Teaching Statement

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Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is built on three key pedagogical pillars: active learning, formative assessment, and inclusive teaching.

I believe students learn more effectively when they are actively engaged in the learning process. To promote active learning, I prioritize interactive teaching methods, such as using the blackboard to develop graphs, perform calculations, and construct logical arguments with the students. This approach allows students to actively participate by writing, calculating, and engaging with the material, rather than passively listening. In larger classes or online settings, I replace the blackboard with a document camera or interactive slides. My lecture slides and handouts, shared before class, include blank spaces for students to take notes and follow along with the material on their own "canvas." I provide fully completed slides and handouts after class to ensure no student falls behind. This method not only encourages engagement but also maintains a steady pace, giving students opportunities to ask clarifying questions throughout the lecture.

I use a variety of active learning techniques tailored to different classroom environments. In smaller classrooms, I oversee and directly participate in activities, while in larger classrooms or online courses, I employ small group discussions, online discussion boards, and brief reflection papers. Across all settings, I alternate between lecturing and active learning periods, incorporating clicker questions, think-pair-share exercises, minute papers, and discussions to create moments of reflection. These pauses allow students to step back from absorbing information and engage with it more deeply.

Students learn in different ways and at different speeds. They benefit from having a variety of assignments and receiving feedback on their performance on each one. Likewise, I benefit from teaching in different ways and from receiving feedback on my performance at various points. I favor the use of formative assessment, distributing assignments of various formats throughout my course and evaluating learning at each stage. Summative assessment, which concentrates feedback in grades toward the course end, can be minimized.

I strive to make all students feel welcome in my class. I acknowledge and value their diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences, which enrich the teaching and learning environment. In the classroom, as in the society, I believe that diversity can enhance efficiency, but I also view diversity, inclusion, and equity in education as goals in their own right. I work to create an inclusive learning environment where diversity can thrive. I provide multiple communication channels and design activities that encourage the expression of diverse perspectives. I recognize that my students have unique identities and experiences, and I emphasize that each of them has a place and brings value to our class.

Teaching Experience

I began my teaching career before graduate school as a teaching assistant for Professor Sisir Debnath. I supported mandatory economics courses for MBA students, corporate managers, and policymakers. My responsibilities included grading problem sets, leading weekly recitations, and holding office hours. Many students from this course have since risen to prominent positions, including top executives and government officials in India.

During my graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I assisted Professors Jonathan Renshon and Andy Kydd in various methods courses for both undergraduate and graduate students, including classes on research design and formal models. My responsibilities involved grading assignments, leading weekly recitations, and holding office hours. Additionally, I worked with Dr. Evan Morrier on a popular course called Understanding Political Numbers, a key part of the undergraduate methods sequence focused on data analysis using R. Since the course was taught over Zoom during the COVID-19 pandemic, I developed content for both asynchronous and synchronous delivery. My role expanded to include grading, leading R coding sessions, discussing research proposals, and providing office hours.

Moreover, I supervised three students as a 698 Undergraduate Research Program Mentor at UW-Madison. Recognizing the diverse interests and career goals of these students, I helped them pursue their preferred career tracks, whether in industry or advanced research. Similarly, I currently supervise three research assistants in India.

I also have experience teaching at the ICPSR Summer Program, where I assisted Professors Tim McDaniel, James Johnson, and Omer F. Yalcin. I supported a variety of methods courses, including Mathematics for Social Scientists, Introduction to Python, and Rational Choice Theories. These courses were designed to equip social scientists with essential methodological tools for their research.

Teaching Interests

My research, coursework, and teaching experience have prepared me to teach courses in the subfields of political economy, quantitative methods, and comparative politics. For undergraduates, I can teach introductory courses in comparative politics and South Asian politics. I am particularly excited to offer an upper-level course on "Political Inequality," which focuses on the problems with democracy, examines their causes and effects, and explores potential remedies.

For graduate students, I am prepared to teach courses in comparative politics, particularly those focusing on political institutions, the developing world, and a field seminar that provides a comprehensive overview of the discipline. I can also offer specialized courses in empirical political economy, focusing on political institutions, electoral accountability, and development. Additionally, I am well-equipped to teach methods courses in econometrics and data analysis at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, with a focus on developing statistical skills and programming expertise. At the graduate level, I can teach advanced methods courses on causal inference, equipping students with the tools necessary for research careers.

In both methods and substantive courses, my primary goal is to deliver key concepts with clarity and relevance. For undergraduates, I aim to simplify complex ideas and emphasize their broad applications. For graduate students, I focus on the theoretical foundations, key concepts, and techniques necessary for conducting cutting-edge research.

Teaching Evaluations

The table below summarizes my teaching evaluations for the courses mentioned, rated on a scale from one to five (with five being the highest):

Course	Semester	Overall	Office Hours	Useful Feedback	Clarity
Research Methods in Political Science (UW-Madison)	Fall 2019	4.0	4.0	4.29	3.71
Understanding Political Numbers (UW-Madison)	Fall 2020	3.75	4.38	3.5	3.75
Introduction to Python (ICPSR)	Summer 2023	4.625	4.625	4.625	5

Student Testimonials

Research Methods in Political Science :

- *"I believe my TA, Priyadarshi, did a great job teaching/leading discussion."*
- *"Whenever I asked a question in discussion, he would ask me at the end of class if I was still confused. This prompted me to seek greater clarity if I hadn't been completely satisfied with his answer to my question during class."*

Understanding Political Numbers :

- *"Very accessible to ask questions"*
- *"Great at answering questions"*
- *"He was very smart and knew what he was doing. In some ways, he did the best of teaching the content"*