

Political Science 795
Winter 2008
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TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE

Objectives

This course is designed for Ph.D. students in political science. Its primary goal is to help in preparing students for teaching of independent courses in the department and for teaching careers in colleges and universities. A secondary goal is to help students to develop credentials that will assist in obtaining teaching positions.

To achieve these objectives, the course surveys an array of issues in teaching. By necessity, this survey will be limited and partial. Thus, the course is intended not to provide full preparation for teaching in itself but rather to serve as one means toward that goal. Other means to develop and improve skills in teaching include teaching roundtables in the department, programs offered by the university's Office of Faculty and TA Development, and readings beyond those required in this course. (Other readings and resources are discussed on pp. 9-11 of this syllabus.)

Beginning this year, the department will offer two different courses under the 795 number, and students are encouraged to take both courses. The winter quarter course is intended to provide general preparation for teaching. The spring quarter course, coordinated by Amanda Rosen, is intended to provide more specific preparation for the first independent class that graduate students teach in political science. There undoubtedly will be some overlap between the classes, but our aim is to make them complementary.

Course Format

We will have nine two-hour sessions, with each session focusing on one or more topics. The topics for each session are in boldface. There is some overlap among topics, and we will sometimes come back to the same issue from a different perspective. Sessions will involve active participation by class members, as we work collectively to develop and evaluate ideas on teaching issues.

Student Responsibilities

The course is graded S/U. An S grade requires two things. First, students must participate actively and well in class sessions. Doing so requires that students prepare for class sessions by reading and thinking about the topics to be considered in those sessions.

Second, students must do a good job on the one written assignment for the course, a plan for the teaching of any course in this department's undergraduate curriculum. The plan will include a statement on teaching philosophy related to the course and a draft syllabus, annotated to provide rationales for choices of subjects, readings, and student assignments. The course plan is due on March 7th, the last day of class. You are welcome to turn in a preliminary version of the course plan, or a portion of the

plan, for reactions and suggestions from me. If you do so, February 15th or 22nd would be good times. A description of this assignment is at the end of the syllabus, on pp. 11-12.

Readings

A large portion of the readings for the course will be in Wilbert J. McKeachie and Marilla Svinicki, *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*, 12th ed. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. (at SBX). The portions of the book that apply to each topic are listed in the course schedule. There will also be readings from handouts and websites, which are listed under the relevant topics. There may be additions and deletions as I discover new sources.

Beyond the required readings, some useful books and articles on a particular topic are listed under "additional readings" in that topic. Books that span multiple topics are listed on pp. 9-10 of the syllabus.

Required Statements

Every syllabus at OSU is required to include statements on academic honesty and on disabilities. The statement on disability is to be in a larger font, to serve students with vision problems. Here are those statements:

Academic Honesty: I expect all of the work you do in this course to be your own. No dishonest practices on the examinations or in the course will be acceptable, and any suspected cases of dishonesty will be reported to the university committee on academic misconduct and handled according to university policy.

Disability: If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Office for Disability Services, I encourage you to do so.

Schedule of Sessions and Topics

Section One: General Considerations

Session 1: January 11th

Philosophies of Teaching

Readings:

OSU Office of Faculty and TA Development, "Writing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement" and "Sample philosophy of teaching statements" (look at the statements from the social sciences: Robert Anthony, Szu-Hui Lee, Laura Luehrmann, Leslie Wade, and Deborah Zelli). (available at ftad.osu.edu/portfolio/philosophy/Philosophy.html)

Teaching in Political Science

- * Teaching as a profession
- * Teaching careers in political science

Reading

McKeachie and Svinicki, ch. 1

Student Attributes and Approaches to Teaching

Reading

Ohio State University, "Common Data Set 2006-07" (available at <http://oaa.osu.edu/irp/CDS0607Columbus.pdf>) (read items on attributes of OSU students)

Session 2: January 18th

General Issues in Student Learning

- * Learning styles
- * Facilitating student learning

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, chs. 23, 24

Kelly McGonigal, "Teaching for Transformation: From Learning Theory to Teaching Strategies" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #759) (This and other Tomorrow's Professor postings are at the website

<http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/postings.html>; look under the heading, “Tomorrow’s Teaching and Learning”)

Richard L. Fox and Shirley A. Ronkowski, “Learning Styles of Political Science Students,” P.S.: Political Science and Politics 30 (December 1997), 732-737. (P.S. is available in electronic journals from OSU libraries)

Amy R. Gershkoff, “Multiple Methods, More Success: How to Help Students of All Learning Styles Succeed in Quantitative Political Analysis Courses,” P.S.: Political Science and Politics 38 (April 2005), 299-304.

Additional Readings

Lynne Celli Sarasin, Learning Style Perspectives: Impact in the Classroom (Atwood 1998)

Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross, Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers, 2d ed. (Jossey-Bass 1993)

Special Issues in Learning

- * Student diversity
- * Learning disabilities

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, ch. 13

Office for Disability Services, OSU, Teaching Students with Disabilities (available at http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/faculty_handbook.asp)

Session 3: January 25th

Developing Student Motivation

- *Motivation as a general issue
- *Practical issues in motivation

Reading

McKeachie and Svinicki, chs. 4, 12

Additional Readings

Martin C. Covington, "A Motivational Analysis of Academic Life in College," in Effective Teaching in Higher Education: Research and Practice, ed. Raymond P. Perry and John C. Smart (Agathon 1997)

Marilla D. Svinicki, Learning and Motivation in the Postsecondary Classroom (Anker 2005)

Section Two: Designing a Course

Session 4: February 1st

From Teaching Philosophy to Syllabus

- * Developing a course plan
- * The syllabus
- * Choosing reading material

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, ch. 2
 Center for Teaching and Learning Services, University of Minnesota, “Syllabus Tutorial” (2004)
 (available at www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/syllabus/)
 Mano Singham, “Death to the Syllabus!” (Tomorrow’s Professor Posting #834)

Additional Reading

Judith Grunert, The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach (Anker 1997)

Session 5: February 8th

Student Assignments

- * Examinations
- * Writing assignments

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, chs. 7-9, 15
 Pamela A. Zeiser, “Teaching Process *and* Product: Crafting and Responding to Student Writing Assignments,” P.S.: Political Science and Politics 32 (September 1999), 593-595.

Additional Reading

John C. Bean, The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom (Jossey-Bass 1996)

Section Three: In the Classroom

Session 6: February 15th

The First Day of Class

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, ch. 3

Office of Faculty and TA Development, "The First Day of Class" (1997) (available at ftad.osu.edu/Publications/firstday.html)

Additional Reading

Jeffrey Wolcowitz, "The First Day of Class," in The Art and Craft of Teaching, ed. Margaret Morganroth Gullette (Harvard University Press 1984)

Presenting Material

- * Lectures
- * Using media and technology

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, chs. 6, 18

Center for Teaching and Learning, Stanford University, "How to Create Memorable Lectures" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #790)

Susan Johnston and Jim Cooper, "Quick-thinks: The Interactive Lecture" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #818)

Richard M. Felder and Rebecca Brent, "Death by Powerpoint" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #689)

Additional Readings

Donald A. Blich, What's the Use of Lectures? (Jossey-Bass 2000)

David W. Brooks, Diane E. Nolan, and Susan M. Gallagher, Web-Teaching: A Guide for Designing Interactive Teaching for the World Wide Web, 2nd ed. (Plenum 2001)

Session 7: February 22nd

Involving Students in the Course

- * Creating effective discussions
- * Games and simulations
- * Group projects

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, chs. 5, 16, 17

Kelly McGonigal, "Using Class Discussion to Meet Your Teaching Goals" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #745)

Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill, "Keeping Discussion Going Through Questioning, Listening, and Responding" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #736)

Victor Asal and Elizabeth L. Blake, "Creating Simulations for Political Science Education," Journal of Political Science Education 2 (2006, issue 1), 1-18. (available in electronic journals from OSU libraries)

Additional Readings

Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill, Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms, 2nd ed. (Jossey-Bass 2005) (Their posting above is an excerpt from this book.)

"Issues in Problem-Based Learning," Journal on Excellence in College Teaching 11 (2000), 1-251.

Jeffrey S. Lantis, Lynn M. Kuzma, and John Boehrer, eds., The New International Studies Classroom: Active Teaching, Active Learning (Lynne Rienner 2000)

Session 8: February 29th

Evaluation of Students

Reading

McKeachie and Svinicki, ch. 11

OSU Office of Faculty and TA Development, "Evaluating Student Learning" (at http://ftad.osu.edu/read/teaching/evaluating/evaluating_print.html)

Additional Reading

Lucy Cheser Jacobs and Clinton I. Chase, Developing and Using Tests Effectively: A Guide for Faculty (Jossey-Bass 1992)

Classroom Management and Special Challenges

- * Disruptive behavior and "difficult" students
- * Helping troubled students
- * Dealing with dishonest practices

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, chs. 10, 14

Linda B. Nilson, "Handling Specific Disruptive Behaviors" (Tomorrow's Professor posting #310)

Section Four: Final Issues to Consider

Session 9: March 7th

Ethics in Teaching

- * Behavior toward students: sexual harassment and other issues
- * Appropriate use of teaching materials: copyright and other issues

Readings

McKeachie and Svinicki, ch. 25

Office of Human Resources, OSU, "Sexual Harassment" (2004) (available at <http://hr.osu.edu/ohrd/shtraining.pdf>)

Office of General Counsel, University of Texas, "Guidelines for Classroom Copying of Books and Periodicals" (2001) (available at www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/clasguid.htm)

Feedback on Course Effectiveness

- * Using student evaluations
- * Other forms of feedback

McKeachie, ch. 26

Additional Reading

William D. Rando and Lisa Firing Lenze, Learning From Students: Early Term Student Feedback in Higher Education (National Center on Postsecondary Teaching, Learning and Assessment 1994)

Designing a Teaching Portfolio

Reading:

Center for Teaching and Learning, Stanford University, “Documenting Your Teaching: Creating a Teaching Portfolio” (available at ctl.stanford.edu/handouts/PDF/teaching_portfolios.pdf)

Additional Reading

Peter Seldin, The Teaching Portfolio, 3rd ed. (Anker 2004)

Resources

There is a wide array of useful resources on teaching. These are some that I have found to be especially helpful:

Books

(A number of books are listed above under specific topics. The books listed here are more general in their content.)

Office of Faculty and TA Development, OSU, Teaching in the United States: A Handbook for International Faculty and TAs (2002) (available at <http://ftad.osu.edu/Publications/InternationalHandbook/TitlePage.html>). This handbook is intended to assist international faculty and TAs, but it has a good many practical suggestions that any teacher will find useful.

Joseph Lowman, Mastering the Techniques of Teaching, 2d ed. (Jossey-Bass 2000). This is a book with a practical orientation that also draws a good deal from scholarship on teaching. There is some emphasis on classroom dynamics and the qualities of interactions between teacher and students.

Robert J. Menges, Maryellen Weimer, and Associates, Teaching on Solid Ground: Using Scholarship to Improve Practice (Jossey-Bass 1996). This book has a series of essays on issues in teaching. In comparison with Davis and McKeachie, it considers these issues more broadly and more theoretically.

Stephen D. Brookfield, The Skillful Teacher (Jossey-Bass 1990). This book looks broadly at teaching issues from a personal point of view. The author's emphasis is on coping with the practical problems involved in teaching effectively.

Maryellen Weimer, Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice (Jossey-Bass 2002). Weimer argues for a change in the standard approach to teaching, one focused on collaboration between teachers and students to enhance learning. The book has some interesting ideas even for teachers who do not fully accept the author's argument.

Leo M. Lambert, Stacey Lane Tice, and Patricia H. Featherstone, eds, University Teaching: A Guide for Graduate Students (Syracuse University Press 1996). This is a set of essays that, as the title indicates, is oriented primarily toward graduate students who are beginning to teach courses. Some essays focus on specific tasks and problems, while others discuss broad issues in teaching.

William M. Timpson, Suzanne Burgoyne, Christine S. Jones, and Waldo Jones, Teaching and Performing: Ideas for Energizing Your Classes (Magna Publications, 1997). The authors examine teaching as a performance art, focusing on classroom presentation. Even for those who don't hold this conception of teaching, material on issues such as preparing the voice for lectures may be of interest.

Bette LaSere Erickson and Diane Weltner Strommer, Teaching College Freshmen (Jossey-Bass 1991). While the book is concerned primarily with teaching new college students, it has broader applicability. One section focuses on the implications for teaching of students' situations and traits. A new edition, under the title Teaching First-Year College Students (with a third author, Calvin B. Peters), will be published in May 2006.

Maryellen Gleason Weimer, ed., Teaching Large Classes Well (Jossey-Bass 1987); Elisa Carbone, Teaching Large Classes: Tools and Strategies (Sage 1998); Christine A. Stanley and M. Erin Porter, ed., Engaging Large Classes: Strategies and Techniques for College Faculty (Anker 2002). These are very good sources on teaching large classes--not relevant to your teaching at OSU, but something to keep in mind for the future. The short Carbone book has a good many specific suggestions for dealing with the difficulties of large classes.

Donna Killian Duffy and Janet Wright Jones, Teaching Within the Rhythms of the Semester (Jossey-Bass 1995). This is a general text on teaching, but it gives special emphasis to the development of classes over the course of a semester (or quarter). The long and useful chapter on syllabus construction is noted in that topic.

Fred Stephenson, ed., Extraordinary Teachers: The Essence of Excellent Teaching (Andrews McMeel 2001). The book is a collection of essays by faculty at the University of Georgia who have won their university teaching award. The subjects of their essays are diverse, and there are a lot of good and interesting ideas.

Ken Bain, What the Best College Teachers Do (Harvard University Press 2004). This book differs from the Stephenson book in that it distills information from interviews with teachers who were identified as especially effective. In describing the practices of highly successful teachers, the author provides a useful set of goals to aim for.

Keith W. Prichard and R. McLaren Sawyer, eds., Handbook of College Teaching: Theory and Applications (Greenwood 1994). The book is a large collection of essays on various aspects of teaching, ranging from student motivation to textbook selection. It is too expensive to buy, but it is worth getting from the library to consult on particular topics.

Other Information Sources

The Office of Faculty and TA Development at OSU (260 Younkin Center, 1640 Neil Hall, 2-3644, ftad.osu.edu/) is a very useful source of information and assistance. FTAD conducts a variety of programs on aspects of teaching, and it provides consultation services for teachers at OSU. It has a substantial library of books and journals and creates its own materials on teaching, including an online handbook on teaching at <http://ftad.osu.edu/read/teaching/toc.html>. We'll be reading some excerpts from the handbook in this class.

The OSU Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing (485 Mendenhall Lab, 8-4291) is concerned with helping students to learn writing and helping in instruction in writing. Its website is at cstw.osu.edu. At the website, look under "resources" for materials on writing that may be useful to students who seek to improve their writing. A very useful website on writing, with more material for instructors than the OSU Center's website, is at Purdue: owl.english.purdue.edu.

I've listed several specific essays from the Tomorrow's Professor ListServ at Stanford University on the syllabus. The ListServ frequently sends out short essays on professional issues, including teaching. You can look through past essays at the website, <http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/postings.html>. Under "Subscribe," you can subscribe to get future postings.

Three good university websites on teaching are those at Minnesota, Penn State, and Stanford. The website for the University of Minnesota Center for Teaching and Learning Services is www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn. It has a variety of information about teaching issues. The website for the Penn State Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is www.schreyer.institute.psu.edu. One good feature of this site is an extensive set of materials on various teaching topics, organized by topic. The Center for Teaching and Learning at Stanford (ctl.stanford.edu) has good information on various topics, primarily under "Resources for Faculty" and "Resources for TAs." The Center sponsors the "Tomorrow's Professor ListServ," mentioned earlier, and the ListServ is linked to the Center's website.

The American Political Science Association has a website on teaching. It has a list of websites with information relevant to courses (go to "Resources") and selected articles on teaching from P.S. (go to "Articles on Teaching" under "Resources"). The website is at www.apsanet.org/teach/. P.S. has a regular section on teaching, and the articles in that section often have good practical advice.

The APSA's section on Undergraduate Education sponsors panels on teaching at the annual APSA meetings. It also sponsors a journal, the Journal of Political Science Education, which has just completed its first volume. Information on the journal is at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/15512169.asp>.

Creating a Course Plan

I've asked you to write a course plan because that will give you an opportunity to develop your ideas about teaching and apply them to a specific class. Choose any undergraduate class in this department.

The plan should begin with a teaching philosophy related to this class. The philosophy should consist of your goals for the class--what you want to accomplish--and the approach that you plan to take to achieve those goals. If you like, you can discuss a general teaching philosophy. But the bulk of this part of the plan should focus on the specific class. In describing your goals and especially your approach, discuss the bases for your choices. For instance, you might talk about how the characteristics of OSU students would lead you to take one approach rather than another.

For the teaching philosophy, feel free to use any length that makes sense. My guess is that it will be two pages or a little shorter than that, but treat that only as a general guideline.

The remainder of the plan will take the form of a syllabus and a series of rationales for the specific choices reflected in the syllabus. You could present an annotated syllabus in which the rationales for various choices are indicated at the appropriate points in the syllabus. Alternatively, you could provide a "clean" syllabus, followed by a separate set of rationales.

The syllabus itself should be in the form that you would give to a class, so include all the items and information that you think appropriate. The rationales should address the important choices that you make about aspects of the class. That would include at least the following: the sets of topics for the class and the order that you take them up; the readings; the assignments and bases for the grade; and the format of class sessions. The rationales need not be lengthy, so long as they are clear about the alternatives that you considered and the reasons for your choice among them. Where your philosophy statement makes a specific rationale clear, there is no need to repeat it in the syllabus.

This assignment is intended to assist you in pulling together your ideas about teaching and applying them to the practical problem of course design. So feel free to modify what you do in the assignment if you would find it useful. For instance, you might give more emphasis to presentation of a general teaching philosophy than suggested above.