

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

As an educator, I start my work from the assumption that teaching comparative politics, the systematic study of political life in societies besides our own, ought to be critically animated by the ideal of bringing politics in other nations to life for students. I am committed to humanistic learning in the Liberal Arts tradition, in the classroom, and work to weave course texts and the diverse perspectives into a rich conversation where student participation drives collective inquiry and understanding.

Pedagogical Philosophy and Objectives

Bringing politics across the globe to students starts with emphasizing the human stakes in the places we study. As a facilitator, I work to foster a pedagogical environment where students can effectively engage in analytical and comparative thinking about governments abroad. To accomplish this guiding ideal, I emphasize three concrete pedagogical goals.

First, I teach students ***to employ comparative analytical reasoning***, teaching them that they can use theoretical concepts derived from the comparative study of politics, like regime-type, state formation, and federalism, to analyze the news and real-world politics more broadly. A key corollary of this goal is teaching students to learn generalizable lessons from other global contexts. A student, for instance, will learn to read about electoral autocracy in Turkey and draw lessons that may inform their thinking on institutions in Western Europe or the United States. Second, I train students to ***critically read and write about global politics***, drawing both on reading theory and by observing global politics unfolding. I encourage them to build and defend claims and argumentation of their own in conversation with course texts. Third, I work to foster an ***increased civic engagement at a global scale***, encouraging students to see politics in other societies as something they have a stake in, can contribute to, and can learn from directly.

My approach to teaching looks to foster critical thinking, classroom participation by varied types of learners, and individual exploration of comparative politics. To cater to diverse classrooms, I assess student performance on a wide array of metrics. I supplement large-group discussions with small-group think-pair-share activities and online discussion posts, giving confident learners and quieter students multiple and varied points of entry and engagement. Moreover, I tailor assignments and activities to allow students to pursue their specific interests through research-oriented assignments. Over the course of the semester, I emphasize writing as a process, starting with low-stakes memos that build towards coherent research papers. I will also, where pedagogically useful, draw on relevant readings from other political science subfields and academic disciplines to facilitate an understanding of phenomena under study. In all these activities, I encourage students to become agents in co-producing knowledge.

In my classroom, I regularly engage students in interactive whole-class activities, placing students at the center of driving classroom learning. Students have led critical analyses of parliamentary politics in Malaysia in large group activities. During a coup politics simulation activity for POL 366: Politics in Africa, students examined the role of the African Union in coups across the region. We divided sections into smaller-groups of coup-plotters, democratically elected incumbents, election monitors, and foreign military observers, to inhabit the dynamics of coups and autocratic control. They thought through the dynamics of coup-proofing and the varied political incentives and dynamics at hand as a learning community with varied perspectives. At the end of these activities, students understood the dilemmas of different critical actors in a coup context and identified the incentive structures and trade-offs that drove different actors in these contexts.

Experience

Over the years, my teaching style has resonated with students. I receive an average rating of 4.54/5 (between “very good” and “excellent”) across the courses I have facilitated. My students have responded positively to my ‘engaging’, ‘prepared’, and ‘energetic’ style. Those who excel in classroom environments will be able to extend their semester-long learning as advisees, research collaborators, and perhaps even as colleagues down the road.

I have designed syllabi on original courses covering politics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) after colonialism and state-formation in the developing world. I would be keen to teach my own version of courses on the political systems of the MENA regions and on political economy in MENA and Africa. I leverage an inclusive approach to facilitation, encouraging students of all kinds to feel empowered to participate in a community of co-learners. In the fall of 2023, I guest lectured for Elizabeth Nugent's POL 364 Politics in the Middle East. I lectured on colonial politics in the Middle East, discussing a range of politics spanning the Construction of the Suez Canal to national independence in the years immediately following the Second World War. I am available and excited to teach courses on politics in the MENA region, on contentious politics, and on state-formation in developing societies. I am also prepared to tailor my teaching to the department's needs and would be willing to teach on a range of comparative and global politics topics.

Future Teaching Goals

Teaching is a skill to be constantly honed and improved. In future years, I will work to improve as an education. In my remaining months at Princeton, I will finish the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning's Transcript Program (a rigorous pedagogical training program). Going forward, I will work to become a more engaging educator to an even wider array of students, for example, by including more primary source and multimedia materials in classroom activities. As an educator, I will always encourage students to have a lifelong interest in politics in other countries. As a professor, a mentor, and a graduate advisor, I hope to convey the importance of global inquiry in civically engaged research, work, and in global citizenship more broadly. In the process, I hope to foster classrooms and communities of students, able to critically engage with social science scholarship, global politics coverage, and the world around them.