

TEACHING STATEMENT

In my six years at Dartmouth, I have taught six different courses: the department required methodology course ("*Quantitative Political Analysis*"), three mid-level courses ("*Politics of India*", "*Politics of Ethnicity*" and "*Elections in Emerging Democracies*") and two upper-level seminars ("*Ethnicity and Representation*" and "*Improving Democracy: Institutional Innovations and Experiments in Developing Nations*"). While teaching these courses, I have learnt a great deal about teaching. Through the variety of topics and formats of these courses, I have had the opportunity to experiment with very different approaches to running a class.

While some of these courses have been lecture-based, I have over the years moved towards a more discussion-based model encouraging active learning. The four classes I currently teach provide a sense of the themes covered by my classes:

"Politics of India" uses the Indian case to expose students to developmental and political processes in a poor and ethnically diverse representative democracy. The course requires students to go beyond the conventional wisdom – largely celebrated in India and elsewhere – that the country is "the largest democracy in the world" and provides an overview of the nature and of the achievements of democracy in India.

"Politics of Ethnicity" introduces students to the subfield of comparative ethnic politics. We explore what ethnicity and ethnic identity are, how they differ from other types of social identities, how ethnic groups come into being and change, how one measures ethnic identity and ethnic diversity, and finally, the role ethnicity and ethnic diversity play in conflict.

"Elections in Emerging Democracies" introduces students to electoral processes in developing countries, and considers how they compare to elections elsewhere. Drawing on examples from Asia, Africa and Latin America, we explore a number of themes, including clientelism, electoral fraud, electoral violence, accountability, and ethnic voting. As such, it prompts students to consider the challenges inherent to the establishment of democracy in "most of the world" and to consider the conditions under which these challenges are likely to be alleviated.

In my current seminar – **"Improving Democracy: Institutional Innovations and Experiments in Developing Nations"** – students and I explore the rationale for contemporary "democracy assistance" programs and review the burgeoning empirical literature evaluating the efficiency of these programs. Each week we review the programs funded by international actors in one specific area (ex: Disarmament and Demobilization, Participation and Inclusivity, Transparency, Rule

of law, etc....), critique them, and together discuss potential improvements of these policies.

Given the focus of many of these courses, my primary goal as an instructor has been to challenge students' views on democracy and to encourage them to examine their pre-existing beliefs against concrete evidence about the way in which democracy really works in most of the world. More generally, I strive to develop students' analytical skills. I encourage them to flesh out arguments, and wherever possible, to test them.

Because of their substantive focus, these courses have often attracted students whose interests extend beyond the western world. This focus has also allowed me to teach to and interact with a diverse group of students, including many international students as well as many second or third-generation American students.

My course evaluations have been very high. Open comments provide evidence of my effectiveness as a teacher. Students from my "*Elections in Emerging Democracies*" and my "*Politics of India*" overwhelmingly praised the quality of my lectures, my ability to draw connections between the materials, the coherence and the organization of the sessions, my enthusiasm in the classroom and my availability.

Building on this experience at Dartmouth, there are four courses – or course sequences – that I am looking forward to develop and teach **at the graduate level** in addition to a core survey course in my subfield (i.e., the *Comparative Politics of Developing Countries*):

1. In keeping with several of my on-going and upcoming research projects, my first interest would be to teach a course sequence on the ***Comparative Politics of Ethnicity***. Such a sequence would review important works in the developing body of literature that has been accumulating on the origins of ethnic identities, their impact on a wide range of social, political and economic outcomes, the rationales for ethnic appeals and ethnic mobilization, the roots of ethnic conflict and violence, as well as the debate over the various effects of ethnic diversity. The focus of such a sequence requires students to go beyond the few "classic" works on the question in comparative politics and political economy, and to build bridges across disciplines and subfields. Accordingly, readings for such a course would likely mix quantitative or causality-based methodologies with anthropological and historical texts. Since courses in "ethnic politics" usually require this type of mix, the real innovation of this sequence would lie in its unusual but extensive incorporation of the largely US-based literatures on race relations, especially the psychological literature on these questions. Many comparative works in ethnic politics still refrain from suggesting and testing micro-level psychological mechanisms. For this reason, students would likely benefit from exposure to the research strategies and the methodological standards developed by political and social psychologists

with a micro-level approach to race relations.

2. Second, I also hope to continue teaching one or several courses on ***Indian and/or South Asian Politics***. Since 2011, I have taught an undergraduate course titled *Politics of India* at Dartmouth, which I would be happy to adapt to a graduate audience.
3. Third, I would be excited to teach a course in ***Field Research Methodology***. Such a course would provide students with a set of methodological references and examples of scholarly excellence in the use of a broad array of methodology. This would serve three purposes. First, it would introduce students to cutting-edge work in political science using a wide diversity of field methods to develop and test theories. Second, it would provide students with the opportunity to develop research strategies that employ either innovative techniques or old techniques that are adapted to a new context. Third, it would prepare students to articulate a field research strategy *before* their fieldwork begins. Such a class would introduce students to a range of data gathering strategies (participant observation, interviewing, archival research, survey design, lab and field experiments) and cover topics such as case selection, levels of analysis, as well as the ethics of field research.
4. Finally, in keeping with my current research projects in India, in the coming years, I plan to develop a series of comparative courses and/or seminars on ***distributive politics and clientelism***. Building on the undergraduate *"Elections in Emerging Democracies"* course I have taught at Dartmouth in 2013 and 2016, this course would review the old and emerging literatures on these questions and introduce students to the important variations in the form of party-voters linkages that exist across programmatic and clientelistic polities, as well as to the nuances in the forms of clientelism across emerging democracies.

Syllabi for these courses and for graduate-level courses are available upon request.