Table 1
Description of Studies

FEATURE	YES	NO
Short Presentation	87%	13%
Open to the Public	53%	47%
Publicly Available Recordings	80%	20%
Three Discussants	60%	40% (2, 18%; 4, 16%; not sure, 6%)
60-Minute Sessions	67%	33% (fewer than 60, 2%; 75, 28%; 90, 3%)

sessions by holding well-attended trivia and professionalization events. Catalanic et al. took a similar approach, building community by holding professionalization sessions and a happy-hour event using gather.town—a tool that other organizers have considered exploring in the near future.

Another important aspect of community building is mentorship. Tyson and other co-organizers created a mentoring program within the Virtual Theory Workshop that connected junior scholars—particularly those who did not have formal-theory faculty at their institution—with faculty mentors in a workshop-style meeting. Torres-Beltran and Brannon place mentorship near the center of their seminar series, taking particular care to prepare first-time presenters with advice about how to share their work and effectively address feedback. Given how isolated and disconnected many scholars in the profession feel, this type of effort would be appreciated by participants and attendees.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Related to the general concern about building community, all contributors to this Spotlight clearly consider DEI issues to be paramount. Tyson captures this sense by noting that virtual-workshop organizers are "ethically obligated to ensure that seminars—through the scholars they elevate and opportunities they bring to departments and research communities—constitute a positive force in shaping the discipline."

Jolly and de Vries address this charge by proactively asking past presenters for recommendations and then directly reaching out to individuals from underrepresented communities. Gartzke et al. consider DEI in various ways, including in terms of international representation. They schedule their workshops during Asian working hours but also when Europeans and Americans can participate, which maximizes the opportunity for anyone in these communities to attend despite geographic location. Catalanic et al. take a similar approach. Bracic et al. balance participants across countries but also maintain variation in methodological approaches. O'Brien and Udry et al. consider the issue of inclusion in workshop leadership training as well, ensuring that subsequent organizers are balanced across gender, discipline, and sub-subfield.

Other virtual-workshop organizers aim to maximize engagement with scholars who are either at a certain point in their career or at a certain type of institution. For example, Dorff and Smith prioritize holding at least half of their sessions for researchers who are approaching the job market. Whereas most virtual-workshop organizers discuss concrete actions intended to make inclusive spaces for scholars from underrepresented groups, Ladam et al.

suggest another group of scholars: those from non-research-oriented departments who often are not sufficiently incorporated. Lynch actively pursues applicants from this group because they likely lack both networks and resources. Torres-Beltran and Brannon considered this matter more broadly, evaluating submissions based on the "demonstrated variation in the resources and support they would receive for their work outside of the working group." Organizers would do well to consider these differences because virtual workshops provide a vital means for under-resourced scholars to receive feedback on and disseminate their work.

Future of Virtual Workshops

The articles in this Spotlight will help those interested in beginning virtual workshops for their own research community. However, they also provide insight into how we can organize research communities offline, where organizational challenges and diversity issues have been increasingly salient in recent years. I believe that this Spotlight will start an important dialogue within the political science community about ways to improve scholarly communication, community, and inclusion inside and outside of typical presentation venues.

NOTE

1. I am a former co-organizer of the Virtual Workshop on Authoritarian Regimes from 2016 to 2020 (43 sessions); co-organizer of the Japanese Politics Online Seminar Series (28 sessions to date); and organizer of the Asian Online Political Science Seminar Series (88 sessions to date).

EARLY-CAREER GRADUATE PREPARATION THROUGH THE GENDER AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION GRADUATE WORKING GROUP

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There has been a recent call for greater diversity in the field, including in the thematic focus and descriptive representation of working groups. To further these goals, we created a working group focused on the intersection of gender and political participation. Our group is led by two women graduate students and composed of students in different stages of their graduate-school career.

When the pandemic forced everyone online, early-career researchers were not afforded the core opportunities that usually are routine during in-person conferences and workshops. This limited graduate students' ability to learn how to present their work, to practice giving and receiving feedback, and to build relationships with their peers. Additionally, many of the informal interactions in departmental settings disappeared. These challenges were particularly severe for women, who comprise a disproportionate share of those studying gender and political participation and also may shoulder care responsibilities, because the productivity gap among these women in the discipline widened significantly (Breuning et al. 2021). Strains on productivity as a graduate student are particularly stressful because many students have limited years of funding and thus cannot afford to fall behind on expected progress.

In response, we created the Gender and Political Participation Graduate Working Group to serve as a welcoming and safe space to learn about and engage with the early work of other graduate students. Acknowledging these challenges, we encouraged participants to share their scholarship regardless of how developed or polished it was. This created a more inclusive space and ensured that those who found their time and capacity limited by the emotional and physical challenges of the pandemic could still develop their research. Moreover, we kept our working group's boundaries as broad as possible to include a diverse array of research, centering it around a topic that usually is overlooked or compressed into a single control variable: gender.

third year. We conducted 12 one-hour workshops. Each workshop included one 30-minute research presentation, followed by 5 to 7 minutes of feedback from a discussant. The remaining time was reserved for audience questions and feedback.

We experienced several positive outcomes and challenges. Our general focus on gender and political participation brought together students from various subfields, which increased cross-subfield knowledge and led to more creative suggestions. The inclusion of those who were in various stages of graduate school provided a low-stakes opportunity for early-career graduate students to learn how to effectively present research, serve as a discussant, and act as a constructive and engaged audience

> *This created a more inclusive space and ensured that those who found their time and capacity limited by the emotional and physical challenges of the pandemic could still develop their research.*

Our call for proposals received 43,508 impressions on Twitter. We received 45 submissions from graduate students. The thread's widespread recognition brought together graduate students from all over the world (e.g., Nigeria, Sweden, and Turkey). Figures 1 and 2 present the subfield and year breakdown of workshop submissions and group members.

In selecting participants for our limited number of workshop slots, we ensured that there was a diversity of perspectives included while also offering opportunities to students who were early in their graduate career. The institutional affiliations and stages of the graduate program varied significantly, with more than half of our participants coming from their first, second, or

member. For most of our presenters, it was their first time presenting initial work to an audience and/or serving as a discussant. As coordinators, we provided guidance on how to present effectively and how to give direct and efficient feedback. Additionally, for early-career graduate students who at that point had experienced graduate school only online, our workshop offered a consistent community in which they could share ideas and ask questions without the pressure associated with performance, competition, and imposter syndrome that many first-year graduate students experience. During the presentations, we focused on building on one another's points and positively recognizing and affirming one another's contributions. We found that this

Figure 1

Gender and Political Participation Submissions by Field
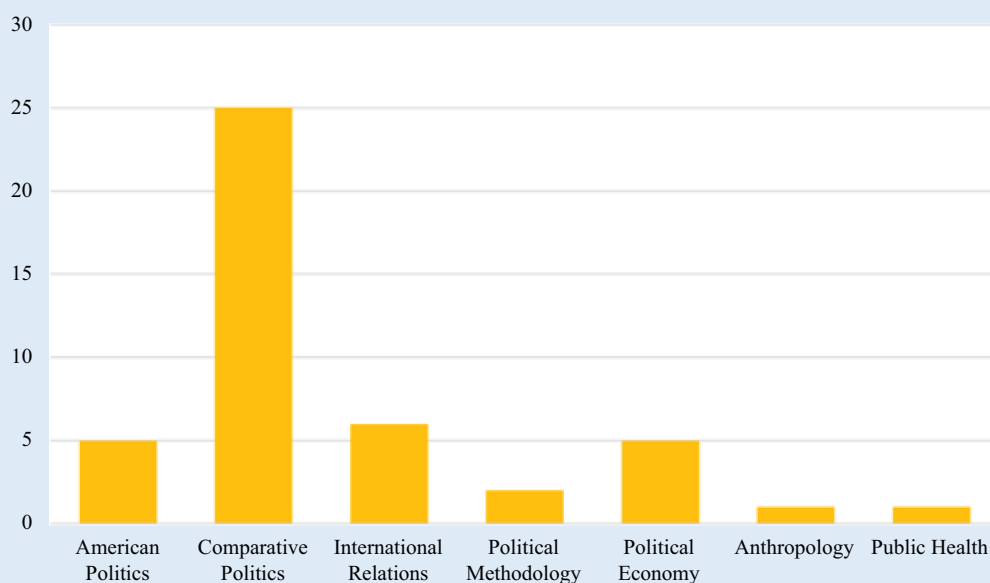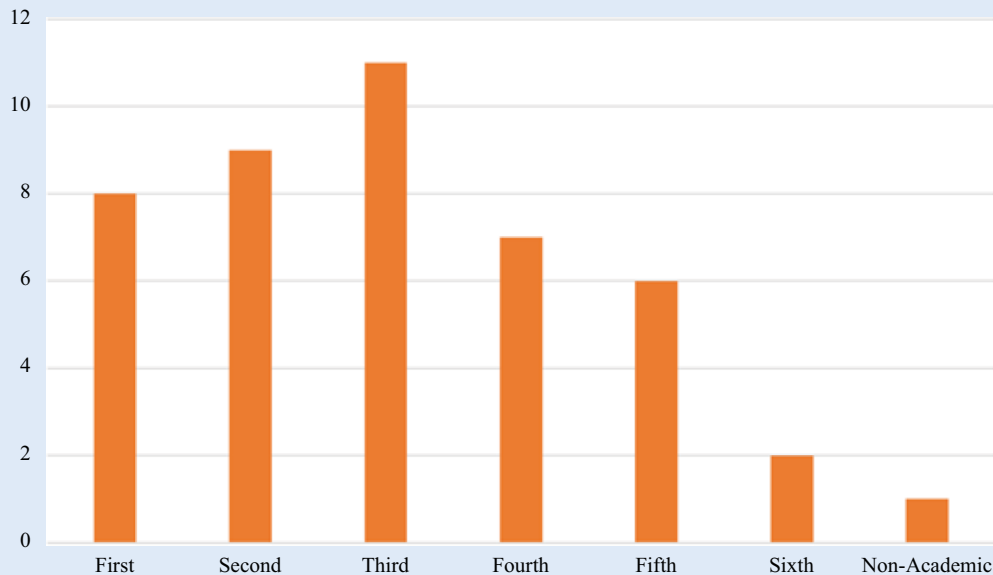
Figure 2
Gender and Political Participation Members by Year

practice, when coupled with a smaller audience size, allowed early-career graduate students to ask questions with more confidence. Along with this welcoming environment, we shared grant and fellowship opportunities that often are part of the "hidden curriculum" in academia and not as familiar to students not from "top" universities. We reassured our participants that they were capable of applying and we demystified the application process by offering advice and support on seemingly difficult funding and fellowship awards.

As a new working group with limited experience, we also had setbacks. Although we offered graduate students in various stages a space for presenting, it sometimes was not enough. Junior graduate students had endured their entire graduate experience via these platforms and sometimes were not able to join meetings due to "Zoom fatigue." This results from an over-reliance on video-streaming platforms and the excessive amount of close-up eye gaze, cognitive load, increased self-evaluation, and constraints on physical mobility (Bailenson 2021). Moreover, data infrastructure caused significant connectivity issues for participants in non-Western countries, limiting their ability to join the session. In response, we worked with them to provide alternative solutions, such as written comments submitted via email.

From our experience, we recommend that those who are interested in developing similar workshops for junior scholars—especially workshops that cross subfield boundaries—focus on creating an inclusive and welcoming platform that emphasizes horizontal networking, mentorship, and feedback, as well as intentionally limiting Zoom burnout. This may necessitate incorporating events beyond research presentations that require less of participants, such as networking rounds and informational workshops. We also emphasize the importance of building relationships between early and advanced graduate students, which

provide mentorship in areas that graduate students are either uncomfortable asking faculty about or that faculty overlook.

Operating online, during a pandemic, is an ongoing, dynamic process, and our goal is to adapt to the needs and requirements of those we want to assist the most. Moving forward, we plan to avoid burnout and provide opportunities to discuss further the intersections of gender and political participation. We also aim to offer specific workshops on finding and applying for funding, fellowships, and grants. Furthermore, we want to bridge the knowledge gap in the field by bringing in senior scholars on a regular basis to provide participants with advice, tips, and best practices as they move forward in their academic career. Recruiting via Twitter was helpful; however, we will expand our pool of potential participants by reaching out to existing platforms aimed at historically excluded graduate students, including People of Color Also Know Stuff and Women Also Know Stuff (Beaulieu et al. 2017; Casarez Lemi, Osorio, and Rush 2020). We believe that these actions will sustain prolonged engagement and provide graduate students with several resources and opportunities to help them succeed in the academy. ∎

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