

Within the academic requirement to balance teaching and research, my priority lies with teaching. I enjoy teaching small and larger classes. My courses tend to be popular and often reach full registration. The students' reviews are very favorable. I have attached examples of student reviews.

I believe in openness and clarity. The syllabus of any of my courses gives clear instructions on the purpose of the course, its set up, its assignments, and its grading system. Also, syllabi establish a clear schedule, underscoring different topical areas and required assignments. Course material is available online through tools such as blackboard. Course materials include readings, presentations, instructions, and at times links to video and audio clips. I have included a copy of this semester's *GLS102 Comparative Government and Politics* syllabus in this application

Two ideas are key elements in my teaching philosophy: societal relevance of our studies and student participation.

Current events captivate our attention. By linking broader theoretical frameworks to actual current events, we create a meaningful learning platform for students. The daily news provides ample examples of the political, economic, societal, and ethical relevance of the conceptual phenomena we study.

In my opinion, active student participation in class is essential to ensuring a valuable learning experience. Stimulating student participation within class—or online—discussions, cultivates the capacity to synthesize information from a multitude of sources and forward concise yet relevant statements about the events and phenomena we study. A focus on student participation avoids a less effective one-directional flow of knowledge from instructor to student, yet allows for interaction and an exchange of knowledge between students and between students and lecturer that fits an academic setting best.

To foster student engagement and to show the political, economic, and societal relevance of our studies, each class begins with a discussion of current events relevant to the course. Students are required to read the news and come prepared to introduce pertinent material. These discussions tend to be quite lively and well informed, and students are often surprised by the extent to which public policies impact their lives. The discussions add to the overall interactive nature of the class and promote an active attitude of the students.

Doing research and presenting such research in writing and speech is an essential part of any academic education. My courses allow students to research topics of interest to them. Students bring forward the results of their research in a term paper and in a class presentation. This offers students a 'customized' topic of study, which adds to the

perceived relevance of the broader themes of the course. Writing assignments and presentations allow students to apply conceptual material, situating the learning process in broader political, economic, or societal frames. In addition, student presentations, followed by questions and answer sessions, broaden the range of topics discussed in class.

Besides a larger research project, which tends to constitute the most significant assignment in my courses, I ask my students to provide a range of smaller writing assignments. These assignments require students to reflect on the relationship between current affairs and the broader theoretical frameworks we study during the course. Through such smaller assignments, students develop and hone their written argumentation skills, while—ideally—bolstering their overall course grade. The smaller assignments, student participation in class, and, at times, quizzes or examinations, allow me to keep track of the individual student performance during the course and to provide support and feedback in a timely matter. With that aim, I also ask students to fill out a brief mid term evaluation of the course. This allows me to adapt my teaching and pedagogy relative to student expectations and needs.

I greatly enjoy teaching and I highly value the interaction with students, I make myself available for students by e-mail, phone, and, of course, in person to discuss progress, course content, research topics, results, and concerns. I am pleased to see students respond to my teaching with engagement and enthusiasm. That makes teaching a very fulfilling profession for me.