likely to be interested in keeping current with political issues, the least likely to be concerned with volunteer work, and the least apt to participate in the political structure. Students at historically Black, four colleges seem to be at the other end of the spectrum (Astin, 1993). Students at these colleges are the most concerned with political affairs, are most apt to be community minded and likely to participate in the political process. Assuming the majority of the students attending these colleges are African-

American, this finding is inconsistent with the general population (Mathews, 1994). Additional factors that affect the level of political socialization are those directly related to classroom instruction, such as the content of the material and the manner in which the material is presented (Avery, 1991).

Review of Empirical Studies

The purpose of this study is to examine the role that an introductory political science course plays in students' political attitudes and behaviors. The overall objective of this study is to analyze the impression that the course has on its students, and how it might influence their participation in their own governance.

Both within the disciplines of higher education and political science, theorists are attempting to account for the effect of the classroom and change in students. In an essay published in *PS: Political Science and Politics* (1999) Mann used selected findings from *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1997* (Astin, 1998) to examine the political orientations of American college freshman. Mann found the Astin study(1998) useful because of its large sample size of 1600 institutions, and because of its longitudinal nature. For those same reasons, the Astin study (1998) has been selected as the most appropriate survey

instrument for use in this analysis. The Freshmen survey has been administered for 33 years under the continued sponsorship of the American Council on Education. The survey is prepared by the staff of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) and has covered the same range of student characteristics including; parental income and education; ethnicity, financial aid, secondary achievement and activities; education and career plans; and pertinent to this study, attitudes, beliefs and values. The surveys sample public and private four-year colleges, historically Black four-year colleges, Protestant and Catholic colleges; and two-year colleges (Astin, 1998). Mann found that the survey results are "watched closely in the higher education community and by state and federal policy makers (Mann, 1999, p. 1). The findings of the CIRP sponsored survey also receives widespread attention in the national press.

The effects of the classroom on student attitudes have been a subject of interest for some time in many disciplines. Of particular relevance for this analysis however are studies that have primarily focused on business students. As early as 1966, Clark explored *the* subject *Religion and Moral Standards of American Businessmen*. Clark sought to find whether moral standards in business could be heightened with classes in business ethics. Clark (1966)

tested business executives who participated in a training program at University of California at Los Angeles. The executives were given a survey before and after the course which ranked them on an ethical scale developed by Clark and applied to 18 different simulated business situations. Clark organized 11 of these situations under the category of personal ethics and integrity and seven under the category of social responsibility. The subjects read a situation and responded on a five point graduated scale as to whether they approved or disapproved.

Clark found that the course did have an effect on the executives' attitudes. While the study was not considered by most to be empirically sophisticated, it was one of the first to focus on attitudinal and behavioral changes as a result of the college classroom.

Clark's (1966) work was later replicated by several other authors to test whether there was a difference between student attitudes toward ethical and social responsibility issues before and after taking a course in ethics. A study by Arlow and Ulrich(1980) added significant empirical rigor to the original Clark (1966) study. These authors tested 120 undergraduate marketing, management, and accounting students taking a business ethics course (Business and Society) using the same five scale as that developed by Clark (1966). In

addition to Clark's (1966) methods, Arlow and Ulrich (1980) updated the statistical methodology using a t-test with the pre-survey and post-survey results. As opposed to the earlier Clark (1966) study, these authors found statistical difference with regard to the seven point social responsibility scale, and only among the management and marketing students. Arlow and Ulrich (1980) found no statistical difference in the pre-survey and post-survey results for the eleven point personal ethics and integrity scale, regardless of declared major.

Arlow and Ulrich (1980) not only furthered the question of change in student attitudes brought about the classroom experience, but also add a more sophisticated methodology. The study does, however, raise several issues regarding the concern for pre-measurement bias and the need for control groups.

A similar but more recent analysis was conducted by Wynd and Mager (1989) who felt that pre-measurement bias could have affected the study. These authors used the same methodology as Arlow and Ulrich (1980). A before and after design, without a control group, addressing the same question as both Clark (1966) and Arlow and Urlich (1980). As in the previous studies, Clark's (1966) five point scale was applied to undergraduate students at the beginning and

at the end of a course. The two scales were then tested with a t-test to determine whether there were any statistical differences. However, Wynd and Mager (1989) tested different students in the same class before and after the course. The authors believed that this approach was necessary to exclude pre-measurement bias. Over the courses of a two and half year period, in seven different business and society classes, these authors distributed surveys on the first day of class to a total of 345 students. What differed from the other studies in that the same surveys were distributed on the last day of class to 205 different students.

Wynd and Mager (1989) found no statistical difference regardless of scale used or of declared major for the students taking the course in business ethics. The authors cited outside influences as being the greatest effect, with the class having little or no impact. It is important to note, however, that Wynd and Mager (1989) concluded there were no differences recorded with regard to gender, income, race, or any other outside variable which would be seen as having a significant impact. The authors use of different samples, and different sample sizes produced different standard deviations which may have affected the level of significance at a .05 level.

Haukoos and Penick (1983) pursued the question of

influence of the classroom on the student. These authors used the same population with a pre-survey and post-survey, which may alleviate the statistical errors which may be created by different populations. However, Haukoos and Penick (1983) added the use of control groups to their methodology in a non-equivalent design. This study sought to find whether a particular classroom climate, the *discovery classroom climate*, had a significant effect on the attitudes of the students with regard to science and their abilities within the classroom. This study was conducted at the College of DuPage, a community college. Four sections of Principles of Biological Science with a total of 78 students were selected for the study. Two sections of the sample received the treatment in question; they were taught using the specified *discovery classroom climate*. The other two sections received no treatment.

During the semester, "both treatments received exactly the same content, only the classroom climate was different" (Haukoos & Penick, 1983, p. 630). The instructor was the same for all four classes. All four classes were administered a pre-survey and post-survey, in this case, the Science Process Inventory (SPI), form D. The scores were analyzed with the use of ANOVA methodology.

The result of the study did find significant

differences "among sections on the science process achievement, however did not find significant differences in the content achievement aspect of the study" (Haukoos & Penick, 1983, p. 633). Because a non-equivalent design was used, Haukoos and Penick (1983) were able to distinguish between significant effects of the individual sections on the science process achievement. The lack of any change in the content achievement component of the study would indicate that pre-measurement bias played little or no role in the study.

The Mann (1999) study crossed traditional academic disciplines to analyze the political socialization in the classroom. The business ethics studies (Arlow & Ulrich, 1980; Clark, 1996; and Wynd & Mager, 1989) also examined the effect of a singular class on the behavior and attitudes of students with the use of pre-survey and post-survey over the course of a semester. Finally, Houkoos and Penick (1983) added the non-equivalent design treatment, with the use of a control group. These studies offer a clear methodological basis for this study. The next chapter will address the methodology of this study and the data to be used.

The preceding studies have highlighted the importance of civic education and political socialization at the postsecondary level. Improvements in these processes should

result directly in increased voter participation, community involvement, and greater civic participation, both at the local and national level. As political participation continues to decrease, the importance of introducing students to civic education through political science becomes more critical. The Introduction to Political Science course can play a positive role in the formation of students attitudes about a range of issues. From clearly defined political issues such as voter participation, to broader concerns of dissent, equity, fairness, and justice. Only by first replicating some of the analysis presented in this review can a clearer picture of what is taking place in the classroom emerge.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study examined whether community college students exhibited a change in their political attitudes and behaviors as they progressed through the Introduction to Political Science Course. As a result of taking this course, were these students more likely to have gained a higher degree of political efficacy, would they become politically more tolerant, and would their opinions move closer to either the liberal or conservative political spectrum? This examination included the effect of the course and its several sub-fields on the undergraduate student. By use of a pre-survey and post-survey methodology, this study examined whether students exhibited significant change in political attitudes as they progressed through the Introduction to Political Science Course.

This research anticipated that students would not only exhibit higher levels of political socialization at the end of the course, they would also exhibit greater levels of political efficacy, and would become significantly more likely to participate in community activities and political

events. A sufficient amount of research reviewed illustrated that there may exist a positive relationship between a college education in general and the level of political awareness and involvement(Almond & Verba, 1963; Campbell, 1975; Verba & Nie, 1972). Additionally, Richard Brody (1994), when examining the We the People Curriculum Program (developed by the Center for Civic Education), found other factors such as "political tolerance" may be included within the context of changing political attitudes and behaviors.

Research Design

Students enrolled in three Introduction to Political Science courses at three different community colleges were administered a pre-survey. This survey consisted of a series of questions measuring student's political attitudes and behavior. These selected questions dealt with political issues and behavior from *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1998* (Astin, 1998)study. The first pre-survey drew information regarding students' political attitudes entering the community college environment. The subjects for this study consisted of students from three Florida community colleges enrolled in POS 2001 (Florida Common Course Numbering), Introduction to Political Science. In addition to the students from the Introduction to Political Science course, three General Psychology classes,

PSY 2012 (Florida Common Course Numbering), one from each college, were administered the same surveys. The psychology classes were used as the nonequivalent comparison groups for this study.

Pre-surveys were administered between the second and third week of the Fall semester (2000) to approximately 480 students: four classes resulting in a total of 150 students at Tallahassee Community College, Tallahassee, five classes resulting in 180 students at Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, and four classes adding 150 students at Gulf Coast Community College, Panama City. Student numbers were based on course offerings in political science and past enrollment numbers for the Fall term, 1999. These student enrollments were inclusive of both the treatment classes and the nonequivalent comparison group. Based on an attrition rate of 30%, the normal withdrawal rate for introductory courses at Florida community colleges, a final sample size of 340 (n=340) for the post-survey was anticipated. Such a response to both the pre and post surveys creates a sufficient population for a normal *t* distribution (Levin, 1984).

The surveys were to be proctored by the chairpersons of the political science departments of Gulf Coast Community College and Miami-Dade Community College. The surveys at Tallahassee Community College were to be proctored by a full

time political science faculty member. The faculty members were all colleagues who understood the research process and the importance of scientific rigor. All the proctors were trained in the same manner in order to maintain consistency at all three campuses. The proctors at all three institutions were not the instructors for the course being surveyed. Participants were given a cover sheet at this time explaining that those students who did not wish to participate in the survey would be permitted to be excused from the survey(see appendix D). The three proctors read from identical two paragraph scripts (see appendix E). Students at all three sites were given 15 minutes to complete the survey.

Logistical problems in distributing the pre-surveys in Miami made it clear that the use of this college sample would have to be abandoned. The majority of the classes were placed in the wrong pre-labeled envelopes by the departmental secretary at Miami-Dade Community College, making it impossible to distinguish between the comparison group and the treatment group. In addition to the mislabeling, several of the pre-surveys were misplaced at the college prior to being mailed to me.

To compensate for the lower sample size, a comparison group and an treatment group were added at both Tallahassee

Community College and Gulf Coast Community College. Increasing the sample size at the other two sites proved more feasible than finding an additional site at the last minute because of the time required to obtain permission from another institution and to coordinate with a new additional academic department.

Upon completing the course, students were administered a post-survey during the week before final exams in the Fall semester, 2000. The post-survey consisted of the same questions as the pre-survey to evaluate the change, if any, in political attitudes and behavior after having completed the Introduction to Political Science course. The post-surveys were administered by the same proctors at both sites. Proctors were given the same script to read as in the pre-survey. Again, students wishing to opt out of the survey were given the opportunity to do so at this time. Students were reminded that the surveys were anonymous, and would not be used for purposes of evaluating their individual performance in the class.

It is important to note that while post-surveys were distributed to the same classes, they may not have been the same students. Because the surveys were anonymous, a requirement of the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee, there were students who completed the post-

survey, but may not have completed the pre-survey.

A total of 26 different classes was used to create the sample. Of the 306 pre-surveys, 205 were from Introduction to Political Science classes (POS 2001), and 101 surveys were from the comparison group, Introduction to Psychology (PSY 2012) classes. Of the 306 post-surveys, 211 were from the treatment group, and 95 surveys were from the comparison group. Because of an increase of 6 completed post-surveys in the political science classes, making up for a loss of 6 in the psychology classes, (the gain and loss of the same number of respondents was coincidental) there was no actual attrition rate in the survey response. Despite the loss of Miami-Dade Community College, the final sample size was just 10% less than the original target population.

Survey Instrument

Political behavior and attitudes were measured using student responses to Astin's (1998) *American Freshman National Norms* survey data. Permission to use portions of the survey was granted by the Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles (Appendix A). The same survey was administered at the beginning of the semester and at the end. This survey used 59 questions from the Astin (1998) data set that were directly related to political attitudes and behavior of the students in the

class. These were the questions on which Mann (1999) focused when analyzing "important political information in the survey" (p. 1). These were also consistent with the variables Astin used to analyze liberal social and political change in separate analyzes of the *American Freshman Norms* survey data (Astin, 1992; Astin, Corn, Sax, & Mahoney 1999). These questions related to political views, political participation and efficacy, and probable career occupations related to politics.

Consistent with the Astin (1998) study, the majority of the questions were scaled according to time spent participating in a particular activity, such as: none, six or more hours, and sixteen or more hours. Several of the questions were simply yes or no, such as the likelihood of a particular career choice. Several questions were simply listed as "activities engaged in during the past year" (Astin, 1998). When applicable, the time frame was changed from, during the past year, to "during the past semester" to evaluate change from the pre-survey to the post-survey period.

In addition to 50 variables, the majority of the demographic categories applied (9 categories describing the student and their backgrounds) in the Astin (1998) study were used in this study so that a clearer picture of the

respondent could be obtained (see Appendix B for a complete survey).

Research Questions and Analysis

Once both pre-survey and post-surveys were administered, the survey responses were used to create a data set. Pre-surveys were coded as "A", post-surveys were coded as "B". Each survey was also coded with an individual number to identify and separate the two community colleges at which the individual survey was administered, the class from which it came, and as to whether or not it was from a comparison group class. Demographic items were labeled as individual variables. Substantive items were aggregated into one of five null hypotheses. Once categorized into the appropriate hypotheses, item choices were identified as labels and assigned numerical values, ranging from 1 - 4. The value labels for items aggregated into each null hypothesis were then averaged. A codebook was created to properly identify the variable names, labels, and numerical values for analysis (see Appendix G).

The data set was assembled in an *Excel* spreadsheet, and analyzed through the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS)software package. Descriptive statistics were used for the demographic variables for purposes of properly describing the two sample sets from the two community

colleges.

A nondirectional, two-tailed "t" test was used to determine if there were significant differences between the averaged value labels for each null hypothesis of the study. For example, items 38 and 39 were applied to the null hypothesis measuring change in political tolerance. Values assigned to the labels for both items 38 and 39 were averaged, then used for a two-tailed test to test for change between the pre and post surveys.

The two-tailed "t" tests compared the observed differences in means with an estimate of the standard deviation of the sampling distribution (Levin, 1984). The difference between the means was tested for significance at the 0.05 level. Survey items were directly aggregated into one of the following five null hypotheses: (see appendix B for complete survey)

1. Political Efficacy

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis which stated that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not gained a higher degree of *political efficacy* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. A value label of 1 representing the least political efficacy, 4 representing the most.

12) Participated in political demonstrations
14) Discussed politics
15) Participated in political campaign
17) Keeping up to date with politics
21) Influence the political structure
22) Influence social values
55) An individual can do little to change society

2. Political Tolerance

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis which stated that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not become *politically more tolerant* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. A value label of 1 representing the least political tolerance, 4 representing the most.

18) Promoting racial understanding
26) Help others in difficulty
50) Government should prohibit homosexual relations
54) Racial discrimination is no longer a problem
57) The government should prohibit racist/sexist speech
60) Same sex couples should have the same legal status as heterosexual couples

3. Political Spectrum

The following items were used to test the null

hypothesis which stated that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not *shifted toward the liberal or conservative political spectrum* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. A value label of 1 representing the least political leaning, 4 representing the most.

39) Politically conservative
40) Politically liberal

Items 42 through 60 relating to political attitudes were also a useful gauge in determining a shift in the student's political leanings.

4. Political Attitudes

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis which stated that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not experienced a significant *change in political attitudes* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. A value label of 1 representing politically conservative attitudes, 4 representing liberal political attitudes.

42) Government should do more to control pollution
43) Government should raise taxes to reduce deficit
44) There is to much concern for criminals
45) Abortion should remain legal
46) The death penalty should be

abolished
47) Sex is OK if people like each other
48) Married women are best at home
49) Marijuana should be legalized
51) Employers should be able to require drug tests
52) A man is not entitled to sex on a date
53) The Government should do more to control handguns
56) The wealthy should pay more taxes
58) Its OK to disobey laws that violate your own values
59) Affirmative Action should be abolished in college entrance requirements

5. Political Sub-fields

Item 41, a list of different undergraduate major fields grouped into general categories were used to test the null hypothesis which stated that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not expressed significantly *different interest in the several sub-fields* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. Students who express interest in; Political Science, International Relations, Public Administration, Prelaw, in the post-survey and not in the pre-survey, would represent a change in the student's political attitude or behavior after taking the Introduction to Political Science course. Additional items, as well as the demographic items (#1-10) were useful in understanding

other factors which may help to explain significant changes in student political attitudes and behaviors.

Coding

All ordinal scale question choices were given numeral values to which the t-tests were applied. Section I in the survey, items 1 - 10, were treated as individual variables. Section II items 11 - 16 were valued as;

.5 = None
1 = Less than one
1.5 = 1 to 2
2 = 3 to 5
2.5 = 6 to 10
3 = 11 to 15
3.5 = 16 to 20
4 = over 20

Section III, items 17 - 32 were valued as;

4 = Essential
3 = Very Important
2 = Somewhat Important
1 = Not Important

Section IV, items 34 - 40 were valued as;

4 = Highest 10%
3.2 = Above Average
2.4 = Average
1.6 = Below Average
.8 = Lowest 10%

Item 40 were valued as;

4 = 1
2.3 = 2
1.3 = L

Section V, items 42 - 60, were valued as;

4 = Strongly Agree
3 = Moderately Agree
2 = Moderately Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

Because of wording of the questions, the coding for the following eight items in Section V was reversed in order to be consistent with the other items in the survey:

44) There is to much concern for criminals
48) Married women are best at home
50) Government should prohibit homosexual relations
51) Employers should be able to require drug tests
52) A man is not entitled to sex on a date
54) Racial discrimination is no longer a problem
57) The government should prohibit racist/sexist speech
59) Affirmative Action should be abolished in college entrance requirements

Possible Sources of Error

A problematic feature when using surveys of this type is error that results from social context and artificiality (Herzog, 1996). The students may claim to be much more politically active for the purposes of a survey. It is conceivable that students were reluctant to admit that they were naive with regard to political issues. If this was the case, this analysis would indicate higher levels of political socialization and efficacy than actually exist.

This possible bias was acknowledged in the interpretation of the data.

Because this survey instrument has only used selected components of a broader survey, another possible source of bias may have been *context effect,* meaning the context provided by the previous question which may effect the response to the next question. Further, "item balance [the number of favorable and unfavorable items used in the survey] may also affect the likelihood of biased responding"(Herzog, 1996, p. 117). As in the Mann (1999) analysis, the political variables have remained as intact as possible, i.e. resembling the original survey. While there may be some minor differences in context effect from the original Astin (1998) survey, they should not have significantly affected the findings.

Another factor which may have influenced the reliability of the survey research is that the act of studying an attitude may affect that attitude, or pre-measurement bias (Wynd & Mager, 1989). This problem is common in pre-survey and post-survey analysis. The alternative in the distribution of the survey which would eliminate a pre-measurement bias would be to sample two different populations (Wynd & Mager, 1989).

The greatest concern as a source of error is the

possibility of extraneous variables affecting the study. Many variables enter into a student's life, particularly in the first two years of college. In addition to the general impact of college, the larger collegiate experience can have a significant effect on students' political attitudes and behaviors (Astin,1998).

The study risks further shortcomings regarding validity by using only one class out of what could be four classes for a full-time undergraduate student. One factor which may have mitigated this possible source of error is the short time span between the pre-survey and post-survey administration. This may have acted to lessen the effect of the larger collegiate experience. By limiting the analysis to the community college student, the likelihood that the student's course work (other than the Introduction to Political Science) will consist of basic, non-specialized classes is greatly increased. The variable abilities and effects of the individual instructors, while possibly creating an intervening variable, may be accounted for by the variation between different sections of the same populations being sampled.

Ethical Considerations

Because of possible ethical considerations in social research this analysis adhered to a commonly accepted

professional code of ethics: The American Association for Public Opinion Research (see Appendix C for full text). All subjects were given the human subject's release as generated by *the Human Subjects Committee, Florida State University* (Appendix D). Approval for the use of the survey in this study has been granted by the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee (Appendix F). Subjects could choose not to participate in the survey at this point.

Issues with regard to ethics were addressed prior to conducting the research. Several organizations have constructed guidelines that address these issues. The American Psychological Association (APA) emphasizes *protection from harm* which holds the investigator responsible for not inflicting any kind of "physical and mental discomfort, harm and danger that may arise from research procedures . . . "(American Psychological Association, 1990, p. 390). The APA prohibits the use of any form of procedure that would cause harm or injury except research that would be of great potential benefit and when the participant has given an informed consent. Consideration of the participants involved always preceded all other factors in the administration of the survey research in this study.

Guidelines offered by the American Sociological

Association (ASA) concurs that informed consent should be used even if the slightest risk to participants is anticipated. The ASA also suggests that researchers should take the proper steps to avoid invasions of privacy (American Sociological Association, 1989). While this research did not cause risk, these guidelines were more pertinent regarding the issue of privacy. The survey research in this study did not individually identify students in the research.

Based on the research to date, both in the disciplines of education and political science, this research attempted to provide a better understanding of the process of political socialization as developed in an introductory political science course. Clarifying how the college student's political attitudes and behaviors are changed can only benefit political science teaching by changing the emphasis in college curriculum and better focusing its methods. The political process at large can benefit by a better understanding of political socialization. Finally, educational methodology in other disciplines, particularly an introductory courses at the community college, could be better understood and implemented as a result of this study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF STUDY

The results of this study were derived from the analysis of 306 pre-survey and 306 post-surveys distributed at two community college campuses, Gulf Coast Community College and Tallahassee Community College, both located in north Florida. The original sample for this study was to include three college campuses, Miami-Dade Community College, Tallahassee Community College, Gulf Coast Community College. It was anticipated that a final sample size of approximately 340 final sets of pre and post surveys. This figure was based on an anticipated attrition rate of 30%. As the surveys were distributed, logistical problems in distributing the pre-surveys in Miami made it clear that the use of this college sample would be precluded. The majority of the surveys were placed in the wrong pre-labeled envelopes by the departmental secretary at Miami-Dade Community College, making it impossible to distinguish between the comparison group and the treatment group. In addition to the mislabeling, several of the pre-surveys were misplaced at the college prior to their return to the

researcher.

To compensate for the lower sample size, one comparison group and one treatment group were added at both Tallahassee Community College and Gulf Coast Community College. Increasing the sample size at the current two sites proved more feasible than going to an additional site because of the time required in obtaining permission from another institution and coordinating with an additional academic department.

A total of 26 different classes was used to create the sample. Of the 306 pre-surveys, 205 surveys were from Introduction to Political Science classes (POS 2001), and 101 surveys were from the comparison group, Introduction to Psychology (PSY 2012) classes. Of the 306 post-surveys, 211 surveys were from the treatment group, and 95 surveys were from the comparison group. Because of an increase of 6 completed post-surveys in the political science classes, making up for a loss of 6 in the psychology classes, (the gain and loss of the same number of respondents was coincidental) there was no actual attrition rate in the survey response. Despite the loss of Miami-Dade Community College, the final sample size was just 10% less than the original target population.

It is important to note once again that while post-

surveys were distributed to the same classes, they may not have been the same students. Because the surveys were anonymous, a requirement of the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee, there were students who completed the post-survey, but may not have completed the pre-survey.

The analyses of the results pertaining to this study were divided into six sections. The first section consists of the analysis of the first ten items on the survey related to the demographic questions. The latter sections analyze each of the five hypotheses addressed in this study. Each section focused on the differences between the pre-survey and post-survey groups for the treatment population, and the differences between the pre-survey and post-survey groups for the comparison population. Unless otherwise noted, all coding for the variables, variable names, and their labels was consistent with the *Student Survey Codebook* (See appendix G).

Analysis of the Demographic Questions

This section examines the pre-surveys only. The first ten items of the survey were treated as individual variables, relating to the demographic information provided by the students. Part of the purpose of this study was to help establish the demographic background of students entering the community college political science classroom.

Establishing demographic information about the sample also assisted in understanding not only the college classroom, but the process of articulation between the high school and college in regard to civic education.

Year Graduated From High School

The first demographic variable asked what year the participant graduated from high school. Illustrating the wide diversity of students in the community college population, high school graduation dates had a range covering 52 years, from 1949, to 2001 (table 4-1). It is assumed that the latter represented dual enrollment students, that is, those enrolled in a community college course, but who have not graduated from high school. More students (21.5%) graduated in the year 1999 than any other year, followed 17.9% who graduated in 2000.

High School GPA

Students were asked their high school grade point averages (GPAs). The self-reported average GPA of respondents was 3.1. The majority of students reported their GPAs in the mid-range (table 4-2). Many respondents reported higher than 4.0 GPAs. Many students in the Florida high school system are evaluated by a weighted GPA, which may have raised the overall average figure by college standards.

Table 4-1

Respondent's High School Graduation Date

Year Graduated	Number	Percent
2001	3	1.0
2000	52	17.9
1999	62	21.5
1998	37	12.8
1997	37	12.8
1996	17	5.9
1995	15	5.3
1994	9	3.1
1993	11	3.8
1992	6	2.1
1991	4	1.4
1990-1985	17	5.8
1984-1980	9	3.0
1979-1970	8	2.7
<1969	3	0.9
Total	290	100.0

Table 4-2

Student High School GPAs

GPA	Number	Percent
4.30 - 4.00	11	4.1
3.99 - 3.51	45	16.4
3.50 - 3.00	142	50.4
2.99 - 2.51	47	15.8
> 2.50	38	13.3
Total	283	100.0

Students' Age

The respondents' age reflected the data evident in the high school graduation dates. Students at these community colleges, as most in the country, (Warren, 1985) cover a wide range (table 4-3). The mean age of the students responding was 22.4. The oldest student was 69 years old, while the youngest was 16, once again representing dual-enrollment students.

Table 4-3

Student's Age

Age	Number	Percent
69-40	9	2.9
39-30	18	5.9
29-25	28	9.3
24-20	143	47.8
19-16	102	34.1
Total	300	100.0

Ethnic Background

The majority of students, 75%, responded White in the survey question concerning their race (table 4-4). Those who answered Black accounted for 15% of respondents. Students who consider themselves Latino or Asian comprised 10% of the respondents.

Ethnically, in most cases, the respondents reflected the general population of Florida with regard to race (table 4-5). The samples of these two community colleges very closely represent Florida's White and African-American racial breakdown. When compared to Florida's overall population, Hispanic minorities are highly under represented in this survey. This may be explained by the fact that the majority of Florida's Hispanic population resides in south Florida (U.S. Census, 1990).

High School Government Classes

Item number 5, asking whether the student has taken a high school government class, was the only item in the survey which was not part of the original Astin survey. This question was added to better understand the articulation between high schools and colleges regarding civic education. It was anticipated that the majority of those sampled were being exposed to political science for the first time in college. However, a large majority of the respondents (87%) stated that they had taken a high school government class. This does not reveal the type of material presented at the high school, or whether the respondent confused American history with government. Many respondents wrote the class title in the margin of the survey, which was actually an American history course.

Table 4-4

Student's Race

Race Category	Number	Percent
White	226	75.1
Black	13	15.3
Latino	46	4.3
Indian	2	.7
Asian	1	.3
Other	13	4.3
Total	301	100.0

Table 4-5

General Florida Population

Race	Florida	National
Black	15.4	12.8
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	.4	.9
Asian or Pacific islander	1.9	4.0
Hispanic	15.4	11.5
White, non Hispanic	68.0	71.9
Total	101.1	101.1

Note. Because of averaging, values total greater than 100%.
U.S. Census Bureau; 1990

Type of Secondary School

The majority of students (85%) responding in the survey attended a public high school. Of the students attending private schools, 10% attended denominational schools, the other 5% attended non-denominational high schools.

Distance College Is From Home

The majority, 53.8% of the students sampled live within the community college's service area of 50 miles or less (table 4-6). However, 46.2% of the students reside outside the community college's service area.

Table 4-6

Miles College Is From Home

Miles From Campus	Number	Percent
5 or less	102	33.9
11 - 50	60	19.9
51-100	80	26.6
101-500	9	3.0
More than 500	50	16.6
Total	301	100.0

Parents' Education

More than half of the students (54.3%) came from households in which the father had no college degree (table 4-7). Additionally, 58.7% came from households in which the

mother did not hold a college degree. The gap between the father's education and mother's education was relatively small, 4.4% more of fathers had a college degree over that of mothers. Fathers had less midrange education level; 4.7% more of mothers were high school graduates, 2% more of mothers had some college education.

Table 4-7

Parents Education

	Father		Mother	
Level of Education	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Grammar school or less	9	3.1	6	2.0
Some high school	21	7.2	18	6.0
High school graduate	63	21.5	78	26.2
Some college	66	22.5	73	24.5
College degree	88	30.0	86	28.9
Postgraduate degree	46	15.7	37	12.4
Total	293	100.0	298	100.0

Students' goals, as reflected by the students desired level of degrees, out-paced the level of educational attainment of their parents.

Degree Sought by Students

Students surveyed not only sought a college degree, but

67% planned to pursue advanced degrees (table 4-8). Only 4% of the students would end their college educations with an associate degree, having no desire to transfer to a four year institution.

Table 4-8

Degree Sought By Students

Degree	Number	Percent
None	3	1.0
Associate degree	11	3.7
Bachelor's degree	83	27.9
Master's degree	136	45.6
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	42	14.1
M.D., D.D.S., or D.V.M.	15	5.0
LL.B. or J.D.	5	1.7
Other	3	1.0
Total	298	100.0

The Null Hypotheses

The remaining analysis tested five null hypotheses:

1. Students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not gained a higher degree of *political efficacy* as compared to students in the Introduction to

Psychology class.

2. Students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not become politically more tolerant as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

3. Students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not experienced a significant *change in political attitudes* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

4. Students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not *shifted toward the liberal or conservative political spectrum* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

5. Students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not expressed significantly *different interest in the several sub-fields* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

Nondirectional, two-tailed "t" tests were used to determine if there were significant differences between the averaged value labels for the first four null hypothesis of the pre-surveys and post-surveys for both the comparison group (the Introduction to Psychology course, PSY 2002 class) and the treatment population (the Introduction to Political Science course, POS 2001 class). The differences

between the means were tested for significance at the 0.05 level. Survey items(with the exception of demographic item numbers 1 - 10) were aggregated into one of the five null hypotheses (see appendix B for complete survey). When appropriate, individual items were compared for significant differences in means.

Political Efficacy

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not gained a higher degree of *political efficacy* as compared to students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

12) Participated in political demonstrations
14) Discussed politics
15) Participated in a political campaign
17) Keeping up to date with politics
21) Influence the political structure
22) Influence social values
55) An individual can do little to change society

The seven items for this hypothesis were first aggregated by averaging their results, creating the first variable, political efficacy. A two tailed t test was applied to the aggregated set of the comparison group (the Introduction to Psychology course, PSY 2002 class) and the

treatment population (the Introduction to Political Science course, POS 2001 class).

Neither the means of the comparison group nor the treatment population changed significantly after taking their respective courses, proving the null hypothesis correct in the case of this variable (table 4-9). While both "t" statistics were positive, neither were outside the standard, treatment distribution area of 95%.

Table 4-9

Political Efficacy

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	1.834	204		
pre-survey	1.757	204	1.893	.06
Comparison group				
post-survey	1.736	74		
pre-survey	1.658	74	1.414	.162

*significant at the .05 level.

While the aggregated variable, political efficacy, proved to be insignificant, further testing of individual items found items 14 and 17 to be statistically significant. Item number 14, have you discussed politics, did change significantly after taking the political science class(table

4-10). The students who took the psychology class did not discuss politics significantly more after taking the class. Students who took the political science class reported discussing politics to a greater extent after taking the class.

Item number 17, keeping up to date with politics, also proved to be significantly different (.028) for the treatment group after taking the class(table 4-11).

Table 4-10

Discussed Politics

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	1.892	199		
pre-survey	1.680	199	2.375*	.019
Comparison group				
post-survey	1.666	74		
pre-survey	1.560	74	.752	.454

*significant at the .05 level.

Table 4-11

Keep up to Date with Politics

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.62	201		
pre-survey	2.43	201	1.854*	.028
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.39	75		
pre-survey	2.17	75	2.215	.068

*significant at the .05 level.

Item number 21, whether students felt it was important to influence the political structure, did not prove to be significant(table 4-12). While items numbers 12,15, 22, and 55 had no significant change either, significance for item number 21 was a crucial component of political efficacy. Lack of significant change in the treatment group is critical to the political efficacy question.

Table 4-12

Importance of Influencing the Political Structure

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.24	202		
pre-survey	2.21	202	.305	.761
Comparison group				
post-survey	1.97	75		
pre-survey	1.84	75	.961	.340

Political Tolerance

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not become *politically more tolerant* as compared to students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

18) Promoting racial understanding
26) Help others in difficulty
50) Government should prohibit homosexual relations
54) Racial discrimination is no longer a problem
57) The government should prohibit racist/sexist speech
60) Same sex couples should have the same legal status as heterosexual couples

For the second hypothesis, the aggregate score for the comparison group experienced a positive, and statistically significant change, moving toward a greater level of political tolerance as indicated by the value labels. The treatment group experienced no significant change, though change there moved toward the negative, less political tolerance (table 4-13).

Table 4-13

Political Tolerance

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.39	202		
pre-survey	2.45	202	-1.869	.063
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.57	74		
pre-survey	2.46	74	2.069*	.042

*significant at the .05 level.

With regard to whether students felt that racial discrimination was no longer a problem, respondents who took the Introduction to Political Science class were more likely to agree. This was a statistically significant change (table 4-14). The comparison group experienced no significant change.

Table 4-14

Racial Discrimination Is No Longer A Problem

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	1.77	200		
pre-survey	1.60	200	2.316*	.022
Comparison group				
post-survey	1.66	73		
pre-survey	1.61	73	.322	.748

*significant at the .05 level.

Item number 57, should the government prohibit racist/sexist speech, produced significant change for both the comparison group and the treatment group (table 4-15). However, the change was in opposite directions. The Psychology class became more likely to agree with this proposition after taking the class; while the students

taking the political science class were significantly less agree with this proposition.

Table 4-15

Government Prohibition of Racist/sexist Speech

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.20	198		
pre-survey	2.47	198	-2.642*	.009
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.85	73		
pre-survey	2.26	73	3.436*	.001

*significant at the .05 level.

Respondents were not significantly less likely to agreed that same sex couples should have the same legal status as heterosexual couples after taking the political science class (table 4-16). There was no significant change for the comparison group or treatment group.

Political Spectrum

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course have not *shifted toward the liberal or conservative political spectrum* as compared to the

Table 4-16

Legal Status Of Same Sex Couples

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.36	200		
pre-survey	2.45	200	-.745	.457
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.64	72		
pre-survey	2.66	72	-.117	.907

*significant at the .05 level.

students in the Introduction to Psychology class. The null hypothesis was accepted with regard to changes at both ends of the political spectrum, conservative and liberal.

39) Politically conservative
40) Politically liberal

There was no significant change for respondents, either in the comparison group or in the treatment group, with regard to the political spectrum (table 4-17).

Table 4-17

Politically Conservative

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.33	199		
pre-survey	2.24	199	1.110	.268
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.00	74		
pre-survey	2.01	74	-.036	.971

*significant at the .05 level.

The comparison group experienced only a .01 change in average mean responses, with regard to considering themselves more politically conservative, clearly insignificant (table 4-18). While not statistically significant, the treatment group did move slightly, .09

toward the more conservative end of the political spectrum.

Table 4-18

Politically Liberal

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.10	198		
pre-survey	2.19	198	-1.137	.257
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.37	74		
pre-survey	2.11	74	1.780	.079

*significant at the .05 level.

Again, the change in movement toward the politically liberal side of the spectrum was not significant for either group. What change there was however, was in opposite ends of the spectrum. Respondents in the treatment group were less likely to consider themselves liberal after having taken the political science class, as opposed to the comparison group, who were sightly more likely to consider themselves liberal.

Political Attitudes

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to

Political Science course have not experienced a significant *change in political attitudes* as compared to students in the Introduction to Psychology class. This variable aggregated the following 14 items:

42) Government should do more to control pollution
43) Government should raise taxes to reduce deficits
44) There is too much concern for criminals
45) Abortion should remain legal
46) The death penalty should be abolished
47) Sex is OK if people like each other
48) Married women are best at home
49) Marijuana should be legalized
51) Employers should be able to require drug tests
52) A man is not entitled to sex on a date
53) The Government should do more to control handguns
56) The wealthy should pay more taxes
58) It is OK to disobey laws that violate your own values
59) Affirmative Action should be abolished in college entrance requirements

Neither the treatment group nor the comparison group experienced any significant change in political attitudes over the course of the semester when analyzing the variable with the 14 aggregated items (table 4-19). The null hypothesis was accepted for the aggregated variable, political attitudes.

Table 4-19

Change In Political Attitudes

Pair Tested	Mean	df	"t" Stat.	Significance (2-tailed)
Treatment group				
post-survey	2.420	202		
pre-survey	2.428	202	-.195	.846
Comparison group				
post-survey	2.605	73		
pre-survey	2.551	73	.839	.404

*significant at the .05 level.

Items numbers 42 through 60 which related to political attitudes were also an excellent gauge in determining a shift in the student's political leanings. Consistent with the third hypothesis, political spectrum, there was no significant change. Individually, items 42-60 did not indicate any significant change, either for the treatment group or the comparison group.

Academic Sub-fields

Item 41, a list of different undergraduate major fields grouped into general categories, was used to test the null

hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course expressed significantly *different interest in the several sub-fields* of political science as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. Students who expressed interest in Political Science, International Relations, Public Administration, Prelaw, in the post-survey and not in the pre-survey would represent a change in the student's political attitude or behavior after taking the Introduction to Political Science course.

Sub-field Changes for the Treatment Group.

Respondents in the treatment group selected 34 different professions as the most desirable. Table 4-20 lists the professions which received 5% or more of the student choices for pre-surveys for the treatment group. In the post-survey, respondents in the treatment group increased their interest for the political sub-field of prelaw from 6.0% to 6.25% (table 4-21). Students choosing political science as the field they expressed the most interest in increased from 5.1% to 6.25%.

Table 4-20

Most Desirable Profession for Students in the Political Science Course

Sub-field	Percentage
Pre-survey	
Business	14.9
Other Fields	7.0
Prelaw	*6.0*
Engineering	5.6
Communications	5.6
Computer Science	5.6
Political Science	*5.1*
Computer Science	5.1
Sub-fields <5% each	45.1
Total	100.0

Table 4-21

Most Desirable Profession for Students in the Political Science Course

Sub-field	Percentage
Post-survey	
Business	10.4
Computer Science	6.7
Biological Science	6.2
Education	6.25
Political Science	*6.25*
Prelaw	*6.25*
Other Fields	5.2
Computer Science	5.1
Sub-fields <5% each	47.6
Total	100.0

Sub-field changes for the comparison group.

Students in the comparison group were also compared for professions chosen both in the pre-surveys and post-surveys. Students in the comparison group selected 21 different academic sub-fields. Table 4-22 compares professions which received greater than 5% of the choices for the comparison groups. No political sub-fields received more than 5% of the choices in the pre-survey. Pre-law received 2.9%, political science received 1.4%. No one selected either international relations or public administration as a top choice in the pre-survey for the comparison group. International relations, while not receiving 5% or more, increased in ranking, going from 2.8% to 4.2% in the post-surveys. Public administration, the last political sub-field, was not selected as a pre-survey or post-survey top choice.

The post-survey comparison group selected one political sub-field, pre-law as a top choice in the greater than 5% range, 5.1% (table 4-23). Political science received 2.06% of the choices. International relations and public administration both received 1% of the choices in the post-survey for the comparison group.

Table 4-22

Most Desirable Profession For Students In The Introduction To Psychology Course

Sub-fields	Percentage
Pre-survey	
Psychology	17.3
Other Fields	11.5
Biological Sciences	10.1
Business	8.6
Education	8.6
Social Work	5.7
Sub-fields <5% each	38.6
Total	100.0

Table 4-23

Most Desirable Profession for Students in the Introduction to Psychology Course

Sub-fields	Percentage
Post-survey	
Business	10.3
Psychology	10.3
Education	9.2
Computer Science	8.2
Communications	7.2
Engineering	5.1
Pre-law	*5.1*
Sub-fields <5% each	44.6
Total	100.0

Two of the choices which were previously identified as indicating a change in a student's political attitude or behavior, political science and prelaw, experienced an increased interest after taking the political science course (treatment group). However, one of the choices, prelaw, also saw an increased interest after taking the psychology course (comparison group).

Analysis of Findings

Of the first four aggregated null hypothesis where tests of significance were applied, only one rejected the null hypothesis, political tolerance. For the other three, the null hypothesis was accepted, there was no significant difference between the treatment group and the comparison group, and no statistically significant difference from the pre-survey and post-survey groups for the aggregated items. Two important individual items in the first hypothesis, however, did prove significant in both regards. The fifth hypothesis illustrated positive percentage changes in the students' preferred political sub-fields for the treatment group. The next chapter presents conclusions and further areas of inquiry indicated as a result of these findings.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS OF STUDY

Introduction

This chapter discusses how the original purpose of the study was served by the research results presented in the previous chapter. This section first examines the demographic information of the respondents and then focuses on the five questions originally presented. This chapter presents a discussion of how the results of the study may be interpreted as well as an understanding of the limitations of this study and its results. Finally, recommendations for further research are offered as a result of this study's findings.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the role that one political science course played in students' political attitudes and behaviors. The overall objective of the study was to analyze the impression that this course had on its students, and how it might influence their participation in their own governance.

Procedures

The results of this study were derived from 26 different classes resulting in 306 pre-surveys (see appendix B for complete survey) distributed at the beginning of the Fall, 2000 semester and 306 post-surveys, distributed at the end of the semester. The surveys were distributed at two community college campuses, Gulf Coast Community College and Tallahassee Community College, both located in north Florida. Of the 306 pre-surveys distributed, 205 surveys were from Introduction to Political Science classes (POS 2001), and 101 surveys were from the comparison group, Introduction to Psychology (PSY 2012) classes. Of the 306 post-surveys, 211 surveys were from the treatment group, and 95 surveys were from the comparison group. Because of an increase of 6 completed post-surveys in the political science classes, making up for a loss of 6 in the psychology classes, (the gain and loss of the same number of respondents was coincidental) there was no actual attrition rate in the survey response.

It is important to note once again that while post-surveys were distributed to the same classes, they may not have been the same students. Because the surveys were anonymous, a requirement of the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee, the same students may not have

completed the pre and post surveys.

Once both pre-surveys and post-surveys were administered, the surveys were used to create a data set. Pre-surveys were coded as "A", post-surveys were coded as "B". Each survey was also coded with an individual number to identify and separate the two community colleges at which the individual surveys were administered, the class from which it came, and whether it was from a comparison group class. Item choices in the survey were identified as labels and assigned numerical values, ranging from 1 - 4. The value labels for items aggregated into each null hypothesis were then averaged. A codebook was created to properly identify the variable names, labels, and numerical values for analysis (see Appendix G). The data was assembled in an *Microsoft Excel* spreadsheet and divided into five groups; demographic variables (pre-survey only), pre-survey/treatment group, pre-survey/comparison group, post-survey/treatment group, post-survey/comparison group. Individual items were then categorized into the appropriate hypothesis and averaged.

The data was analyzed with the use of the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS)software package. Descriptive statistics and frequency tables were used for the demographic variables for purposes of properly

describing the two sample sets from the two community colleges. Nondirectional, two-tailed "t" tests were used to determine if there were significant differences between the averaged value labels for the null hypothesis of the pre-surveys and post-surveys. The difference between the means were tested for significance at the 0.05 level. Additionally, individual items within the aggregated variables were tested for significance by means of the nondirectional, two-tailed "t"test. The last variable, political sub-fields, was analyzed by means of frequency tables.

Discussion

This study sought to discover whether, as a result of taking this course, students were more likely to have gained a higher degree of political efficacy. Did they become politically more tolerant? Did their opinions move closer to either the liberal or conservative ends of the political spectrum? This examination included the effect of the course and its several sub-fields on the undergraduate student. By use of pre-survey and post-survey methodology, this study examined whether students exhibited significant change in political attitudes and behaviors as they progressed through the Introduction to Political Science Course. In order to achieve these objectives, the study first needed to examine

demographically the composition of a typical community college class.

Student Demographics

The student sample was consistent with community college student populations in the area (Tallahassee Community College Factbook, 2000). The majority of the students were recent public high school graduates, although there were many, older, non-traditional students. Average student high school grade point averages were not as high as those found entering four-year institutions (Astin, 1998). The majority of students (54%) lived within the community college service area of less than 50 miles away from campus. However, 34% of the students lived within 5 miles of the campus, indicating that many of the students were in student housing and may actually be from other parts of the state.

Ethnically, students closely mirrored the non-college population in the state of Florida with the exception of a 11.1% lower Hispanic population. While 56.5% of students came from parents without a college education, almost 95% of the students surveyed sought four-year college degrees, 67% of those expressing a desire to go on to obtain postgraduate degrees. This finding supports research conducted by Astin (1998) which finds that today's college students are very concerned about financial stability. In 1998, Astin found

that 72% of all students surveyed felt it was essential or very important to be very well off financially, of those, community college students were a higher percentage, 76% (Astin, 1998). More specific to the studied population in this analysis, Mann(1999) discovered community college students to have higher financial aspirations than four year college students. This finding suggests that educational advancement is viewed as a means to attain financial stability.

This study investigated whether community college students exhibited a change in their political attitudes and behaviors as they progress through the Introduction to Political Science course. Results are discussed with regard to five issues; political efficacy, political tolerance, political spectrum, political attitudes, and interest in political sub-fields.

Political Efficacy

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course did not gain a higher degree of *political efficacy* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

12) Participated in political demonstrations
14) Discussed politics
15) Participated in political

campaign
17) Keeping up to date with politics
21) Influence the political structure
22) Influence social values
55) An individual can do little to change society

When analyzing the average of these seven items that were identified as measurements of political efficacy, it was found that the students sampled were not significantly affected by taking the course. Students displayed low levels of political efficacy both entering and leaving the course. This finding is consistent with current trends among the wider American population which show decreasing levels of political efficacy. Today 66% of Americans say that government officials are disconnected from them, and have no concern for their needs or opinions. In 1964, only 36% of Americans felt this way (Ginsburg, et al., 2001).

A focus on some of the individual components from the composite political efficacy score, however, did find two significant effects on students after taking the political science course. Students were significantly more likely to discuss politics after taking the course (item #14). There was no equivalent change in behavior in the students taking the psychology course (comparison group).

This finding was also mirrored by item #17, concerning

whether the student keeps up to date with politics. Again, while there was no significant change in the students who took the psychology course, the students who took the political science course were significantly more likely to keep up to date with politics. This trend runs counter to that found by Astin who discovered that the percentage of students who believe that keeping up to date with politics is important has been decreasing as a percentage of the student population. During 1999 this figure reached a new low of 26% of all students surveyed (Astin, 1998). This trend was supported in Mann's (1999) research. In this sample, 37% of the students taking the political science class felt it was important to keep up to date with politics.

It could be argued that external influences had a greater effect on the surveyed population than the college course, particularly in the context of the 2000 Presidential election. The opportunity to discuss politics and change individual political attitudes and behavior was greatly increased by the events of a highly publicized and contentious presidential race during the time span of this study. If this were true, then the effects should also have been reflected in the comparison group, but they were not. While the external influence can not be discounted, the use

of a comparison group may have mitigated much of the effect.

The most proactive item, item #21, whether students felt it was important to influence the political structure, a vital component in political efficacy, was not significantly affected by taking the political science class. The failure of item #21 to be significant suggests that while the students' interest and participation on an individual level can be heightened during an individual semester, their sense of having input in the larger community is either not affected in the college classroom, or may be a longer term change for the student.

Political Tolerance

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course had not become *politically more tolerant* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

18) Promoting racial understanding
26) Help others in difficulty
50) Government should prohibit homosexual relations
54) Racial discrimination is no longer a problem
57) The government should prohibit racist/sexist speech
60) Same sex couples should have the same legal status as heterosexual couples

The second null hypothesis, the composite of the six

items analyzed, found significant change in political tolerance in the comparison group. This is consistent with a body of literature, exemplified by Richard Brody (1994), who analyzed the *We the People Curriculum Program* (developed by the Center for Civic Education) and its effect on students' political attitudes. The report showed that high school students exhibited a much higher degree of political tolerance after exposure to civic education.

Surprisingly however, it was found that a similar change did not occur in this study among the students taking the political science course. These students did not increase their political tolerance as a result of taking the political science course.

Analysis of individual items further supported the idea that taking Introduction to Political Science may actually decrease political tolerance. Fewer students agreed with item #54, concerning whether racial discrimination was still a problem, after taking the political science course than agreed before the course. This negative trend was not displayed in the comparison group. Students taking political science were less concerned about racism after taking the course.

Item #57, which asks students whether the government should prohibit racist/sexist speech, found significant

change in the comparison group and in the treatment group. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected for both groups. Further analysis however, found that the change was in opposite directions. The comparison group was significantly more likely to allow the government to restrict racist/sexist speech, indicating a reduction in political tolerance. Whereas the treatment group was significantly less likely to allow the government to restrict racist/sexist speech, indicating greater political tolerance on this item.

Item #57, therefore, runs counter to the trend for political science students. On all other tolerance items political science students became less tolerant after taking the class. It is conceivable that responses on this item indicate something other than political tolerance. After taking the course, which by definition must address the issue of government power, students may have developed a more libertarian perspective, viewing government control with increasing suspicion and associating government control with civil liberty infringements. At this point, students were also exposed to the idea of freedom of speech. The students in the psychology class had no difficulty with the government taking a proactive role in the control of speech.

Political Spectrum

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course had not *shifted toward the liberal or conservative political spectrum* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

39) Politically conservative
40) Politically liberal

On item #40, which asked students if they considered themselves liberal, the liberalizing effect normally reported with regard to the college experience (Astin, 1977) was clearly not reflected. While there was some movement in the group means over the course of the semester, the change proved insignificant when tested.

It is not surprising that a significant change in students' ideological perspectives did not occur. It should be remembered that the population studied were community college students who were at the beginning of their college careers. These students, to a limited extent, had developed their ideological opinions, being influenced by family and friends. It is unlikely that such powerful forces could be seriously challenged by one course. Further analysis of the results found that students in both the comparison and the treatment groups ranked themselves as very moderate, either in the liberal or conservative category, with the treatment

group yielding a higher score, being slightly more conservative going into the class(2.24 v. 2.01). At the end of the course the movement in means indicated that the political science class students had become more conservative but this finding was not statistically significant.

Political Attitudes

The following items were used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course had not experienced a significant *change in political attitudes* as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class.

42) Government should do more to control pollution
43) Government should raise taxes to reduce deficit
44) There is too much concern for criminals
45) Abortion should remain legal
46) The death penalty should be abolished
47) Sex is OK if people like each other
48) Married women are best at home
49) Marijuana should be legalized
51) Employers should be able to require drug tests
52) A man is not entitled to sex on a date
53) The Government should do more to control handguns
56) The wealthy should pay more taxes
58) It's OK to disobey laws that violate your own values
59) Affirmative Action should be abolished in college entrance requirements

The null hypothesis was not be rejected with regard to changes in political attitudes. The 14 items aggregated under political attitude, using an average of all items in this section, exhibited no significant change in either the comparison or treatment groups. Unlike the other variables, the analysis of individual items was consistent with the aggregated variable; there was no discernible difference in means between the comparison group and treatment group (2.60 v. 2.53). As was indicated in the political spectrum variable, respondents entered the class with very moderate political view points that remained unchanged in their exposure to the political science class. This finding suggests that one semester is not sufficient in duration to change the students' political viewpoints.

Political Sub-fields

Item 41, a list of different undergraduate major fields grouped into general categories was used to test the null hypothesis that the students enrolled in the Introduction to Political Science course did not express *different interest in the several sub-fields* of political science as compared to the students in the Introduction to Psychology class. Students who expressed interest in Political Science, International Relations, Public Administration, Prelaw, in

the post-survey and not in the pre-survey, would represent a change in the student's political attitude or behavior after taking the Introduction to Political Science course.

Students taking a course in political science were more apt to express interest in the fields of political science and pre-law afterwards. The question of how well an undergraduate introductory course functions as a recruitment tool for a particular discipline is an important one. It is often regarded, intuitively, as a strong relationship. These results support this idea to a limited extent. After taking the class, Introduction to Political Science, students were more likely to express an interest in political science as a sub-field, 6.25% of them as compared to 5.1% before taking the class. The sub-field of prelaw also benefitted by the students taking the political science course. At the beginning of the class, 4.3% were likely to express a strong interest in prelaw, whereas 6.25% expressed it as their first choice after taking the class. This finding may support the idea put forth by Mann (1999) that while interest in politics decreases, the number of students choosing political science as a major is increasing. On the other hand, students in the psychology classes, actually expressed less interest in the field of psychology after taking the class.

One explanation for these results is that students enter these two social science classes with different perceptions. It is possible that students entering the political science class had a preconceived perception of a much more difficult subject matter while the students entering the psychology class may have a preconceived perception of a much less rigorous discipline.

Limitations

It is important to note that this study can only speak to the sample of students surveyed in two community colleges in north Florida. Questions regarding extraneous variables affecting the analysis should not be underestimated. While some generalizations can be inferred, they are still subjective evaluations. Many variables enter into a student's life, particularly in the first two years of school. In addition to the general impact of college, the larger collegiate experience has a significant effect on students' political attitudes and behaviors (Astin,1998). The use of a comparison group may have offset possible effects of extraneous variables, even taking into account that a large portion of the sample was in Tallahassee, Florida during the 2000 Presidential race.

This study cannot make assumptions regarding the durability of the change. The change in students after

taking an individual undergraduate college course could be very short term, or it may last a life time. This analysis can only suggest that there are many areas of education, particularly civic education, that warrant further empirical analysis.

In many cases, the inability of the survey items to make finer discrimination caused some issues to be blurred. For example, political tolerance indicators were reversed when the issue of government controls was introduced. Given the choice of limiting the power of government to increase political tolerance, political science students were in favor, and the psychology students were opposed to the proposition.

The effects of the individual instructors, while possibly creating an intervening variable, was accounted for by the variation in 26 different sections of the same populations being sampled. This may have helped to mitigate, but not eliminate pre-measurement biases in the study.

As in all empirical analysis in social science, the possible sources of error must be acknowledged and weighed against the cost of not pursuing the study. In the case of this study, the benefits of a better understanding of the political socialization process in the classroom and thereby improvements in civic education are perceived to be

important benefits of the analysis.

As discussed in Chapter 3, a problematic feature when using surveys of this type is error that results from social context and artificiality (Herzog, 1996). Being in a political science class the students may have claimed to be much more politically active for the purposes of the survey. The survey cover letter stating that the survey would not be used for purposes of grade evaluation, as well as the proctor's reassurance of anonymity, may have mitigated much of the possibility of this error occurring.

This analysis can only attempt to offer alternative hypotheses which will result in competing explicandum. "Social scientists do not believe all human actions, thoughts, and feelings are determined, nor do they lead their lives as though they believed that. The deterministic model does not assume that the causal patterns are simple ones" (Babbie, 1995, p. 66). Limitations related to the factors discussed above must be acknowledged.

Recommendations

Practical Applications

It was the intent of this study to improve our understanding of how students acquire the tools of citizenship and how civic values are learned. What was found was that the methods that are currently used in the sampled

college classrooms may be ineffective, and in some cases, even counter productive to the notion of civic education.

Political Efficacy

Civic education should be more strongly linked to civic participation. Issues raised by Mathews (1994) suggesting that as students learn more about politics they feel left out of the discussion should be further analyzed in the curriculum presented to students of politics. Critical thinking and analysis does not have to lead to apathy. However, current trends in decreased civic participation may not be reversed, unless the role of civic education is further studied, understood and strengthened.

The failure of item #21, whether students feel they have influence in the political structure, to exhibit any significant change after taking the political science class, suggests that while the students' interest and participation on an individual level can be heightened during an individual semester, their sense of having input in the larger community is either not being successfully addressed in the college classroom or may be a longer term change for the student. Jaros and Darcy (1975) found that participatory values were less likely to be transmitted than substantive ones even when overt teaching is involved. Utter (1988) felt that in order to have political participation there must

exist a form of political obligation. The reasoning allowed that if obligation is "attitudinal, instruction must be viewed as an attempt to change the way students feel about certain institutions and processes of democratic government. Hence education to foster democratic citizenship amounts to little more than manipulation" (p. 119).

This author's essay pointed out an important dilemma for the political science educator and for this inquiry. If the political science instructor follows a positivist-based form of instruction, there may not be a development of political obligation for the student. This puts the political science instructor in the position of either becoming a citizen trainer, or an positivist educator. If the current trend continues, we may be left with what Utter (1988) refers to as "the triumph of the skeptic". However, should the political science educator put aside all inclinations to question democratic principles, then education of democratic principles may amount to little more than manipulation (Utter,1988).

This analysis suggests that political obligation may simply be a first step to positivist education. If the role of the positivist is to be met, the political obligation must already be in place before the student goes to a university. Secondary education is more clearly suited for

the establishment of political obligation. If students are to be given a complete understanding of the role of the democratic citizen, civic education must begin earlier than the post-secondary level.

Political Tolerance

This study found that students taking the introduction to political science course may even reduce their degree of political tolerance. It is therefore suggested that college curriculum in political science address the issue of political tolerance more fully, so that students may understand these issues as a component of civil liberties.

It is conceivable that after taking the course, which by definition must address the issue of government power, students may have developed a more libertarian perspective, viewing government control with increasing suspicion and associating government control with civil liberty infringements.

Political tolerance may need to be further addressed as an independent issue, not just as a limit on the powers of government. This may need to be addressed in the classroom by linking political tolerance not just with limitations on government, but with issues such as civil rights or rights of gays. There does not seem to be a clear link presented to students beyond the limitation of the role of the Federal

government.

Political Sub-fields

The academic sub-fields chosen by the students appear to be important at this point in their educational careers. Authors such as Chickering (1981) find that students of both psychology and political science learn in particular ways, highly active and highly reflective -- students whom Chickering (1981) defines as "Divergers". As students enter the beginning stages of developing the learning styles as advanced by Chickering (1981) it is important to better understand some of the inputs students use choosing an academic sub-field and why they may behave differently within different academic disciplines.

Recommendations for Future Research

If this inquiry is to improve our understanding of how students acquire the tools of citizenship and how civic values are learned, it must encourage alternative research and hypotheses. There were several areas of this study which lent themselves to further analysis.

Political Spectrum

A survey specifically focusing on the political spectrum issue may go further in obtaining a better understanding of whether students change their self-perceptions as to whether or not they are liberal or

conservative. The questions should more politically provocative, focusing on classically liberal and conservative issues, such as national defense, power and size of government, or rights of criminals. Better directed survey questions may have resulted in a clearer understanding of students' political attitudes.

Political Attitudes and Tolerance

Survey questions which were applied to political attitudes for this analysis would have yielded clearer results if they had factored out the aspect of governmental powers and attitudes. For example, students did not significantly change their opinions regarding whether abortion should remain legal (item #45), a common litmus test for gauging political attitudes. Students did not change their opinions concerning whether Affirmative Action should be abolished in college entrance requirements (item #59). Both questions addressed whether the government should restrict a particular behavior, instead of whether the students approved or disapproved of the particular behavior.

The students' support for civil liberties can be held constant with separate questions regarding governmental controls which are not related to political attitudes or tolerance. Political attitudes and tolerance could be more directly measured without mention of whether the government

should restrict a particular behavior.

Political Efficacy

The relationship between civic education and civic participation has always been assumed to be a positive one. As discussed earlier in this study (see Chapter 2) Hahn and Green (1983) found that students who studied political science had both a heightened political knowledge *and* a higher level of political efficacy. The difference between this analysis and that of Hahn and Green (1983) is that the 1983 study was a survey research project of randomly selected Villanova University undergraduates in their freshman and senior years. The Hahn and Green (1983) study was an attempt to measure the change in students' attitudes over a four year period.

When compared to the Hahn and Green (1983) study, it is conceivable that while political knowledge and interest may be heightened in the short term (one semester), political efficacy may involve a much more long term behavioral change in students. This study suggests that the relationship between civic education and civic participation should not be taken for granted. While we may be teaching our students about the structure of government, we may also be instilling a negative image. Further research is needed to measure change in attitudes over the longer time period of the

student's college career.

Students' political efficacy may in fact increase at some point later in their academic careers. A study measuring the change in political efficacy after 1 class, after 2 years, and after graduation, may be more accurate in determining if and when a change in political efficacy occurs for the college student.

Finally, this study was conducted during the very controversial 2000 presidential elections in and around the focus of the controversy, Tallahassee Florida. It is suggested that media reporting of the controversy in itself may have caused a decrease in political efficacy. Repeating the study, while attempting to hold all other variables constant, may measure any effect of the controversial election on college students, if there in fact was any.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we must return to the question originally posed by the study. In teaching an Introduction to Political Science course, are colleges increasing American civic education? In terms of one college class, the data is not encouraging. In the aggregate, students taking the Introduction to Political Science course did not increase their political efficacy to a large extent, they became less politically tolerant, and their ideological

opinions and attitudes did not change. Many of the individual items were equally discouraging.

A more positive trend identified among those taking the Introduction to Political Science course was the increased likelihood that these students will discuss politics and keep up to date with political events. Since such activities are obvious prerequisites for meaningful civic participation. It might also be assumed that students would feel that they could influence the political structure after taking the introduction to political science course. This was not the case, however. After taking the course students felt that they had less influence over the political structure than before.

A tentative suggestion is that this may be a case of familiarity breeding contempt, apathy, or powerlessness. The more students discover about the political system, with its myriad of powerful actors, the more they appreciate how difficult it is for a single individual to influence such a complex structure. The purpose of the Introduction to Political Science class is to expose students to the workings of government and to give students the skills needed to critically evaluate the political system. In this mix, there is also a possibility that students will leave the class more cynical about their political system, and

less apt to participate. Is this a hidden by-product of civic education at the college level?

This cynicism was found in several other, broader studies. The Times Mirror Report (1990) found a public that was "angry, self-absorbed, and politically unanchored" (p.5). The report found resentment toward immigrants and the poor, and heightened general cynicism toward government institutions and political parties (p. 5). Mathews (1994) demonstrated that what is generally considered as apathy, is in fact a result of frustration and anger at being left out of the political debate. Citizens generally felt that the process of voting was insignificant when compared to other forms of political expression, especially lobbying by special interest groups and campaign contributions(Mathews, 1994). As students learn the different aspects of politics, inclusive of lobbying and interest groups, they may also feel left out of the debate.

The research reviewed earlier found that American college students have greater levels of political apathy than others in the general population, lower interest in political issues and consequently much lower voter turnout rates (Bennett 1997; Bennett & Rademacher, 1996; Rahn, 1998). Rahn (1998) concluded that the current generation of college students has the lowest level of "citizenship".

When compared to adults, college students today are considerably more disenfranchised from political structures than are adults (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

These studies demonstrate that as students become part of the general constituency their level of apathy decreases. The Hahn and Green (1983) study discovered that students exhibited some change, but only over the long run. In this study, students experienced no change in the short run. If there is any decrease in student apathy, it may only occur later in their academic careers.

The introduction to political science course is often the first and many times the only orientation that most citizens have about how they are governed. More than most disciplines, the effects of political science extends beyond the classroom to the role of citizenship and to the quality of its governmental values. Political education is important in completing a student's liberal arts education, and vital in determining their role as citizens. This study indicates that the introduction to political science course should be enhanced to help facilitate that role.

APPENDIX A

Permission for Use of the CIRP Survey

From: Kit Mahoney <kmahoney@ucla.edu>
To: RICHARD MURGO <MURGOR@mail.tallahassee.cc.fl.us>
Date: 2/2/00 10:27PM
Subject: Re: Fwd: Permission for use

Dr. Murgo:

The Higher Education Research Institute grants permission to you to use the CIRP survey in a study of your political science class which you are undertaking as part of your dissertation. If you publish any results, please cite the institute.

Although I am not personally aware of any researchers following political trends, you should check the HERI Clearinghouse on our webpage. This is a listing of many dissertations, articles, etc. which have used the CIRP data. If you would like to submit an abstract of your dissertation research, we would be pleased to include it on in the Clearinghouse.

Good luck with your dissertation.

Kit Mahoney

At 01:57 PM 1/18/00 -0800, you wrote:
>>Date: Tue, 18 Jan 2000 14:58:35 -0800
>>From: RICHARD MURGO <MURGOR@mail.tallahassee.cc.fl.us>
>>Subject: Permission for use
>>To: heri@ucla.edu
>>X-Mailer: Novell GroupWise Internet Agent 5.5.2.1
>>
>>** Proprietary **
>>
>>Dear directors:
>>
>>My name is Richard Murgo. I teach Political Science at Tallahassee
>Community College. I am currently completing my dissertation on community
>college students' political attitudes. Our college participated in your
>survey in 1997. If it would be possible, I would like to re-administer a
>portion of your survey to my political science class using app. 25 of the
>questions dealing with political attitudes. I will be using the questions
>as a pre-test and post-test.
>>
>>My purpose in corresponding is two-fold. First, if I may get your
>permission in using some of the questions in your survey in conjunction
>with my research? (I am a graduate student in the Florida State Higher
>Education program, Dr. Barbara Mann is my major professor). Is there a
>formal process which you may require?
>>
>>
>>Secondly, are you familiar with others who may be currently focusing on
>the political questions in your survey. I recently have seen some of the
>work done by Sheila Mann who is doing some related work using your data.
>Any current work you may know of would be greatly appreciated
>>
>>Thank you for your time and consideration
>>Richard Murgo

>>
>----------
>William S. Korn, Associate Director for Operations
>Higher Education Research Institute
>Graduate School of Education & Information Studies
>University of California, Los Angeles
>3005 Moore Hall/Mailbox 951521
>Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521
>(310) 825-1925 (voice) (310) 206-2228 (FAX)
>heri@ucla.edu
>http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/heri.html
>----------
>

Kit Mahoney
HERI Business Manager
HERI/UCLA-GSEIS
3005 Moore Hall/Mailbox 951521
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521
ph 310/825-1925
f 310/206-2228
www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/heri.html

APPENDIX B

Student Survey

Student Survey

Thank you for your participation in the following survey. This survey should take no more than 15 minutes of your time to complete. Please answer each question as honestly as possible by marking the choice with an "X", or filling in the appropriate number.

1) What year did you graduate from High School?
_____

2) What was your high school G.P.A.
_____

3) What is your Age?
_____

4) What is your Racial/Ethnic Background?
___White / Caucasian ___Latino
___ African American/Black ___Asian
___American Indian ___Other

5) Did you take any "government" classes in high school?
___ Yes ___ No

6) From what kind of secondary school did you graduate?
___Public
___Private (denominational)
___Private (nondenominational)

7) Have you taken this same survey in another class in the last five days?
___ Yes ___ No

8) How many miles is your college from home?
___5 or less
___6 - 10
___11 - 50
___51 to 100
___101 to 500
___More than 500

9) What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parents?

	Father	Mother
Grammar School or less	___	___
Some high school	___	___
High school graduate	___	___
Some college	___	___
College degree	___	___
Postgraduate degree	___	___

10) What is the Highest academic degree that you intend to obtain? (Mark one)
___None ___ Ph.D or Ed.D
___Associate Degree ___ M.D., D.D.S. or D.V.M.
___Bachelors's Degree ___LL.B. or J.D.
___Master's Degree ___Other

Below is a general list of activities students engage in. Indicate how many <u>hours</u> per week in the last year have you spent participating in each of the following activities. (Mark one for each item)

11) Prayer and meditation
___None
___Less than one
___1 to 2
___3 to 5
___6 to 10
___11 to 15
___16 to 20
___ over 20

12) Participated in political demonstrations
___None
___Less than one
___1 to 2
___3 to 5
___6 to 10
___11 to 15
___16 to 20
___ over 20

13) Performed volunteer work
___None
___Less than one
___1 to 2
___3 to 5
___6 to 10
___11 to 15
___16 to 20
___ over 20

14) Discussed politics
___None
___Less than one
___1 to 2
___3 to 5
___6 to 10
___11 to 15
___16 to 20
___ over 20

15) Participated in a political campaign
___None
___Less than one
___1 to 2
___3 to 5
___6 to 10
___11 to 15
___16 to 20
___ over 20

16) Voted in a student election
___None
___Less than one
___1 to 2
___3 to 5
___6 to 10
___11 to 15
___16 to 20
___ over 20

Indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following: (Mark one for each item)

17) Keeping up to date with politics
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

18) Promoting racial understanding
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

19) Become an authority in my own field
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

20) Obtain recognition from my colleagues
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

21) Influence the political structure
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

22) Influence social values
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

23) Raise a family
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

24) Have administrative responsibility
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

25) Be very well off financially
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

26) Help others in difficulty
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

27) Make a theoretical contribution to science
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

28) Write original works
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

29) Be successful in own business
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

30) Be involved in environmental clean-up
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

31) Develop philosophy of life
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

32) Participate in community action program
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

33) Be a community leader
___Essential
___Very Important
___Somewhat Important
___Not Important

Rate yourself on each of the following traits as <u>you really think</u> you are when compared with the average student of your own age. We want the most accurate estimate of <u>how you see yourself</u>. (Mark one for each item)

34) Academic ability
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

35) Athletic ability
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

36) Drive to achieve
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

37) Leadership ability
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

38) Originality
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

39) Politically conservative
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

40) Politically liberal
___Highest 10%
___Above Average
___Average
___Below Average
___Lowest 10%

41) Below is a list of different undergraduate major fields grouped into general categories. Circle only three of the fields as follows

1– First choice (probable major field of study)
2– Second choice
L–The field of study which is least appealing to you

English	1	2	L	Communications	1	2	L
Journalism	1	2	L	Political Science	1	2	L
Language	1	2	L	International Relations	1	2	L
Music	1	2	L	Public Administration	1	2	L
Philosophy	1	2	L	Prelaw	1	2	L
Speech and Drama	1	2	L	History	1	2	L
Theology	1	2	L	Social work	1	2	L
Other Arts and Humanities	1	2	L	Sociology	1	2	L
Biological Science	1	2	L	Psychology	1	2	L
Business	1	2	L	Women's Studies	1	2	L
International Business	1	2	L	Other Social Sciences	1	2	L
Marketing	1	2	L	Technical Trades	1	2	L
Accounting	1	2	L	Computer Science	1	2	L
Education	1	2	L	Law Enforcement	1	2	L
Engineering	1	2	L	Military Sciences	1	2	L
Chemistry	1	2	L	Other Fields	1	2	L
Statistics	1	2	L	Undecided	1	2	L
Other Physical Science	1	2	L				
Anthropology	1	2	L				
Economics	1	2	L				
Ethnic Studies	1	2	L				
Geography	1	2	L				

Describe your attitude on the following issues.
(Mark one for each item)

42) Government should do more to control pollution
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

43) Government should raise taxes to reduce the federal deficit
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

44) There is to much concern for criminals
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
Strongly Disagree

45) Abortion should remain legal
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

46) The death penalty should be abolished
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

47) Sex is OK if people like each other
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
Moderately Disagree

48) Married women are best at home
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

49) Marijuana should be legalized
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

50) Government should prohibit homosexual relations
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

51) Employers should be able to require drug tests
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

52) A man is not entitled to sex on a date
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

53) The Government should do more to control handguns
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

54) Racial discrimination is no longer a problem
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

55) An individual can do little to change society
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

56) The wealthy should pay more taxes
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

57) The government should prohibit racist/sexist speech
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

58) Its OK to disobey laws that violate your own values
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

59) Affirmative Action should be abolished in college entrance requirements
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

60) Same sex couples should have the same legal status as heterosexual couples
__Strongly Agree
__Moderately Agree
__Moderately Disagree
__Strongly Disagree

Thank You for Your Participation in our Survey!!

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APPENDIX C

Code of Professional Ethics and Practices

Code of Professional Ethics and Practices

We, the members of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, subscribe to the principles expressed in the following code.

Our goal is to support sound practice in the profession of public opinion research. (By public opinion research we mean studies in which the principal source of information about individual beliefs, preferences, and behavior is a report given by the individual himself or herself.)

We pledge ourselves to maintain high standards of scientific competence and integrity in our work, and in our relation both with our clients and with the general public. We further pledge ourselves to reject all tasks or assignments which would in be inconsistent with the principles of this code.

THE CODE

1. *Principles of Professional Practice in the Conduct of Our Work*

A. We shall exercise due care in gathering and processing data, taking all reasonable steps to assume the accuracy of results.

B. We shall exercise due care in the development of research designs and in the analysis of data.

1. We shall employ only research tools and methods of analysis which, in or professional judgement, are well suited to the research problem at hand.
2. We shall not select research tools and methods of analysis because of their special capacity to yield a desired conclusion.
3. We shall not knowingly imply that interpretations of research results, nor shall we tacitly permit interpretations, which are inconsistent with the data available.
4. We shall not knowingly imply that interpretations should be accorded greater confidence that the data actually warrant.

C. We shall describe findings and methods accurately and in appropriate details in all research reports.

APPENDIX D
Survey Cover Letter

Dear Student;

I am graduate student under the direction of Professor Mann in the Department of Educational Leadership at Florida State University. I am conducting a research study to student and faculty perceptions in the college classroom.

I am requesting your participation, which will involve answering the attached questionnaire. It should not take you any longer than ten minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty and it will not affect your grade. The questionnaire is anonymous. The results of the study may be published but your name will not be known.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me or Dr. Mann at 644-7077 or bmann@mailer.edu.

Return of the questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard Murgo
Political Science
Tallahassee Community College
murgor@tcc.cc.fl.us
201-8145

APPENDIX E
Proctor's Script

Proctor's Script

Please read the following to your students prior to administering the enclosed surveys. Again, this survey should take no longer than 15 minutes for the students to complete. Thank you for sharing a portion of your valuable class time.

The completion of the following survey is in no way related to your course-work for this class. Its purpose is simply to help establish how students feel about politics and political science, before and after they take an Introduction to Political Science course. The results of this survey will be used to better understanding student's political perceptions. We ask that you please take a few minutes of your time to respond to the following questions. Your time and efforts are greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX F
Human Subjects Approval

Florida State
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President
for Research
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2811
(850) 644-5260 • FAX (850) 644-1392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

from the Human Subjects Committee

Date: May 15, 2000

From: David Quadagno, Chair DQ/ph

To: Richard Murgo
Tallahassee Community College
444 Appleyard Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Dept: Educational Leadership

Re: Use of Human subjects in Research
Project entitled: Teaching Political Science: the effects on students' political attitudes and behavior

---

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be exempt per 45 CFR § 46.101(b)2 and has been approved by an accelerated review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by May 15, 2001 you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is M1339.

cc: B. Mann
APPLICATION NO. 00.097

Florida State
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President
for Research
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2763
(850) 644-8633 • FAX (850) 644-4392

REAPPROVAL MEMORANDUM

from the Human Subjects Committee

Date: May 1, 2001

From: David Quadagno, Chairperson

To: Richard Murgo
444 Appleyard Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Dept: Educational Leadership

Re: Reapproval of Use of Human subjects in Research
Project entitled:Teaching political science: the effects on students' and behavior

---

Your request to continue the research project listed above involving human subjects has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee. If your project has not been completed by May 15, 2002 please request renewed approval.

You are reminded that a change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must report to the Chair promptly, and in writing, any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chairman of your department and/or your major professor are reminded of their responsibility for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in their department. They are advised to review the protocols of such investigations as often as necessary to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

:hh
cc: B. Mann
human/renewal.hs
APPLICATION NO.01.207 -R

APPENDIX G
THE IMPACT OF THE POLITICAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM ON STUDENTS' POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS
STUDENT SURVEY CODEBOOK

THE IMPACT OF THE POLITICAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM ON STUDENTS' POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS
Student Survey Codebook

items 1 - 10, were treated as individual variables.

item 1 were valued as;
last two digits(IE. 1997=97), except 2000 or 2001,
which is 20 or 21

item 2 were valued as;
maximum three digit GPA

item 3 were valued as the actual age

item 4 were valued as;
1 = white
2 = Latino
3 = black
4 = Asian
5 = Indian
6 = other

item 5 were valued as;
1 = yes
2 = no

item 6 were valued as;
1 = public
2 = private (denominational)
3 = private (nondenominational)

item 7 were valued as;
1 = yes
2 = no

item 5 were valued as;
1 = 5 or less
2 = 11-50
3 = 51 - 100
4 = 101-500
5 = more than 500

item 9 was split into two variables, 9a for Father, 9b for Mother

9a (Father) was valued as;
1 = grammar school or less
2 = some high school
3 = high school graduate
4 = some college
5 = college degree
6 = postgraduate degree

9b (Mother) was valued as;
1 = grammar school or less
2 = some high school
3 = high school graduate
4 = some college
5 = college degree
6 = postgraduate degree

item 10 was valued as;
1 = None
2= Associate Degree
3 = Bachelors's Degree
4 = Master's Degree
5 = Ph.D or Ed.D
6 = M.D., D.D.S. or D.V.M.
7 = LL.B. or J.D.
8 = Other

Section II items 11 - 16 were valued as;
.5 = None
1 = Less than one
1.5 = 1 to 2
2 = 3 to 5
2.5 = 6 to 10
3 = 11 to 15
3.5 = 16 to 20
4 = over 20

Section III, items 17 - 32 were valued as;
4 = Essential
3 = Very Important
2 = Somewhat Important
1 = Not Important

Section IV, items 34 - 40 were valued as;
4 = Highest 10%
3.2 = Above Average

2.4 = Average
1.6 = Below Average
.8 = Lowest 10%

Item 41 was divided into three question; 41a1 for the first choice, 41b2 for the second choice, and 41cL for the least appealing choice.

item 41a1 for the first choice was valued as;
4 = 1
2.3 = 2
1.3 = L

item 41b2 for the second choice was valued as;
4 = 1
2.3 = 2
1.3 = L

item 41cL for the least appealing choice was valued as;
4 = 1
2.3 = 2
1.3 = L

listed professions will be numbered randomly;
1 = English
2 = Journalism
3 = Language
4 = Music
5 = Philosophy
6 = Speech and Drama
7 = Theology
8 = Other Arts and Humanities
9 = Biological Science
10 = Business
11 = International Business
12 = Marketing
13 = Accounting
14 = Education
15 = Engineering
16 = Chemistry
17 = Statistics
18 = Other Physical Science
19 = Anthropology
20 = Economics
21 = Ethnic Studies
22 = Geography
23 = Communications
24 = Political Science

25 = International Relations
26 = Public Administration
27 = Prelaw
28 = History
29 = Social work
30 = Sociology
31 = Psychology
32 = Women's Studies
33 = Other Social Sciences
34 = Technical Trades
35 = Computer Science
36 = Law Enforcement
37 = Military Sciences
38 = Other Fields
39= Undecided

Section V, items 42 - 60, were valued as;
4 = Strongly Agree
3 = Moderately Agree
2 = Moderately Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree
Coding was reversed for items:
44
48
50
51
52
54
57
59

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Richard C. Murgo has been a Professor of Political Science at Tallahassee Community College since 1994 and is currently faculty coordinator for the department of Political Science and the department of Economics. He holds Masters Degrees in Political Science from Florida State University and in Applied Economics from the University of Central Florida. He received his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Florida State University.

Richard established a Model United Nations program at T.C.C., which now includes a three credit course, annual participation in two conferences, and the hosting of a state-wide high school conference. Richard is a member of the UNA-USA HBCU/Community College Model UN Initiative. In addition to his role as Model UN faculty advisor, Richard is the coordinator for the T.C.C. Boys and Girls State Dual Enrollment Program which has been recognized as one of the leading programs of its type in the country. Richard also established and functions as coordinator for the Political Science Internship Program. This program now includes all full time political science faculty and facilitates 20 to 25

students per year, placing interns both domestically and internationally. To date, Richard has received a grant to create T.C.C.'s first Office of Student Volunteerism and a subsequent grant to maintain the program.

Richard has presented papers at; The 1999 annual meeting of Florida Political Science Association, *Technology in the Political Science Classroom,* the 63rd Annual Conference of American Legion Boys State Directors, *The Florida Dual-enrollment Program,* The 1996 League for Innovation Conference, *An International Relations Computer Simulation for Use in the Classroom.* He also chaired a Roundtable presentation at the 2000 annual meeting of the Florida Political Science Association, *Using Model United Nations to Teach International Relations.* Additionally Richard has co-published two articles, *Technology in the Post-secondary Social Science Classroom* in Florida Technology in Education Quarterly, Summer, 1995 and *The Treatment of the United Nations in Textbooks: A National Review Report to the United Nations Association, 2001.*

In addition to academic pursuits, Richard has been a member of the Board of Directors for *Kids Voting, Leon County* since 1996, currently as Assistant Chairman. Richard has been a member of Omicron Delta Epsilon (International

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