

FRIDAY, 6 MARCH 2026

PANEL SESSION V: 8:45-10:15 A.M.

Panel I: Examining Population Patterns in the New South (228 MCH)

“Partisan Shifts in the Sunbelt Suburbs: Movers and Stayers Beyond the Rural/Urban Divide” – Irwin Morris (North Carolina State University)

“The “Other” Rural Voters: Majority-Minority Rural County Voting Patterns, 1976-2024” – Chad Kinsella (Ball State University)

“Political Migration Into the South” – David Wolfson (Columbia University)

“Boom Towns: The New Challenge to Measure Communities of Interest” – Karen Owen (University of West Georgia) and Mark Owens (The Citadel)

Discussants: Dan Judy (North Star Opinion) and Patrick Miller (Kent State University)

Panel J: Revisiting Political Science Theories in the New South (230 MCH)

“The Understudied South: Learning from Arkansas” – Christopher Tyler Burks (University of Arkansas, Little Rock) and Jay Barth (Hendrix College)

“The Curious Case of Madison Cawthorn: Strategic Voting in Southern Primary Elections” – J. Michael Bitzer (Catawba College) and Christopher Cooper (Western Carolina University)

“From the Gridiron to the Campaign Trail: When Football Gods Run for Congress” – James LaPlant (Valdosta State University), Karen Owen (University of West Georgia), and Kristina LaPlant (University of Wisconsin – La Crosse)

“Measuring Appalachia” – Jordan Carr Peterson (University of Tennessee, Knoxville)

Discussants: Keith Gaddie (Texas Christian University) and Chase Meyer (University of South Carolina)

PANEL SESSION VI: 10:30-11:45 A.M.

Panel K: Undergraduate Panel II (228 MCH)

“The Beliefs of the Educated South” – Riley Butler, Riley Chadwell, Caleb Munson, Jacob Wehr,

and Clayton Vande Burgt (all The Citadel)

“The Participation of the Educated South” – Samuel Jordan, Kenneth Malloy, Alofa Quarterman, Hannah Rife, and Braden Valentine (all The Citadel)

“The Female South” – Turki Al Said, McConnell Burdette, Jack Burton, Wyatt Carey, Jeremiah Days, and Joshua Parker (all The Citadel)

“The New Residents of the South” – Joseph Comey, Matthew Keplar, Darin Landrum, and Bryce Scambler (all The Citadel)

Discussants: Joseph A. Aistrup (Auburn University) and David Hughes (University of Louisiana at Lafayette)

Panel L: Polarization & Resentment (230 MCH)

“21st Century Southern Politics: Partisan Equilibrium, Ideological Polarization and Geographic Change” – Brian Arbour (John Jay College)

“Southern Discomfort: The Extent and Limits of Affective Polarization in the Modern South” – Christopher Cooper (Western Carolina University), Scott Huffmon (Winthrop University), Gibbs Knotts (Coastal Carolina University), and Seth McKee (Oklahoma State University)

“Voter Resentment and the Strategic Dynamics of Enfranchisement” – Trelace Lawrimore (New York University, Abu Dhabi) and Anna Denisenko (University of Chicago)

Discussants: Nicholas Howard (Concordia College) and Jordan Ragusa (College of Charleston)

Panel Session VII: 1:45-3:00 P.M.

Panel L: Roundtable on the 2026 Elections (230 MCH)

Alan Abramowitz (Emory University)
Charles S. Bullock, III (University of Georgia)
John A. Clark (Western Michigan University)
John J. McGlennon (College of William and Mary)
Seth McKee (Oklahoma State University)
Karen Owen (University of West Georgia)

About This Symposium

The Citadel’s Department of Political Science is pleased to sponsor the 48th anniversary of The Citadel Symposium on Southern Politics, which offers two days of scholarship focusing on original research and writing and panel discussions devoted to the study of that work. This year’s program features thirteen panels of scholarly presentation on various aspects of southern politics.

The Symposium was founded in 1978 by Robert P. Steed, Tod A. Baker, and Laurence W. Moreland, and has been held biennially since that year. In 2004, DuBose Kapeluck joined the Symposium as a co-director. In 2009, Scott E. Buchanan served as executive director of the Symposium until 2020. From 2021 to 2022, Josh Hostetter co-directed the Symposium. Mark Owens became co-director of the Symposium in 2023.

Drs. Kapeluck and Owens wish to acknowledge the long-standing support from The Citadel’s senior administration and the generosity of the RCP Endowment, without which the Symposium would not be possible.

Finally, we would like to thank each and every presenter for your continued support of the Symposium. We could not do this without you.

THE CITADEL SYMPOSIUM ON SOUTHERN POLITICS

48th Anniversary



THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

5-6 MARCH 2026

at

**THE CITADEL
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA**

*Sponsored by
The Citadel Department of Political Science*

#SoPoliticsSymp

Schedule of Events

THURSDAY, 5 March 2026

8:00 AM Registration (ongoing)
2nd floor lobby, Mark Clark Hall (MCH)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM PANEL SESSION I
Panel A: New Policy Issues Facing the South (228 MCH)
Panel B: Designing Spaces (230 MCH)

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM PANEL SESSION II
Panel C: Elections in the South (228 MCH)
Panel D: Cultural Issues in the South (230 MCH)

Noon – 1:00 PM LUNCHEON
Swain Boating Center

1:15 PM – 2:45 PM PANEL SESSION III
Panel E: Undergraduate Panel I (228 MCH)
Panel F: An Engaged South (230 MCH)

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM PANEL SESSION IV
Panel G: Southern Distinctiveness in State Institutions (228 MCH)
Panel H: Appointments & Internships (230 MCH)

4:45 PM – 6:00 PM RECEPTION
Capers Hall Courtyard

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Panel L: Polarization & Resentment (230 MCH)

Noon – 1:30 PM LUNCHEON
Riverview Room
Keynote Lecture: Where Place Meets Purpose: North
Carolina and the Power of Public Political Science
J. Michael Bitzer (Catawba College)

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM PANEL SESSION VII
Panel M: Roundtable on the 2026 Elections (230 MCH)

Program

THE CITADEL SYMPOSIUM ON SOUTHERN POLITICS

THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 2026

PANEL SESSION I: 8:30-9:45 A.M.

Panel A: New Policy Issues Facing the South (228 MCH)

“Pandemic Blues?: An Analysis of the Georgia Public School Response to COVID-19” – M.V. Hood, III (University of Georgia)

“Leader or Laggard? Explaining State Climate Resilience Policy Adoption in the South and Non-South, 2007-2024” – Martin K. Mayer (University of North Carolina at Pembroke), John C. Morris, Spencer Goidel, Paul Harris, and Annabella Lodge (all Auburn University)

Revisiting the Panama Canal Debate: Alabama’s Role in the Debate to Return the Canal to Panama” – Lori Owens (Jacksonville State University)

Discussant: Jordan Carr Peterson (University of Tennessee, Knoxville)

Panel B: Designing Spaces (230 MCH)

“Mural Tradition, Public Art and Southern Cities and Courthouse Towns” – Jocelyn Evans (University of West Florida)

“Evolution of Texas, Georgia, and the Southern Courthouse Town” – Keith Gaddie (Texas Christian University)

“Legends and Community on the Texas Courthouse Square” – James Riddlesperger (Texas Christian University)

Discussant: James LaPlant (Valdosta State University)

PANEL SESSION II: 10:00-11:30 A.M.

Panel C: Elections in the South (228 MCH)

“Trump Country 2.0: The Continued Role of Rural Voters in Alabama and Georgia” – Scott Buchanan (Georgia College and State University) and Bruce Blair (Clayton State University)

“The Law and Politics of Line Warming in

Southern States” – Elizabeth Gordon (Kennesaw State University)

“The 2026 Midterm Elections in the South” – Alan Abramowitz (Emory University) and John McGlennon (College of William and Mary)

Discussant: Gibbs Knotts (Coastal Carolina University)

Panel D: Cultural Issues in the South (230 MCH)

“The Deadly Politics of the Southern Cross” – Hon. Tim Golden (Valdosta State University, Georgia Senate 1999-2015)

“The Politics of Firearm Violence: A South/Non-South Analysis” – John C. Morris, Joseph A. Aistrup (Auburn University), R. Bruce Anderson (Florida Southern College), Rob Kenter (The Center for Policing Equity), and Martin K. Mayer (University of North Carolina at Pembroke)

“What Shapes Awareness of Confederate Iconography?” – Emily Wager (Western Carolina University) and Lucy Britt (Bates College)

Discussant: Scott Huffmon (Winthrop University)

PANEL SESSION III: 1:15-2:45 P.M.

Panel E: Undergraduate Panel I (228 MCH)

“Campaign the Swamp: Delusion in the Sunshine State” – Eleora Funk, Samantha Sharp, and Alexi Stoev (all Florida Southern College)

“The Inequality-Polarization Nexus: Testing Garand’s Model in the South, 2015-2025” – Matthew Hang, Leon Titow, Jr., and Alexander Harts (all Florida Southern College)

“Hurricanes: Changing Physical and Political Landscapes in the South” – Erin Grant, Lauren Hogan, and Emma Vietor (all Florida Southern College)

Discussants: John Clark (Western Michigan University) and Irwin Morris (North Carolina State University)

Panel F: An Engaged South (230 MCH)

“Dog Whistles and Dixie: Tracing the Nationalization of the Southern Strategy” – Alyssa Archer (Valdosta State University)

“Still a Voice in the South: The Changing Political Significance of Black Churches” – Emily Meaney,

Elona Simonov, and Fatima Vazquez (all Florida Southern College)

“Leaning Over the Weak: Southern Asymmetry and the Time-Variation in Party-ID Intransitivities” – Drew Kurlowski (Coastal Carolina University)

“Civic Attachment, Civic Optimism, and Policy Opinion in a Southern Context” – Joel Turner, Scott Lasley, Jeff Kash (all Western Kentucky University) and Scott Buchanan (Georgia College and State University)

Discussants: Brian Arbour (John Jay College) and Shannon Bridgmon (University of South Carolina)

PANEL SESSION IV: 3:00-4:30 P.M.

Panel G: Southern Distinctiveness in State Institutions (228 MCH)

“The Partisan Realignment of Southern State High Courts” – David Hughes (University of Louisiana at Lafayette) and Seth McKee (Oklahoma State University)

“Is it a Southern Thing? Differences in Redistricting and Federalism in 2025” – John Theilmann, Allison Vick, and Kaylee Warner (all Converse College)

“Southern Effectiveness in the U.S. House: The Role of State Legislative Experience” – Nicholas Howard (Concordia College) and Mark Owens (The Citadel)

Discussants: Christopher Cooper (Western Carolina University) and Chad Kinsella (Ball State University)

Panel H: Appointments & Internships (230 MCH)

“The Transformation of the Tennessee Republican Party from a Patronage-Based to an Organization-Based Party” – Sean F. Evans (Union University)

“Southern Support for Presidential Nominees: How Taft Broke the Solid South” – Chase Meyer (University of South Carolina)

“POLS Majors and Internships: Competing Values at Southern Universities?” – Tara Stricko (Kennesaw State University)

Discussant: M.V. Hood, III (University of Georgia)