

Teaching Statement

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Teaching Philosophy

In teaching undergraduates, my goal is to provide the civic and critical thinking skills necessary so that they may be engaged citizens and be prepared to successfully pursue jobs or graduate degrees. In training graduate students, my objective is to provide them the research skills necessary to pursue academic or non-academic jobs. To accomplish these ends, I will empower students by providing them the critical thinking skills they need to evaluate arguments, advocate for their causes, make informed decisions, and, put simply, not be duped. As we spend increasing amounts of time consuming media, we are bombarded with information. This information runs the gamut of factual and news-based to opinion-based op-eds to “fake news.” This problem is magnified by partisanship and the politicization of news and their effects on desirability bias, confirmation bias, and selective exposure (?). Unfortunately, we are rarely taught how to appraise and think critically about the information we consume. In my classes, I will empower students and hone their critical thinking skills so that they are less prone to information disorders and better at appraising argument, being advocates, and making informed decisions.

I view education as a means of promoting social change and empowering students through providing them with the critical thinking tools necessary to combat information disorders, become effective advocates, and make better decisions (??). This approach departs from the conventional “banking model of education” which prioritizes the memorization of content and the ability to parrot back ideas to the comprehension of content and ability to critically appraise ideas (??). The banking model only serves to reinforce a student’s susceptibility to information disorders as they learn to consume information without critically evaluating it (?). In other words, my goal as a teacher of all students is to focus less on the “what” of science and more on the “how” of science: how arguments are appraised and how knowledge is accumulated.

In my undergraduate classes, students will engage with the materials through a variety of strategies, including small group discussion, in-class debate and judging, and critical response papers. Each of these strategies is designed to have student critically engaging

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with the material. Debates would be staged around one important question related to the course materials, with two teams of two students debating one another using a combination of the course materials and original argument. Perhaps the most important tool, however, is that the other students will be required to moderate these debates. While their decisions will be made public, they will be required to submit a “reason for decision” that indicate how they evaluated the arguments and why they thought one side had stronger arguments than the other. This process of comparing arguments and determining which are superior empowers students and provides them with important critical thinking and decision-making experience (?). Through my experience with debate, both as a debater and moderator, I find these strategies exceptionally useful.

It is important for graduate students to consider the craft of research, and how to successfully produce knowledge. In appraising course material and research at the graduate level, I believe it important that graduate students be able to answer three questions about every article: *What did the article do well?* *What did the article do poorly?* *What can you do to fix what the article does poorly?* By thinking about the answers to these questions, seminar participants are compelled to consider the scientific process and craft of research in a very practical sense. In addition, graduate students will write seminar papers that make an original contribution, another tool for promoting critical thinking and argument evaluation skills while providing students with papers that can be submitted for publication.

When teaching methods classes, graduate and undergraduate alike, students will be empowered through the “see one, do one, teach one” method popularized by medical schools. Using this experience-based method, I will teach a concept, task students with applying the concept to help them understand something they find interesting, and then explain that application to the class to help them consolidate their understanding.

Teaching Interests

As a faculty member, I would be interested in and capable of teaching courses, undergraduate and graduate alike, in International Relations and Political Methodology. Specifically, I would be excited and qualified to teach the following:

Courses:

International Relations:	Political Methodology:
Theories of IR	Probability and Statistics
Alliance Politics	Generalized Linear Models
Interstate Conflict	Network Analysis
American Foreign Policy	Time Series Analysis
International Institutions	Survival Analysis

Teaching Experience and Preparation

As the Senior Fellow for The Ohio State University's Program in Statistics and Methodology (PRISM), I am tasked with organizing, designing, and teaching a variety of workshops. In this calendar year, I have taught an extended introduction and refresher workshop on statistical computing with R and will teach a workshop on data manipulation in R. In addition, every week I hosted office hours to assist faculty and students with methodological and statistical problems they encounter with their own research. These office hours have provided me hands-on, one-on-one teaching experience.

In addition to teaching through PRISM, I value mentoring, advising, and collaborating with undergraduate and graduate students. Many of these relationships have led to published pieces or ongoing projects. Since the summer following my first year, I have actively supervised some of Professor Box-Steffensmeier's undergraduate and graduate research assistants. In a supervisory role, I mentored an undergraduate (now in law school at Northeastern University) and oversaw the development of a historical case study of modern environmentalism that led to his inclusion on an article published in *Social Networks*. I have also overseen both an undergraduate's automated data collection of candidate-to-candidate campaign contributions (his person now works for Facebook) and a younger graduate student's writing and framing of the manuscript. I also oversee two other younger graduate students on projects related to applications of the Frailty Exponential Random Graph Model (FERGM) and studying the religious difference in partisan identification. In the past four years, I greatly benefited from the mentorship of and collaboration with Professors Box-Steffensmeier and Cranmer. As an assistant professor I hope to prioritize mentorship and collaboration with graduate and undergraduate students.

Throughout graduate school, I was either on fellowship or a graduate research associateship, and as such, had no teaching requirements. Still, I sought opportunities to prepare myself for teaching. In the summer before my second year, I attended a two-day workshop hosted by Ohio State's University Center for the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT) which offered useful courses on grading, assignment design, lecturing, and facilitating discussion. I also attended talks hosted by UCAT, one of which was on designing lectures and presentations that keep students' attention. I also plan to attend APSA's 2019 Teaching and Learning Conference so that I am prepared to effectively teach introductory courses.