

Teaching Statement

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Teaching is a form of communication – if used correctly, teaching is one of the most effective ways of communication, and can have a long-lasting, significant, and profound impact on someone, from which they could benefit a lifetime, and make a difference to change the world. For me, teaching is the best way to transfer my areas of research to something that cultivates the future generation into innovative and socially responsible citizens, who think not only in terms of productivity, profits, and performances, but also social justice, social impact of technologies, and universal good and human wellness.

My area of research is Science and Technology Studies (STS) – an interdisciplinary field made up of various social sciences and humanities centered on human dimensions of science, technology, and medicine. I situate my study in the broader discipline of sociology and use sociological tools and frameworks to dissect the dynamics of modern technologies and human behaviors. The interplay between human society and technological development is highly relevant both for me and for the students, as science and technology have become an indispensable part of our society and shaped our ways of living in a large scale, yet created new challenges (as we see, for example, how social media and mobile phones define a new era). Traditional disciplines have failed to integrate the human and technology development, whereas my teaching offers an exciting opportunity for college students from various disciplines (especially STEM) to think creatively and critically about the issues in their own fields, identifying problems for which they could potentially work on in the future.

For me, educating future leaders in science and technology is a privilege as well as a calling. In a way, my teaching is to communicate the values of social sciences and humanities, and to equip the students with specific frameworks, skills, and methodologies to analyze, critic and reflect on the fast-changing world of science and technology. As a teacher my role is to inform the students with knowledge, to instruct them in critical thinking, and to inspire and motivate them to connect their issues of interests with tools and perspectives from my field. **My goals for teaching are, therefore, to** 1) raise social awareness in understanding science, technology, and medicine; 2) apply sociological perspectives, frameworks, and theories in conceptualizing and solving practical problems; 3) creatively critique and reflect in an inclusive and diverse environment, where different perspectives and interpretations are integrated in de-colonized and culturally sensitive ways.

For the **first goal**, I think it's fundamental to connect the subject of study with broader social and cultural context in the first place. As modern science and technology develop into extremely specified expertise, I aim to provide trans-disciplinary and human/environment-centric views on science, technology, and medicine to my students from different majors. I use concrete, context-rich materials to link students' prior experiences and knowledge, making the teaching more relevant. The content in my classes is issue- and problem-based, with examples and stories from academic research, historical archives, and on-going news such as the COVID pandemic in the year 2020/2021, when I was guest lecturing and used recent data to illustrate the origin of inequality in healthcare. My design of lectures, in-class discussions, and tests are to facilitate learning, and I will collect survey feedback from students to improve the choices of issues and materials – especially how such materials enhances their motivations and interests and resonate with students.

The **second goal** is core to my teaching as a sociologist. The framework (concepts, methods, and paradigms) of sociology in the study of science and technology is a powerful tool in understanding aforementioned issues and can benefit students' future academic and professional career as creative

and critical thinkers. I expect student to fully engage in the process of developing their own studies of social and technological phenomena with sociological concepts and frameworks, and to effectively (attempt to) explore, measure, and test them in the problem-solving process. Problems can be big or small – something extensive as a capstone project, or something simple like a dinner table discussion or some shower thoughts – but all of them can initiate sociological ways of practice and develop ownership over their projects. This can be done through both independent and group work (such as a research design assignment). My role is to provide examples and to walk them through the entire process with a series of worksheets, outlines, drafts, and feedback. I conduct assessments with comprehensive rubrics that evaluate various interconnected abilities and skills and reward the students accordingly – no projects should be seen as a failed one (as long as proper efforts are put into), but imperfect ones that have strengths and weaknesses. Students are expected to continuously refine their thinking – during and after the classes – and progress towards higher goals beyond the lessons.

The third goal – to reflect and critique in an inclusive and diverse environment – provide the backbones of my teaching. Social sciences and humanities always call for sympathy, reflection, and cultivation of virtue to the human matters. My teaching will not be condescending but seek ways to introduce the students into a vibrant scholar community where people exchange ideas with curiosity and mutual respect. My role is not only a teacher or instructor, but also someone with an international, multilingual background who always listen, find inspiration, and incorporate students' thinking from different cultures and experiences. I evaluate students' qualities of participation and contribution, level of diversity and creativity, and difference and change in values and perspectives after taking classes. I also accommodate learning in multiple mediums, encouraging creative forms of assignment.

To summarize, my teaching philosophy is that social science teaching should connect students with real-world problems, to initiate new ways of thinking from sociology and other social sciences, and to facilitate their critical analysis of science and technology from a human and social angle.

For undergraduate teaching, my areas of expertise (STS, Sociology of Medicine, History of Medicine) can translate into a series courses ranging from introductory levels (Intro to Sociology, Intro to Science and Technology Studies), intermediate levels (Sociology of Health and Illness, Social Studies of Innovation and Technology, History of Medicine), and advanced levels (seminar-style special issues).

Engagement and interaction are key elements throughout my teaching, paired with multiple, integrated ways of assessment and evaluation which focus on students' change in perspective, improvement in skills, and willingness of reflection. I will continuously adjust my plans and methods according to the motivation of students' learning, and the skills they demonstrate in the self-initiated assignments – through surveys, Q&A sessions, and students' in-class and after-class feedback. My previous trainings as a TA/co-lecturer, teaching workshops, teaching certificate have equipped me with a set of comprehensive tools to evaluate, refine, and deliver my teaching effectively. Other experiences such as guest lecturing, public speeches, and research symposiums as a public scholar of contemporary relevance also enhance my communication skills. I will keep up with research and evidence of teaching as a future faculty member and actively participate in the teaching community.

I believe that future generations of leaders need social awareness in terms of science and technology; and future challenges call for comprehensive skillsets that are problem-oriented and critical in nature. My teaching could facilitate such learning with comprehensive, evidence-based design, and will add valuable assets into the teaching community.