

APSA Presidential Task Force on Rethinking Political Science Education

Appendix 3: Sample Syllabus for Graduate Teaching in Political Science course

A Model Nine-Week Course: Evidence-Based Teaching in Political Science

This workshop has been developed to support you as graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and as future faculty who will teach, mentor, and advise students, as well as conduct research. It introduces evidence-based research on university-level teaching and learning with an emphasis on practical application of theoretical principles. We begin each meeting with a discussion of issues, challenges, and successes from the week's teaching experiences, or any pressing concerns for the week to follow, and discuss how we might link these to evidence-based research on teaching and learning. We then move to a substantive discussion of designated topics for the week, focusing both on research findings and practical applications. Theoretical readings are paired with practicum assignments –concrete learning activities that can be introduced into discussion sections or larger classes to promote student learning. The workshop also provides resources and feedback on developing teaching portfolios for the job market.

Workshop requirements for those registering for credit:

1. Participation in 7 of 9 seminar meetings.
2. Weekly short assignments: most weeks we'll prepare brief classroom exercises that provide practical applications of theoretical principles for that week's session, and that you can use in section.
3. Final course project due final exams week: Prepare a teaching portfolio, or relevant portion of one, depending on your year in the program, and your personal and professional goals. For example, if you're leading discussion sections, you may submit a lesson plan that illustrates principles and theories addressed in the workshop. If you're preparing to teach a course, you may submit a course syllabus. If you're planning to go on the job market soon, you may submit a more developed teaching portfolio, including a teaching statement, syllabi, sample lesson plans, SoTL research on student learning, etc.

Texts:

The following texts are classic references for undergraduate teaching and learning from which we'll read excerpts. (None are required for the course. All required readings are available electronically via the campus library. In some cases, if newer editions are not yet electronically available, and relevant excerpts were not significantly revised, we'll read the most recent edition available online to keep course costs low.)

1. Ambrose, Susan A., et al. 2010. *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
2. Bain, Ken. 2004. *What the Best College Teachers Do*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
3. Brown, Peter C., Henry. Roediger III, Mark A. McDaniel. 2014. *Making it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA.

4. Curzan, Anne and Lisa Damour. 2011. *First Day to Final Grade: A Graduate Student's Guide to Teaching*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
5. Davis, Barbara Gross. 2009. *Tools for Teaching*. (2nd ed.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
6. Deardorff, Michelle D., Kerstin Hamann, John Ishiyama, eds. 2009. *Assessment in Political Science*, APSA: State of the Profession Series.
7. McKeachie, Wilbert J. and Marilla Svinicki. 2013. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*, Wadsworth Press (14th ed.).
8. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. *How People Learn II: Learners, Contexts, and Cultures*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24783> (free PDF available)
9. National Research Council. 2000. *How People Learn: Brain, Mind Experience and School*. National Academy Press, Washington D.C.
10. Nilson, Linda B. 2016. *Teaching at Its Best: A Research Based Resource for College Instructors*, 4th ed., Jossey-Bass.

Two Peer-Reviewed APSA Political Science Journals to Consult on Pedagogy

1. [Journal of Political Science Education](#)
2. [PS: Political Science and Politics](#)

Helpful Websites with Teaching and Learning Resources

1. [Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative, UBC](#)
2. [University of Michigan, CRTL](#)
3. [Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard](#)
4. [Center for Teaching and Learning, Stanford](#)
5. [Carnegie Mellon, Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence](#)
6. [MIT Teaching and Learning Laboratory](#)
7. [Berkeley Graduate Student Instructors \(GSIs\)](#)
8. [University of North Carolina, Center for Teaching Excellence](#)

Summary of Scheduled Meetings and Topics: (*Topics may be slightly revised after our first meeting, once we have a better sense of who's in the workshop and your specific interests and goals.*) Since this is a 2-credit S/U course, readings will be kept relatively short, 1 – 2 research articles or chapters from texts each week, designed to lay theoretical foundations for effective pedagogical practices. (Estimate is ~4 hrs. for weekly reading and practicum prep, which as mentioned above, should apply directly toward teaching/section prep.)

Week 1:

- Introductions and goals
- Preparing to teach and strategies for succeeding: inclusive classrooms

Week 2:

- How do we learn? Introduction to theories of human cognition and student learning
- Practical teaching strategies to engage student learning: facilitating discussion

Week 3:

- Establishing learning outcomes: aligning assignments and assessments

- Bloom's taxonomy: formative and summative assessments

Week 4:

- Fixed vs. growth mindsets: How to provide efficient and effective feedback to promote learning
- Midterm reviews and evaluations: building your teaching portfolio

Week 5:

- Teaching writing: writing to learn.

Week 6:

- Strategies and Styles of Teaching
- Effective Lecturing and Active Learning: Peer Instruction, Simulations, Case Studies

Week 7:

- Developing teaching portfolios for the job market, awards, promotion files

Week 8:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and SoTL Research

Week 9: Looking Forward: UG Education and the Discipline (APSA)

Finals Week: No class; submit teaching portfolio project.

Schedule of Readings and Resources for Workshop Meetings. (As noted above, topics and readings may be slightly revised, depending on workshop participants' personal interests and goals.)

Week 1:

Discussion

- **Introductions and Goals**
- **Planning for Week 2:**
 - Preparing to teach and strategies for succeeding: inclusive classrooms
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Inclusive classrooms

Readings

1. Sathy, Viji, and Kelly A. Hogan. 2019. "How to Make Your Teaching More Inclusive." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. pp. 2 - 16 (15 pgs.)
2. Collier, Peter, and David Morgan. 2008. "Is That Paper Really Due Today? Differences in First-Generation and Traditional College Students' Understanding of Faculty Expectations." *Higher Education* 55:425-46 (21 pages).

Practicum

Planning for week 2 -> establishing Learning Outcomes (LOs)

Preparing to teach and strategies for succeeding: inclusive classrooms

- Asking and answering questions
- Inclusive classrooms

Week 2:

Discussion

1. How Do We Learn? Theories of human cognition/student learning
2. Practical Teaching Strategies to Engage Student Learning

Readings

1. National Research Council, *How People Learn: Brain Mind Experience and School: Expanded Edition*.
 - Ch. 1: “Learning: From Speculation to Science,” pp. 3 – 27 (25 pgs.).
 - Ch. 2: “How Experts Differ from Novices,” pp. 31 – 50 (19 pgs.).

Practicum

- Develop a brief outline of how key research insights from Chapter 1 could be translated into a classroom activity either for a discussion section you're currently teaching, or one you would like to teach in the future.

Week 3:

Discussion

- Establishing learning outcomes + aligning assignments and assessments
- Bloom’s Taxonomy + formative and summative assessments

Readings

1. Simon, Beth and Jared Taylor, 2009, “What is the Value of Course-Specific Learning Goals?” *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 52 – 57. (Example of SoTL research.)
http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/SEI_research/files/LifeSci/Simon_Taylor_ValueOfCourseSpecificLG.pdf
2. Linda B. Nilson, 2010 (3rd edition), Chapter 2 “Outcomes-Centered Course Design,” *Teaching at Its Best: A Research Based Resource for College Instructors*, pp. 17 – 32.

Practicum

- Depending on your personal interests and goals, develop course specific, unit specific, or single-lecture or discussion section learning outcome(s).
 - Refer to Table 2.1 to identify verbs that map onto different cognitive levels or processes and discuss the cognitive process that the learning goal will promote using one of the cognitive frameworks outlined in the chapter -Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy, Anderson and Krathwohl’s (2000) revision, Fink (2003), and/or Perry (1968) and Baxter-Magolda 1992.
 - Refer to Table 2.2 for examples of learning outcomes based on Bloom’s and Anderson and Krathwohl’s taxonomies to assist you in drafting your learning outcomes. Note: Learning outcomes should be phrased: **“By the end of [this course, or this unit, or this lecture, or this discussion section] students should be able to . . .**
 - Refer to the learning outcomes rubric in Table 2.3 to evaluate/revise your learning goals.
- Design/draft an assignment(s) or in-class activity that will support student learning in achieving this learning outcome. (Our readings over the next several weeks will address the research on how different types of assignment and activities can support different learning goals, but for now, simply reflect on something that you think should work well.)

Week 4:

Discussion: What type of feedback best promotes student learning?

- Promoting Student Learning Before and After Exams: Fixed vs. Growth Mindsets

- Soliciting midterm feedback (Quit, Keep, Start)

Readings

Fixed vs. Growth Mindsets; Assessments of Student Learning

1. Dweck, Carol, 2015, “The Secret to Raising Smart Kids,” *Scientific American*, vol. 23, no. 5, pp. 1 – <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-secret-to-raising-smart-kids1/>
2. Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro 2010, Chapter 5 "What Kinds of Practice and Feedback Enhance Learning?" *How Learning Works*.

Practicum

- Design an assignment either for discussion section or for a future course you'd like to teach that incorporates key research findings on student practice and instructor (or peer) feedback.

Week 5:

Discussion: Teaching Writing: Writing to Learn

- Strategies for Equitable, Effective, and Efficient Feedback on Writing to Promote Learning

Readings

1. Barbara Gross Davis, 2009, Chapter 34 “Helping Students Write Better in All Courses,” and Chapter 35 “Designing Effective Writing Assignments,” *Tools for Teaching*, pp. 305 – 322. E-book from Roger: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucsd/detail.action?docID=448877>
2. UNC Chapel Hill, Writing Center: Writing Standards in Political Science: <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/political-science/>
3. Skim for relevance: 3-pg handout from Harvard’s writing program on responding to student writing.
4. Ambrose et al., 2010, *How Learning Works*, Appendix C, Exhibit C.3 (from Carnegie Mellon) 3-pg rubric for assessing papers (skim for relevance).
5. Skim for relevance: Lisa Baglione, “[Doing Good and Doing Well: Teaching Research-Paper Writing by Unpacking the Paper,](#)” *PS*, 2008, vol. 41, issue 3, pp. 595 – 602.

Practicum

- Design a writing assignment either for section, or for a course you’d like to teach.
- If time, develop a rubric for assessing the assignment, or simply critique how the example given in Appendix C (above) may or may not be useful or adaptable for your assignment.

Week 6:

Discussion

Strategies and Styles of Teaching: Effective Lecturing and Active Learning/Peer Instruction

Readings

1. YouTube: Erik Mazur: Peer Instruction (Serious Science): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9orbxoRofI> (14mins)

2. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*:
 - Ch. 14: "Active Learning: Group-Based Learning," pp. 190 – 200
 - Ch. 15: "Experiential Learning: Case-Based, Problem-Based; Reality-Based," pp. 202 – 211. (TritonEd)
3. Gary King and Maya Sen, "How Social Science Research Can Improve Teaching," *PS Political Science & Politics*, vol. 46, no. 3, July 2013, pp. 621 – 629. <https://gking.harvard.edu/files/gking/files/teaching.pdf>
4. Two summaries/reviews of paper by Scott Freeman et al. in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* (PNAS), May 2014:
 - <https://www.wired.com/2014/05/empzeal-active-learning/>
 - <http://www.pnas.org/content/111/23/8319>

Practicum

- Design an active learning exercise that you could use either in section or in a class you'd like to teach one day. (Or report on an active learning exercise you've implemented already.)

Week 7:

Discussion

Developing teaching portfolios for the job market – workshop and discussion

Readings

1. Davis, *Tools for Teaching*:
 - Ch. 54, "The Teaching Portfolio," pp. 481 – 503.
2. APSA resources.
3. Cornell resources for developing a teaching philosophy statement: <http://gradschool.cornell.edu/career-services/teaching-philosophy-statement>
If you scroll down, you'll find additional links to *Chronicle of Education* articles on how to write a teaching statement, in addition to a great link to sample statements in various disciplines (including Pol. Sci.) at Michigan: <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tstpum>

Practicum

Bring a draft teaching statement or other teaching portfolio contribution for feedback.

Week 8: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); and SoTL Research

Discussion

What are key concerns relating to diversity, equity and inclusion in our classrooms, and what can be done about them?

- What type of research designs might be most useful in assessing the impact of specific pedagogical interventions in this area, and why?

Readings:

1. Walton, et al. "Two Brief Interventions to Mitigate a "Chilly Climate" Transform Women's Experience, Relationships, and Achievement in Engineering," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 2015, vol. 107, no. 2, 468 – 485: <https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/u.osu.edu/dist/2/43662/files/2017/02/468-12v4agv.pdf>

2. Rowland and Myatt, "Getting Started in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: A 'How to' Guide for Science Academics," Wiley OnLine Library, Sept. 2013: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24591041>

Learning Outcomes:

1. Define and discuss an example of SoTL
2. Demonstrate understanding of diversity, inclusion and equity concerns in our classrooms
3. Provide critiques of a sample research design that assesses impact of pedagogical intervention on "chilly climate"
4. Provide draft of class (or course) experiment to assess the impact of a specific pedagogical intervention on student learning (which may or may not be related to diversity, equity and inclusion) (this can carry into week 10)

Although the first research article focuses specifically on addressing "chilly climate" due to gender bias, we'll discuss whether this research may have broader application. What are some strengths and weaknesses of the research design?

Practicum

Draft a preliminary research design to assess the impact of a pedagogical intervention on student learning either for a future discussion section or for a future course you'd like to teach. (The pedagogical intervention may be designed to address diversity, equity, inclusion, but could also address a different learning outcome/objective.)

Week 9: Undergraduate Education and the Discipline

Discussion

- Undergraduate Education at R1 Universities
- Teaching and the Discipline: APSA updates

Readings

1. Boyer Report, "Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities" - <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED424840>
2. Wahkle, John C., "Liberal Learning and the Political Science Major: A Report to the Profession," *PS: Political Science & Politics*, March 1991, 48 – 60.: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/ps-political-science-and-politics/article/liberal-learning-and-the-political-science-major-a-report-to-the-profession/334FE64574A44457D387910BE0D13C98>

Practicum

Bring draft of relevant portion of teaching portfolio you plan to submit as the workshop project for discussion and feedback. (Final drafts are due Tuesday of finals week, with flexibility, depending on your finals week schedule. See page 1 of syllabus, #3 under "Workshop Requirements" for more details and/or feel free to follow-up with me.)

Further Optional Readings:

Weeks 0 - 2:

1. First Day of Class -link from Carl Wieman site: <http://cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/index.html>

2. Motivating Learning: <http://cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/index.html>
3. Derek A. Webb, "Twelve Easy Steps to Becoming an Effective Teaching Assistance," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 2005, vol. 38, issue 4, pp. 757 – 761.
4. Davis, *Tools for Teaching*
 - Part I, Ch. 3: "The First Days of Class," pp. 37 – 47 (11 pgs.).
 - Part III, Ch. 9: "Leading a Discussion," pp. 97 – 105 (9 pgs.)
 - Ch. 10: "Encouraging Student Participation in Discussion," pp. 106 – 111 (6 pgs.)
 - Ch. 12: "Asking Questions," pp. 118 – 125.
 - Ch. 13, "Fielding Students' Questions," pp. 127 – 131. (e-book from Geisel)
 - Part II: Responding to a Changing Student Body, pp. 57 – 93.
 - Ch 5: "Diversity and Inclusion in the Classroom," pp. 57 – 68 (12 pgs.).
 - Ch. 7: "Reentry and Transfer Students," pp. 85 – 88 (4 pgs.).
 - Ch. 8: "Teaching Academically Diverse Students," pp. 90 – 93 (4 pgs.)
 - (Skim for relevance) Ch. 6: "Students with Disabilities," pp. 72 – 84.
5. Curzan and Damour, *First Day to Final Grade*.
 - Ch. 1 "Becoming a Teacher," pp. 1 – 6 (6 pgs.).
 - Ch. 2 'The First Day of the Term," pp. 7 – 29 (23 pgs.).
 - Ch. 3. "Weekly Class Prep," pp. 29 – 40 (11 pgs.)
 - Ch. 4: "Running a Discussion," pp. 41 – 57.
 - Ch. 6: "Trusty Class Plans,' pp. 76 – 91.
 - Ch. 11 "The Balance of School and Teaching," pp. 227 – 231 (5 pgs.)
 - Appendix B: Lesson Plan for a Discussion Class, p. 180 – 181.
6. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*:
 - Ch. 5: "Facilitating Discussion: Posing Problems, Listening, Questioning," pp. 36 – 54.

Weeks 3 and 4:

1. Grant, Heidi and Dweck, Carol, 2003, "Clarifying Achievement Goals and Their Impact," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 85, no. 3, pp. 541 – 553.
2. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*: Chapter 9, "Good Designs for Written Feedback," pp. 108 – 124.
3. Davis, *Tools for Teaching*:
 - (Skim): Ch. 40, "Allaying Students' Anxieties about Tests," pp. 375 – 389.
 - Ch. 43: "Grading Practices," pp. 409 – 418.
 - Ch. 36: "Evaluating Students' Written Work," pp. 325 – 334.
 - Ch. 52: "Early Feedback to Improve Teaching and Learning," pp. 461 – 471.
 - Ch. 53: "Video Recordings and Classroom Observations," pp. 472 – 480.
 - Ch. 60: "Student Rating Forms," pp. 534 – 546.
4. Danelle D. Steven and Antonia Levi, *Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback and Promote Student Learning*, Sterling, VA: Stylus Pub., 2005.
5. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*:
 - Ch. 10: "The ABCs of Assigning Grades," pp. 125 – 137.
6. Curzan and Damour:
 - Ch. 8 Grading, pp. 133 – 156.

- Ch. 9, “Feedback from Students,” pp. 157 – 164.
7. My Fight against Grade Inflation: A Response to William Cole,” Simeon Dreyfus, *College Teaching*, 41:4, pp. 149 – 152.

Week 5: Teaching Writing; Designing Effective Writing Assignments

1. Davis, *Tools for Teaching*, Ch. 35: “Designing Effective Writing Assignments,” pp. 314 – 322.
2. John C. Bean, *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*, 2nd ed., San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2011, Chapter 1: " Using Writing to Promote Thinking: A Busy Professor's Guide to the Whole Book," pp. 1 - 14 (14 pp), Chapter 2: "How Writing is Related to Critical Thinking," pp. 17 - 38 (22 pp). Skim for relevance: Chapter 6: "Formal Writing Assignments," pp. 89 - 119 (30 pgs.).
3. Lisa Baglione, [“Doing Good and Doing Well: Teaching Research-Paper Writing by Unpacking the Paper.”](#) *PS*, 2008, vol. 41, issue 3, pp. 595 – 602.
4. Nancy Sommers, “Across the Drafts,” December 2006, pp. 248 – 256. (Short essay on the value of feedback for developing undergraduate writing skills.) 3-pg. handout: “A Brief Guide to Responding to Student Writing,” Harvard College Writing Program. (Attached.)
5. *McKeachie’s Teaching Tips*
 - Ch. 16: “Using High-Stakes and Low-Stakes Writing to Enhance Learning,” pp. 213 – 233.
6. Curzan and Damour:
 - Ch. 6, section on “Paper Workshop,” pp. 94 – 98.

Week 6: Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning: Active Learning and Peer Instruction

1. Davis, Ch. 14 “Preparing to Teach the Large-Enrollment Course,” pp. 135 – 145; Davis, Ch. 15 “Delivering a Lecture,” pp. 148 – 156; Davis, Ch. 16 “Explaining Clearly,” pp. 157 – 160; Davis, Ch. 17 “Personalizing the Large-Enrollment Course,” pp. 162 – 166; Davis, Ch. 18 “Encouraging Student Participation in the Large-Enrollment Course,” pp. 168 – 173.
2. [UCSD’s TA Handbook](#): Effective Lecturing, pp. 42 – 52.
3. Jennifer Fitzgerald and Vanessa A. Baird, “Taking a Step Back: Teaching Critical Thinking by Distinguishing Appropriate Types of Evidence,” *PS: The Teacher*, July 2011, pp. 619 - 624.
4. “Being a Skilled Facilitator of Critical Thinking,” from *Critical Thinkers*, pp. 228 – 241.
5. “Structuring Classes to Promote Critical Thought,” (see esp. sub-section: “Five Keys to Creating an Interactive Classroom,” from *Teaching Students to Think Critically*, pp. 61 – 68.

Week 9: Last Days of Class:

1. Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, Chapter 7 (Assessment and Teaching Evaluations), pp. 150 – 172; “Epilogue: What Can We Learn From Them?,” pp. 173 – 178.
2. Davis, *Tools for Teaching*: Ch. 59: “The Last Days of Class,” pp. 529 – 533.