

**Call for Paper/Panel Proposals**  
**APSA 2011 Political Communication Pre-Conference**  
**The Political Communication of Threat**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual APSA Pre-Conference on Political Communication will be held on Wednesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 somewhere in the vicinity of Seattle. The theme of this year's conference is the exploration of how the political system communicates, processes, and responds to threat.

Threats arrive in many forms, from shocking natural disasters and man-made crises to long-enduring violations of political and human rights. In fact, most of the political problems in the world can be conceptualized in terms of the threat they pose. Understanding how threats are communicated throughout the political system is thus paramount in our understanding of political communication more broadly. The notion of threat speaks to established research areas across the subfield while also holding the potential for new avenues of research. For example:

*Elite Communication:* How do elites communicate with the public in times of crisis, and how does this communication affect public perception of elites and the crisis itself?

*Campaigns:* How do candidates use the threat of potential losses (e.g., as opposed to the promise of gains), and under what conditions are these strategies effective?

*Mass Media:* How does media coverage of shock-based threats like a terrorist attack or a hurricane compare to coverage of more constant threats like crime or racism, and what are the consequences for policy response to these different threats?

*New Media:* How does the communication of threat vary between newspaper, television, and new media outlets? How do new media technologies such as Twitter and a 24-hour news cycle affect the timing and/or power of public response to threat?

*Political Communication and Rights:* Under what conditions does the communication of threat lead to a strengthening or weakening of minority rights? What are different linguistic mechanisms for communicating threat, and what are their effects on democratic norms?

*Communication Networks:* How do different social networks communicate threats in different ways, and do social networks tend to become more or less homogenous during times of threat?

*Communication and Political Behavior:* How does the communication of threat affect political discussion, citizen openness to opposing views, and cognitive processing of information?

While proposals on any topic of political communication are welcome, this conference seeks to bring together a broadly focused group of scholars to discuss how threats are communicated, understood, and acted upon among and between political actors, institutions, and citizens within and between nations. For paper or panel proposals (recommended length: 500 words) or for expressions of interest in serving as a panel chair or discussant, please email Amber Boydston <[aboydstun@ucdavis.edu](mailto:aboydstun@ucdavis.edu)>. For general questions, please contact either of the Pre-Conference Program Co-Chairs: Amber Boydston or Shana Kushner Gadarian <[sgadarian@berkeley.edu](mailto:sgadarian@berkeley.edu)>.

**The deadline for paper/panel proposals is Friday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011.**