

Report of the Committee on Plurality versus Single Transferable Vote for APSA Elections*

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Executive Summary

The main theme of this report on APSA Election Rules is that “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

We concur with the findings of the two previous Election Review Committees that the Nominating Committee has done an admirable job in designing slates that have been well balanced with respect to at least six dimensions of diversity: race, gender, Hispanic/non-Hispanic, geographic location, area of professional interest and academic/non-academic employment status. (Unfortunately, non-PhD institutions have been underrepresented, but we expect this problem to be ameliorated now that it has been called to the attention of the Nominating Committee.) Moreover, the recommendations of the Nominating Committee have been well received by the Association: in the last 25 years, all but one of more than 300 people proposed by the Nominating Committee has been elected. This is true despite the fact that it takes only ten signatures for someone to offer a challenge.

The Association uses multi-seat elections to fill the three Vice-Presidencies, and the eight Council seats that become open each year. As requested, we considered the merits of the Single-Transferable Vote (STV) as a possible replacement of the plurality voting method currently used in these multi-seat elections. We find that in the abstract, STV has certain theoretical advantages over the plurality. For one thing, STV makes it substantially easier for a challenger to be elected who represents a particular group, point of view, or interest. Unfortunately, there is some evidence from APSA’s two petition-driven elections that successful challengers might well reduce rather than insure the diversity with respect to the six dimensions mentioned earlier. Therefore, in the context of a responsible Nominating Committee, we find no compelling reason to change our voting rules for multi-seat elections.

In the case of single seat elections, the Single-Transferable Vote method is known as Alternative Voting. We find that for single-seat elections, Alternative Voting is superior to plurality because it prevents “spoilers” or what can be called the “Nader effect.” Alternative Voting accomplishes this by using voters’ rank order preferences to conduct one or more an instant runoffs. On each count, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated from consideration, and the votes for that candidate are transferred to the voters’ next choice.

Currently, APSA election rules call for Alternative Voting when there are more than two candidates for President-elect, but use plurality for Secretary or Treasurer.

Our four recommendations can be summarized as follows.

1. No changes should be made in the APSA election rules for the multi-seat elections of the three Vice-Presidents, and the Council. If and when APSA election outcomes suggest that the current system is failing to achieve diverse representation, this conclusion should be revisited by the Council.

2. Whether or not changes are made in procedures for multi-seat elections, Alternative Voting should be used for the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. Since this is not urgent, it can wait until the Constitutional amendment process is invoked for other reasons

3. For fairness, names should be rotated on the ballots.

4. Recognizing that candidates are typically drawn from the pool of people who have been active in the Association, we recommend the Council consider ways to promote diversity in all of the Association's activities, and especially in leadership roles.

I. Introduction

A. APSA's Current Election Rules

Here is how the APSA's current election system works.

A Nominating Committee is appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Council. There are six members, with overlapping two year terms.

The Nominating Committee is instructed by the Constitution to nominate one, and only one, candidate for each open position.¹ In practice, the Nominating Committee has produced slates that are balanced with respect to six dimensions of diversity: gender, race, Hispanic/non-Hispanic, field of professional interest and geographic distribution.

With one exception the elections use plurality voting, i.e. the candidate with the most votes is elected. For example, the Council has eight open positions each year, each for a two year term. If there are one or more candidates in addition to the eight proposed by the Nominating Committee, voters are allowed to cast up to eight votes, and the top eight candidates are elected. The same holds true for the three Vice-Presidents taken together, and the separate offices of Secretary and Treasurer. The only exception to the plurality voting occurs when there are more than two candidates for the position of President-elect - a situation that has not arisen in at least 25 years.²

B. The Council's Review of the Election Rules

Over the last five years, there have been three committees appointed to review the Association's election procedures with special attention to insuring the protection of diverse representation among the officers and the Council.

1. The first Election Review Committee, chaired by Gary Jacobson, focused mainly on whether competitive elections should be mandated. This could be done by requiring the Nominating Committee to propose more than one candidate for each open position. The committee gathered data on the characteristics of APSA members and on the characteristics of elected officers and Council members for the previous eight years. It also reviewed the experience of other professional associations. The committee's report, known as the "Jacobson Report"³ found the present system was working well to achieve diverse representation, and recommended against mandating competitive elections. The Committee did recommend changes in how the Nominating Committee is chosen,⁴ and called for further consideration of the issues. In response, the Council arranged for a public discussion at the following Annual Meeting,⁵ and a second Elections Review Committee was appointed.

¹ For the office of President-elect, the Nominating Committee is not restricted to one candidate. See Appendix I for the relevant sections of the Constitution and By-Laws.

² See Appendix I for what happens in this rare situation.

³ The April 2002 Jacobson Report is available at <http://www.apsanet.org/news/elections/electionsreport.pdf>

⁴ See Section V part B below.

⁵ A report on this August 2002 Town Meeting on Governance of APSA is available at www.apsanet.org/about/governance/townhall.cfm. Earlier discussions at the April 2002 Midwest Political Science Association are reflected in an ad-hoc committee report available at

2. The second Election Review Committee was chaired by Kirstie McClure, and was given a charge to “consider how contested elections could be made consistent with the interests of minorities, while avoiding the problems associated with set asides or quotas.”⁶ After gathering data on the officers and Council over several decades, it concluded that the “Nominating Committees over the last thirty-odd years have done an admirable job along many dimensions of diversity,” except that its candidates underrepresented non-PhD institutions. The McClure report made a series of recommendations, including the use of the Single Transferable Vote (STV) for all elections.⁷ In its September 2004 meeting, the Council rejected the proposed changes related to election of Vice-Presidents, requested that the Nominating Committee consider candidates from non-PhD institutions, discussed how nominators would be listed on the ballot, and decided to consider STV at its next meeting. In pursuance of the last action, a third election review committee was appointed.

3. The third committee, called the STV Committee, was given the narrow mandate to consider STV, especially with respect to ensuring the protection of diverse representation.⁸ The Committee consists of Robert Axelrod and John Garcia.

C. APSA’s Election Experience

In practice, the slate offered by the Nominating Committee has rarely been challenged. Therefore, the Association has had little experience with contested elections. In fact, over the last twenty-five years APSA had only two contested elections, both for members of the Council. In 2003 there was one candidate by petition and that candidate was not elected. In 2004 there were two candidates by petition one of whom, Harvey Mansfield, was elected. With 13 or 14 open seats each year, the Nominating Committee has offered more than 300 candidates in the last 25 years, all but one of whom has been elected.⁹

As both of the previous Electoral Review Committees have found, the Nominating Committee has over the years provided diverse representation not only with respect to demographic diversity, but also geographical distribution, and fields of professional interest. The Nominating Committee slates, however, have not given adequate representation to APSA members from non-PhD granting institutions, and the Council has called this fact to the attention of the Nominating Committee.

The two petition driven elections had interesting outcomes with respect to diversity. In 2003, the challenger came very close to defeating a female professor from a historically

<http://www.apsanet.org/news/elections/electionprovisions.cfm>. APSA also has an election forum that focuses mainly on whether competitive elections should be mandatory. See <http://www.apsanet.org/news/elections/electionsforum.cfm>

⁶ The background and the charge are at

<http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/electionreview.cfm>

⁷ The McClure Report is available at

<http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/electionreview.pdf>

Note that the McClure report refers to the current plurality system the “Block Vote.”

⁸ For the charge to the STV Committee, see Appendix 2.

⁹ The Treasurer is elected on alternate years for a two year term. The other 13 elected positions are President Elect (who automatically becomes President after one year), three Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and eight members of the Council (each serving a two-year term).

Black university recommended by the Nominating Committee. In 2004, the successful challenger defeated a candidate recommended by the Nominating Committee who had been the chair of his university's Department of African-American Studies.¹⁰

II. Assessment of STV

A. What is STV?

When applied to single-seat elections, STV is known as Alternative Voting. The basic idea of Alternative Voting is to guarantee that the winner receives support from a majority, and not just a plurality of the voters.

APSA rules specify Alternative Voting when there are more than two candidates for President-elect, and only this office.

In Alternative Voting, voters rank candidates in order of preference. If no candidate has a majority of votes cast after the first ballot, ballots are counted several times. On each count, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated from consideration, and the votes for that candidate are transferred to the voters' next choice. Ballots that indicate no additional choices are considered "exhausted."¹¹ To visualize how Alternative Voting works, take a look at the delightful PowerPoint demonstration offered by the Center for Voting and Democracy.¹²

The easiest way to see the implications of Alternative Voting compared to Plurality Voting is to consider Florida in the 2000 US Presidential election between Al Gore, George Bush, Ralph Nader, and Pat Buchanan. Based on what did happen, we can surmise that had this election been conducted with Alternative Voting, no candidate would have gotten a majority of first place votes. But then an "instant run-off" would first have eliminated Buchanan and reallocated his votes. Next, Nader would have been eliminated, and his votes would have been reallocated. Finally, the two-way race between Gore and Bush would probably have gone to Gore. Gore would probably have won because there were far fewer Buchanan supporters than Nader supporters, and enough of Nader's supporters would probably have listed Gore as their second preference to give Gore a majority. Put another way, with Alternative Voting supporters of a weak candidate, such as Buchanan or Nader, do not have to make the difficult decision of voting for their favorite candidate or voting for the preferred choice among the candidates who might actually win.

For multi-seat elections, STV first calculates the number of votes needed to elect a candidate. This is called is the "Droop quota" (no kidding). For example, with eight Council seats to be filled, the Droop quota is one vote more than one-ninth of the total votes. Likewise, in the combined election of the three Vice-Presidents, the Droop quota is one more than one-quarter of the total votes.

¹⁰ For candidate statements and election results, see <http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/election.cfm>.

¹¹ This description is taken of the American Psychological Association's *Monitor on Psychology*, January 2005, page 10. For the formal APSA rules see Appendix 1. For more on the history, usage, and politics of Alternative Voting (also known as Instant Runoff Voting), see <http://www.instantrunoff.com/faq.asp>

¹² See <http://www.fairvote.org/irv/muppets/Muppets%20Use%20IRV.ppt>

The election process for STV proceeds as follows. If the candidate with the most first preference votes achieves the Droop quota, he or she is deemed elected. If that candidate has more votes than the Droop quota, the “surplus” votes are reallocated to the voters’ next choice. After that, things proceed as with AV. The ballots are counted several times. On each count, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated from consideration, and the votes for that candidate are transferred to the voters’ next choice. When a candidate attains the Droop quota, he or she is elected, surplus votes are reallocated¹³, and the process continues until the required number of seats is filled.

B. Empirical Observations

STV is used in governmental elections in Australia, Ireland, Malta, Northern Ireland and New Zealand.¹⁴ In these cases, STV typically serves as a type of proportional representation among established political parties. Since APSA does not, at least not yet, have established parties who compete with each other, the experience of these countries is of limited value.

In United States, STV was used in many local elections in the first half of the twentieth century. STV lost its popularity in the U.S. after a Communist was elected to the New York City Council in 1947.¹⁵ Today, the only official bodies in the United States using STV are the City Council and School Committee of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

For single-seat elections using Alternative Voting the most experience relevant for APSA’s is the use of Alternative Voting by the American Psychological Association (APA) for election of their President. Chamberlin, Cohen and Coombs¹⁶ have analyzed individual rankings from five elections for APA President, each with more than 10,000 ballots. In these single-seat elections, Alternative Voting was found to be superior to plurality on both criteria the authors considered: resistance to manipulation, and likelihood of selecting the candidate (if there was one) who would beat each of the others in a pairwise contest.¹⁷

¹³ A good way to reallocate votes is the proportionate method used in Irish elections. See http://www.oasis.gov.ie/government_in_ireland/elections/proportional_representation.html?PHPSESSID=fe117d4bb6373eea8e4bf35999978c5. For more on the history, theory and practice of Alternative Voting (also know as Instant Runoff Voting), see <http://www.instantrunoff.com/faq.asp> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instant-runoff_voting.

¹⁴ For more on the history, theory and practice of STV, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single_transferable_vote.

¹⁵ See <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/articles/kolesar.htm>

¹⁶ John R. Chamberlin, Jerry L. Cohen, and Clyde H. Coombs, 1984. “Social Choice Observed: Five Presidential Elections of the American Psychological Association,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 479-502. See also John R. Chamberlin and Fran Featherston, 1986. “Selecting a Voting System,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 48, No. 2., pp. 347-369. Both articles are available through JSOR.

¹⁷ The McClure report provided no information on The American Psychological Association, perhaps because they did not respond to an inquiry.

C. Theoretical Analysis

A bewildering variety of voting systems have been designed, each with its own theoretical advantages. There is a considerable literature analyzing the theoretical properties of these voting systems, and trying to assess their relative merits using a variety of criteria. On behalf of the second Elections Review Committee, Dick Katz undertook a comprehensive analysis of these systems.¹⁸ Based mostly on theoretical considerations, Katz favored STV, and this conclusion was endorsed in the Committee's final report. Given that the McClure report unanimously recommended STV, the mandate for the present Committee has been narrowly framed to consider only STV in comparison with APSA's present method of plurality voting.

It is worth summarizing Dick Katz's theoretical comments on STV.

1. For single seat elections, STV in the form of Alternative Voting has the advantage of yielding a majority (as opposed to a plurality) choice (p. 41).

2. One of the primary advantages of STV is that "it does not, at least in theory, require overt coordination among candidates in order to produce an outcome that approximates that which might be expected with perfect competition." (p. 43)

3. Unfortunately, STV does not allow a voter to vote for diversity *per se*. For example, suppose "I want a Latina elected not because I want to maximize Latina representation but because I want diverse representation (and therefore want only one Latina to leave room for other types of candidates to be elected)." Now suppose there are two Latina candidates. I will certainly give a high rank to one of them. Here is the rub: Without knowing whether that candidate will win, I don't know whether diversity will be best served by giving a high rank to the other Latina candidate (in case the first is not elected) or not (in case the first *is* elected) (p.43)

4. For groups supported by less than 1/9 of the voters, considerable coordination would be needed to achieve representation on the Council. For example, "[r]ather than agreeing a Latina should be elected from time to time, for example, the supporters of Latina representation would have to coordinate which Latina and which time. (This is, of course, exactly what the nominating committees do for us - for example assuring that there will be one member of a small group on the Council by nominating a member of that group in alternate years.)" (p. 43).

In discussing its recommendation for STV, the McClure Report makes the following theoretical points.¹⁹

1. STV minimizes the number of "wasted votes",²⁰
2. STV allows voters to pool their votes on a single candidate without requiring coordination.
3. STV retains the norms that one votes for individuals rather than lists or groups.

¹⁸ Katz's analysis is available on pages 38-55 (Appendix III), of the McClure Report. See <http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/electionreview.pdf>.

¹⁹ See pages 8-9 of the McClure report, available at <http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/electionreview.pdf>.

²⁰ Technically, wasted votes are votes cast by voters who after the election might reasonably conclude "if I and others like me had abstained, it would not have mattered.

4. STV minimizes the institutional impediments to the election of minority (however defined) representation, although it provides not guarantee descriptive (or other) diversity of outcome.

An additional theoretical consideration is that in STV or Alternative Voting a sincere expression of ones rank order preferences can - in certain circumstances - result in the defeat of a favored candidate who could have been elected with an (insincere) strategic ballot.²¹ Although Alternative Voting and STV are both susceptible to manipulation, there are both empirical²² as well as theoretical reasons²³ to believe that neither is as vulnerable to manipulation as plurality voting is.

Unfortunately, to the best of our knowledge, the literature on theoretical effects of STV and Alternative Voting does not consider these voting systems in the APSA context of a Nominating Committee which is mandated to design a slate that takes into account multiple dimensions of diversity.

III. Plurality versus STV

A. For single seat elections

For single-seat elections, plurality allows and even encourages “spoilers” who can distort the election outcome. A spoiler is a weak candidate who attracts enough votes from a strong candidate to prevent him or her from winning a plurality. For example, in the 2000 US Presidential election Bush had an incentive to help nominate Nader as a spoiler precisely because Bush would expect Nader to take more votes from Gore than from himself.

In contrast, under Alternative Voting, the presence of someone like Nader would *not* distort the outcome in a three candidate race. The reason is that under Alternative Voting, the weakest candidates would be eliminated and their votes reallocated in a series of an instant runoffs. For single seat elections Approval Voting is clearly superior to plurality because it prevents a weak candidate from being a spoiler, and it never requires voters to waste their vote if they express their true preferences. Thus Alternative Voting is clearly superior to plurality in elections with only one seat to be filled.

In fact, APSA Constitution already specifies Alternative Voting (the single-seat version of STV), when there are more than two candidates for President-elect.²⁴ Although this situation has not arisen for at least 25 years, it does make good sense to specify Alternative Voting in this contingency. If APSA were to update its election rules, the same arguments would apply equally well to the other single-seat elections, namely Secretary and Treasurer.

²¹ See E. Stensholt, “Nonmonotonicity of AV,” Voting Matters, Issue 15, 2002. Available at <http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/publications/votingmatters/15P2.htm>

²² See Chamberlin et al. (1984) and Chamberlin et al. (1986) cited earlier.

²³ As discussed earlier, plurality is especially vulnerable to a “spoiler” like Ralph Nader.

²⁴ For APSA election rules, see Appendix 1.

B. For multiple seat elections

In the case of APSA, there are two multiple seat elections, one for the three Vice Presidents, and the other for the eight Council seats that become vacant each year. We will discuss the Council elections, but similar considerations apply to the election of the three Vice Presidents. Our analysis goes beyond the theoretical properties of STV discussed earlier, and considers the likely strategic implications in the context of the history and politics of the American Political Science Association.

1. As we have seen, STV would allow a group or point of view that has the support of 1/9 of the voters to guarantee itself a seat on the Council.²⁵ Under plurality, a successful challenger will typically require support from nearly half the voters (assuming most voters support most of the Nominating Committee's slate). For example, in the 2004 contested election for Council, a candidate wound up needing 49% of the votes to win one of the eight available seats.²⁶ On the other hand, STV would have allowed such a group or point of view supported by just one-ninth of the voters to secure a Council seat on its own. Indeed, over time, such a group could always hold two Council seats by electing one each year for a two year term.

2. Knowing that it is much easier to win a least one or two seats under STV, there will almost certainly be more petition-generated challenges to the Nominating Committee's slate.

3. The election of more challengers under STV might actually lower the diversity of representation on the Council. As we have seen, the Nominating Committee slates have achieved diversity with respect to salient demographic characteristics as well as the field of professional interest and geographic location.²⁷ The Nominating Committee candidate most likely to be defeated by a challenger might well be a person chosen to balance the slate with respect to one or more dimensions of diversity. As we have seen, this is no idle concern: the candidate who almost lost to a challenger in 2003 was a woman from a historically Black university, and the candidate who *did* lose to a challenger in 2004 had previously been chair of his university's Department of African-American Studies. Under STV this problem would be magnified because challenges would more often succeed.

4. For better or worse, these challengers will typically present themselves on behalf of certain groups, points of view or interests. A successful challenger is likely to feel a mandate to act accordingly. On the other hand, a candidate on the Nominating Committee slate, probably has more flexibility in defining a role, even if the Nominating Committee had a specific reason or reasons for recommending that candidate.

5. Because there will be more challengers, and because more challenges are likely to succeed under STV, the Council the will typically include at least a few challengers. Moreover, the successful challengers might well be assertive about the issues they represent. For this reason, a Council elected via STV would therefore likely to be more fractious than the Councils that have been elected by plurality. Whether having more challengers and more

²⁵ A successful candidate for the Council under STV does not have to be ranked first by 1/9 of the voters. At a minimum, a successful candidate only needs to achieve one-ninth of the total votes after seven other candidates have been eliminated and their votes reallocated.

²⁶ See <http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/election.cfm>

²⁷ As noted earlier, non-PhD institutions have been underrepresented.

assertive members of the Council is good or bad depends on ones perspective on the role of APSA and its Council, ones views about contention vs. consensus, and ones stand on specific issues.

6. The Nominating Committee may have more trouble recruiting candidates under STV because (a) there is a far greater chance of being defeated, and (b) even if elected, service on a fractious Council may seem less attractive to many potential candidates.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Elections

When only a single candidate is to be elected, STV is clearly superior to plurality. The reason is that in a single-seat election the candidate who is the first preference of the most voters, is not necessarily the candidate who has the greatest support. This is illustrated most clearly in the case of a spoiler, like Nader, can draw votes away from a candidate who would otherwise win. STV solves this problem by providing for an instant run-off based on the rank order preferences of the voters.

The superiority of STV in single-seat elections is no doubt why the APSA Constitution already specifies STV when there are more than two candidates for President-elect. The same reasoning applies to the offices of Secretary and Treasurer, and we see no good reason for not using STV for those offices as well.

APSA also conducts multi-seat elections for the three Vice Presidents, and the eight Council seats that become available each year. As long as the Nominating Committee can solve the coordination problem by producing well balanced lists of candidates, and as long as its recommended candidates win all, or almost all, of the available positions, we find no compelling advantage to STV. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that under current conditions, STV might well lower demographic diversity.

With respect to question of ensuring demographic diversity, the plurality system has worked well because the Nominating Committee slates have been well-balanced.²⁸ STV would improve the ability of moderate sized groups to assure their own representation on the Council. On the other hand, the fact that a mere ten people can nominate a challenger provides an incentive Nominating Committee to be attentive not only to diversity, but also to other dimensions of concern to the APSA membership.

If, in the future, APSA becomes so polarized that the Nominating Committee is unable to design a slate that attains widespread support, some form of proportional representation (such as STV) would be preferable to plurality.²⁹ Since all but one of the last 300 candidates from the Nominating Committee has been elected, we do not see this as an urgent problem.

²⁸ As noted above, balance has been sustained, not just in terms of demographic diversity, but also with respect to geographic location, and fields of professional interest. We regard the under representation of non-PhD institutions as a problem that is likely to be ameliorated now that the problem has been pointed out to the Nominating Committee.

²⁹ Dick Katz expects that “once the norm against petition-driven elections is well and truly breached, the numbers of candidates will explode.” (page 47 of the McClure Report). We think this is unlikely because under the current rules it is relatively difficult for a challenger actually to get elected.

Since the plurality system has worked well to ensure diversity of the APSA Council and officers, and STV might lower diversity, we see no reason abandon plurality for multi-seat elections.

With respect to APSA election rules, we recommend the following:

Recommendation 1. Given how well the election system has worked for ensuring diverse representation, we recommend no changes in the APSA election rules for the multi-seat elections of the three Vice-Presidents, and the Council. If and when APSA election outcomes suggest that the current system is failing to achieve diverse representation, this conclusion should be revisited by the Council.

Recommendation 2. Whether or not changes are made in procedures for multi-seat elections, Alternative Voting should be used for the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. Since this is not urgent, it can wait until the Constitutional amendment process is invoked for other reasons.

Recommendation 3. Regardless of the voting system used, the By-Laws should be amended to specify that the order of the names on the ballot shall be rotated.

B. Other Steps to Ensure the Protection of Diverse Representation

We have also been asked to “recommend and offer motions for what, if anything, the Council should do to ensure the protection of diverse representation in petition-generated elections.” While the current electoral system has worked well so far, we believe it would be helpful to increase the size of the pool available to help sustain diversity in the APSA leadership.

Recommendation 4. We offer the following motion for approval by the Council:

“Recognizing the importance of diverse representation among the elected officers and Council members, and recognizing that APSA Officers and Council members are usually drawn from the pool of people who have been active in other APSA activities, the Council endorses and supports:

1. efforts to promote diversity in all of its activities, and especially in leadership roles such as membership on APSA committees, and Chairs of Panels and Sections at the Annual Meetings,
2. efforts to encourage the Organized Sections to take similar actions to promote diversity among in its activities, and among its leadership roles,
3. efforts to support the role of the various Status Groups in the recruitment of potential leaders, and
4. efforts to support diversity within the profession, in regard to both entry and retention.

As a first step in this regard, the Council hereby requests the APSA staff to prepare a report describing the Association’s current efforts in these areas so that the Council can consider what additional steps should be taken to be taken in pursuance of these goals.”

We also considered the Jacobson Committee’s suggestions for changing the way the members of Nominating Committee are chosen. As mentioned in the Introduction, each year three members of the Nominating Committee are appointed for two year terms by the

President, with the advice and consent of the Council. To insure fairness in representation on the Nominating Committee itself, The Jacobson Committee recommended that the members of the Nominating Committee be chosen from the Council (excluding ex-officio members) by lot, three per year, and expanding the terms of service to three years and thus the size of the committee to nine members.³⁰ We do not support this proposed change because it would constitute a new three year commitment for three-eighths of the people elected to the Council.³¹ Moreover, we do not see any reason to believe that a subset of members of the Council would be any better at designing a well-balanced slate than have been the individuals chosen for just such a purpose.

In sum, our primary conclusion is that APSA's combination of a responsible Nominating Committee with plurality voting for multi-seat elections has worked well. Changing to a Single Transferable Vote is more likely to lessen rather than ensure the diversity of APSA's officers and Council.

Appendix 1. Text of APSA Election Rules

“The elective officers, except the President, shall be chosen by vote of the members of the Association attending the Annual Business Meeting, a quorum being present, provided that whenever there is a contest for any elected office or offices such elections shall be conducted by mail ballot of the entire individual membership. In the latter event the Executive Director shall distribute ballots within thirty (30) days following the Annual Business Meeting and under such other conditions as the Council may prescribe, and he or she shall count only ballots returned within thirty (30) days following distribution; each contested election, except as specified below for the President-Elect, shall be determined by a plurality of those voting on the particular office; if the number of nominees for the set of vice-presidencies or for Council membership exceeds the number of offices constitutionally to be filled, all such nominees shall appear on the mail ballot, members shall be entitled to vote for a number equal to the number of offices in the set, and the nominees ranking highest in the poll, in a number equal to the number of offices, shall be declared elected. The President-Elect shall be chosen by the above method only if there are two and only two nominees for the office. Should there be three or more nominees for President-Elect, ballots for that office shall be so designed as to enable members to designate their rank-ordered preferences by placing numbers beside the names of the nominees ("1" for first preference, "2" for second preference, and so on for each nominee). If no nominee receives at least fifty-percent-plus-one of the first preferences, other preferences shall be added from the first-preference ballots of each eliminated nominee according to the standard method of the alternative vote system, which shall be prescribed by the Council in advance of nominations, until one nominee receives at least fifty-percent-plus-one of the aggregated preferences and is declared the winner.

³⁰ See page 15-16 of the Jacobson Report at <http://www.apsanet.org/news/elections/electionsreport.pdf>

³¹ Each year eight new members join the Council, and each year three members of the Council are selected (not necessarily all or any from that cohort).

“After each annual meeting the President shall appoint with the advice and consent of the Council and with due regard to geographical distribution and the fields of professional interest, three members to a Nominating Committee of six, to serve for two-year terms; and he or she shall designate the chair. The Committee may canvass the membership directly or indirectly for suggestions, and shall submit to the next Annual Business Meeting one nomination for each elective office to be filled, except the Presidency”.

- Article V of the APSA Constitution.³²

“In selecting nominees for elective offices, the Nominating Committee should give due regard to diversity, geographical distribution, fields of professional interest, type of institution, and academic/nonacademic employment status.”

- APSA By-Law 2.4³³

Appendix 2. Charge to the STV Committee

The STV Committee is charged to submit a report no later than one month before the spring 2005 meeting of the Council. The report should (1) assess the advantages and disadvantages of using STV in petition-driven contested elections for APSA officers and/or Council, and (2) recommend and offer motions for what, if anything, the Council should do to ensure the protection of diverse representation in petition-generated elections. In preparing its assessment and recommendation, the Committee shall give careful consideration to the Final Report of the Elections Review Committee, including its appendices. The Committee also shall consider the views of the various Status Committees and Caucuses.

Appendix 3. Additional Source Material

In addition to the sources cited in the Report’s footnotes, we recommend the following.

Bowler, Shaun and David M. Farrell, 1991. Voter Behavior under STV-PR: Solving the Mystery of the Irish Party System, *Political Behavior*, Vol. 13, No. 4. pp. 303-320.

Gill, Jeff and Jason Gaines, 2002. “Why Does Voting Get So Complicated? A Review of Theories for Analyzing Democratic Participation, *Statistical Science*, Vol. 17, no. 4, 383-404.

Zimmerman, Joseph F. 1994. “Alternative Voting Systems for Representative Democracy, *PS: Political Science & Politics*, December, p.674-677.

On use of STV and Alternative Voting in other countries:

³² The APSA Constitution is available at

<http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/constitution.cfm>.

³³ APSA By-Laws are available at <http://www.apsanet.org/about/governance/bylaws.cfm>

http://www.devolution.ac.uk/Reilly_Electoral_Systems_and_conflict_management.pdf

<http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Resource-material-STV-Information-STV-around-the-world?OpenDocument>

http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Resource-material-STV-Information-Index?OpenDocument#five

<http://www.aceproject.org/main/english/es/esy_au.htm

On history of use of STV in US, and its demise:

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/articles/Brief%20History%20of%20PR.htm>