Teaching Statement
Priyadarshi Amar (Postdoctoral Researcher, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid)

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 class material 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 Versatility and Course Portfolio

My research expertise, extensive coursework, and diverse teaching experience have prepared me to teach across multiple subfields of political science with enthusiasm and competence. I am eager to contribute to both undergraduate and graduate curricula through a wide range of foundational and specialized courses.

Core Undergraduate Offerings: I am well-prepared to teach essential undergraduate courses including Introduction to Comparative Politics, where I can help students understand fundamental concepts of political systems, institutions, and processes across different countries and regions. My background in quantitative methods positions me to teach Research Methods courses, where I emphasize hands-on learning with statistical software and real-world applications. I am particularly excited to develop and teach a specialized upper-level course on "Political Inequality," examining democratic deficits, their root causes, consequences, and potential solutions through comparative analysis.

Specialized and Regional Expertise: My deep knowledge of South Asian politics enables me to offer focused courses on the region, providing students with insights into one of the world's most

politically dynamic areas. Additionally, I am prepared to teach courses on the Political Economy of Development, exploring how political institutions shape economic outcomes in developing nations, and Media and Politics, examining the evolving relationship between information systems and democratic governance in the digital age.

Graduate-Level Instruction: For graduate students, I can teach comprehensive field seminars in comparative politics, offering systematic coverage of major theoretical approaches and empirical findings. I am eager to offer advanced courses in Empirical Political Economy, focusing on cutting-edge research methods and substantive findings in areas such as electoral accountability, institutional design, and economic development. My expertise in causal inference and econometric methods positions me to teach rigorous methods courses at the graduate level.

Methodological Training: Across undergraduate and graduate levels, I am committed to teaching quantitative methods courses, from introductory statistics and data analysis using R and Python to advanced econometrics and causal inference techniques. I believe strongly in making methodological training accessible and relevant, connecting statistical concepts to substantive political questions.

Adaptability and Innovation: I am not only willing but excited to teach beyond my current specializations. I welcome opportunities to develop new courses that meet departmental needs and student interests, drawing on my broad training in political science and my commitment to interdisciplinary approaches. Whether adapting existing courses or creating entirely new offerings, I approach each teaching opportunity with enthusiasm and a commitment to pedagogical excellence.

In all courses, my primary goal is to deliver key concepts with clarity and relevance. For undergraduates, I aim to simplify complex ideas while emphasizing their broad applications and contemporary significance. For graduate students, I focus on theoretical foundations, methodological rigor, and the skills necessary for conducting cutting-edge research.

Teaching Experience

I began my teaching career before graduate school as a teaching assistant for Professor Sisir Debnath at the Indian School of Business. I assisted for 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.

More recently, I have taught a course as a visiting instructor at the University of Mumbai. The course was designed to help MA in Public Policy students with statistical analysis using R. These ten lectures provided me with my first exposure to teaching a course as the principal instructor, giving me valuable experience in curriculum design, lecture delivery, and student assessment. Adding to this experience, I will be teaching a Mathematics camp as a visiting lecturer at Nalanda University in the coming months, alongside my postdoctoral duties at UC3M. These upcoming teaching opportunities

will further expand my instructional experience across different educational contexts and student populations.

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
Research Methods in Political Science (UW–Madison)	Fall 2019	4.0	4.0	4.29
Understanding Political Numbers (UW–Madison)	Fall 2020	3.75	4.38	3.5
Introduction to Python (ICPSR)	Summer 2023	4.625	4.625	4.625

Note: The evaluations for other courses are not available either because the class size was too small for evaluation requirements or because the proportion of students who submitted evaluations was lower than the minimum required to generate a report.

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"*