

Political Science 795  
Winter 2001  
Larry Baum

## **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 end. Other means to develop and improve skills in teaching include the teaching roundtables in the department, programs offered by the university's Office of Faculty and TA Development, and readings beyond those included in this course.

### **Course Format**

We will have ten two-hour sessions, with each session focusing on one or more topics. Sessions will involve active participation by class members, as we work collectively to develop and evaluate ideas on teaching issues. Only nine sessions are listed in the schedule below, to allow for the equivalent of one session for special presentations. There may be some adjustments in the schedule to provide time for additional presentations.

### **Student Responsibilities**

The course is graded S/U. Each student is expected to prepare for class sessions by reading and thinking about the topics to be considered in those sessions and to participate actively in the sessions. There will be one written assignment, 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. It is due on March 9th, 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 16th or 23rd might be a good time.

A description of this assignment is provided at the end of the syllabus.

### **Readings**

Most readings for the course will be taken from the two books indicated below. The portions of these sources that apply to each topic are listed in the course schedule. There will also be handouts on many of the topics, most of which are listed under the relevant topics. And I'll distribute the Department's informal handbook, "The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching."

Where a book or article on a particular topic seems especially useful, it is listed under "additional readings" in that topic. At the end of the syllabus are lists of books and information sources that apply to many different topics.

Wilbert J. McKeachie, *Teaching Tips*, 10th ed. Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

Faculty and TA Development ("FTAD"), *Teaching at The Ohio State University: A*

*Handbook*, 1999 edition.

**Schedule of Sessions and Topics**

***Section One: Introduction***

Session 1

First Thoughts About Philosophies of Teaching

Nancy Van Note Chism, "Developing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement" (1997-98)

Teaching in Political Science

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

McKeachie, ch. 1

Understanding OSU Students

- \* Who our students are
- \* Students in political science courses

Office of the Registrar, OSU, "Comparison of Ohio State University Fall Freshman Survey Responses to National Means" (n.d.)

Session 2

## General Issues in Student Learning

- \* Learning styles
- \* Facilitating student learning

McKeachie, ch. 14  
 FTAD, ch. 2

*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

McKeachie, ch. 20  
 Office for Disability Services, OSU, Teaching Students with Disabilities (undated)

**Section Two: Designing a Course**Session 3

## From Teaching Philosophy to Syllabus

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

McKeachie, chs. 2, 3  
 FTAD, ch. 3

Center for Teaching Effectiveness, University of Texas, "The Syllabus" (n.d.)  
 Howard B. Altman and William E. Cashin, "Writing a Syllabus" (1992)  
 Mary McDonnell Harris, "Motivating with the Course Syllabus" (1993)  
 Mary L. Beaudry and Tracey Schaub, "The Learning-Centered Syllabus" (1998)  
 Teachers' RoundTable, OSU, "Instructors' Template for Preparing Guidelines to Help Students Succeed in Your Course(s)" (1994)

*Additional Readings*

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

"Stalking the Superior Syllabus," in Donna Killian Duffy and Janet Wright Jones, Teaching Within the Rhythms of the Semester (Jossey-Bass 1995)

Session 4

## Student Assignments

- \* Examinations
- \* Writing assignments

McKeachie, chs. 7, 10, 11

*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 5

The First Day of Class

McKeachie, ch. 4  
Teaching Politics website, "First Day of Classes" (1997)  
Office of Faculty and TA Development, "The First Day of Class" (1997)

*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

McKeachie, chs. 6, 17  
FTAD, ch. 4

*Additional Reading*

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

David W. Brooks, Web-Teaching: A Guide for Designing Interactive Teaching for the World Wide Web (Plenum 1997)

Session 6

Involving Students in the Course

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

McKeachie, chs. 5, 16  
FTAD, ch. 5  
Andrew Ward, syllabus for Agricultural Engineering 573

*Additional Reading*

Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill, Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms (Jossey-Bass 1999)

Session 7

Developing Student Motivation and Skills

- \* Motivation
- \* Skills

McKeachie, chs. 25-27

*Additional Readings*

Martin C. Covington, "A Motivational Analysis of Academic Life in College," in Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research, Volume IX, ed. John C. Smart (Agathon 1993)

Chet Myers, Teaching Students to Think Critically (Jossey-Bass 1986)

Joanne G. Kurfiss, Critical Thinking: Theory, Research, Practice, and Possibilities (Association for the Study of Higher Education 1988)

Session 8

Evaluation of Students

McKeachie, ch. 9  
FTAD, chs. 6-7  
Mark Ellis, syllabus for Music 270

*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

McKeachie, chs. 8, 21, 22

Edward J. Ray (OSU Provost), "Academic Misconduct" (2000)

**Section Four: General Issues in Teaching**

Session 9

## Ethics in Teaching

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

McKeachie, ch. 24

Office of Human Resources, OSU, "Sexual Harassment" (2000)

Office of General Counsel, University of Texas, "Guidelines for Classroom Copying of Books and Periodicals" (n.d.)

## Feedback on Course Effectiveness

- \* Using student evaluations
- \* Other forms of feedback

McKeachie, ch. 23

Karron G. Lewis, "Using On-Going Student Feedback to Increase Teaching Effectiveness and Student Learning" (1994)

*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

(n.d.) Special Interest Group on Professional Portfolios, OSU, "Portfolio Tip Sheets"

Peter Seldin and Linda Annis, "The Teaching Portfolio" (1992)

Hannelore B. Rodriguez-Farrar, "The Teaching Portfolio" (n.d.)

Floyd Urbach, "Developing a Teaching Portfolio" (1992)

*Additional Reading*

Peter Seldin and Associates, Successful Use of Teaching Portfolios (Anker 1993)

### 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.)

Barbara Gross Davis, Tools for Teaching (Jossey-Bass 1993). Like the McKeachie book, this is a general text on teaching; these two books are the ones used most frequently in courses on teaching. The book suggests a large number of specific ideas about different aspects of teaching.

Joseph Lowman, Mastering the Techniques of Teaching, 2d ed. (Jossey-Bass 1995). This is a practically oriented book 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.

Kenneth E. Eble, The Craft of Teaching, 2d ed. (Jossey-Bass 1988). Similar to the Brookfield book.

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 accept 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.

Maryellen Gleason Weimer, ed., Teaching Large Classes Well (Jossey-Bass 1987). This is a very good source on teaching large classes. While the book's primary concern isn't relevant to your teaching at OSU, it's something to keep in mind should you take a position at an institution in which there are large introductory classes.

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) is a very useful source of information and assistance. FTAD conducts a variety of programs on aspects of teaching, and it provides consulting services. It has a substantial library of books and journals and creates its own materials on teaching, including the Handbook. FTAD has a helpful website at [www.osu.edu/education/ftad](http://www.osu.edu/education/ftad). At the website, there is a good deal of material in "Readings on Teaching" and "Resources on College Teaching and Learning".

At the website for OSU Faculty and TA Development, under "Resources," is an entry for the "Tomorrow's Professor ListServ" (it's the second from the bottom). This ListServ sends out short essays on professional issues, including teaching, at frequent intervals. There is some emphasis on science and engineering, but most of the essays are relevant to the social sciences as well. You can look through past essays under "Postings" and subscribe to get future essays by email under "Subscribe."

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 [www.cstw.ohio-state.edu](http://www.cstw.ohio-state.edu). At the website, look under "online and print resources for writing" for materials on writing that may be useful to students. A very useful website on writing, with more material for instructors than the OSU Center's website, is at Purdue: [owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu).

The National Teaching and Learning Forum is a journal on teaching that often has good articles about various teaching matters. The journal is available on the web at [www.osu.edu/forum](http://www.osu.edu/forum).

Two good university websites on teaching are those at Minnesota and Penn State. The website for the University of Minnesota Center for Teaching and Learning Services is [www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn](http://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.psu.edu/celt](http://www.psu.edu/celt). One good feature of this site is an extensive set of materials on various teaching topics, organized by topic. University organizations devoted to teaching often have useful materials on their websites. There is a good list of websites at [eagle.cc.ukans.edu/%7Ecte/resources/websites.html](http://eagle.cc.ukans.edu/%7Ecte/resources/websites.html), though some of the sites are inactive (whether listed as such or not).

The Center for Teaching Effectiveness at the University of Texas published a newsletter, The Teaching Network, until 1997. The newsletter usually had one article on teaching issues; the articles are short but are often useful. The newsletter can be found at [www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/teachnet](http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/teachnet) and is readable in Adobe Acrobat.

Teaching Politics is a website for political scientists, with a variety of teaching-related materials that include conference papers and collected comments on topics from an online discussion group. Most of the sections of the website haven't been updated in a while, but there is still good material in them. The "Guide to Teaching" has good ideas on several topics. One section that been kept fairly current is "Conference Papers," which provides text or recordings of conference presentations on teaching. The website is at [teachpol.tcnj.edu](http://teachpol.tcnj.edu).

The American Political Science has a website on teaching. It has several kinds of information. Especially useful are a collection of course syllabi (go to "Syllabi" and then to "Course Syllabi Database") and selected articles on teaching from P.S. (under "Resources"). The website is at [www.apsanet.org/teach/](http://www.apsanet.org/teach/). P.S. has a regular section on teaching, and I'll distribute an index of some of the most useful articles.



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.