

**POLS 681**  
**TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE SEMINAR**  
**Spring 2005**

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**Office Hours:** M/W 12-3 and by app't.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This course introduces graduate students to issues associated with the teaching of political science at the tertiary level. The class will deal with the “nuts and bolts” of constructing and delivering undergraduate classes ranging from basic introductory courses to advanced specialized courses. Classroom techniques and questions of professional ethics and legal obligations will be examined, as will the use of current instructional technologies. The course aims to prepare students to work at TAMU as Graduate Assistant Lecturers as well as to develop skills that may be transferred to their future careers as academics. The immediate goal of the course will be the preparation of a syllabus and course materials that the student may use in teaching as a Graduate Assistant Lecturer at TAMU and/or in presenting instructional materials to prospective academic employers. Grades for this course are on a PASS/FAIL basis. To receive a PASS, students must attend and actively participate in the discussions and activities. Be prepared to talk critically about the issues and to raise your own questions about how to succeed as a teacher of political science. Students must also submit occasional materials when requested.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Most of the required will be from *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*, 11<sup>th</sup> ed. In addition, some reading materials will be photocopied and distributed in class.

**FORMAT:**

The class is designed as a seminar and a hands-on opportunity to work on important teaching skills. Students must attend scrupulously and engage actively in the discussion and the assignments. This is not a lecture course but a seminar intended to get you thinking and talking about your professional goals and how to achieve them. You will also be expected to complete all out of class assignments.

***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement:***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Services for Students with Disabilities in Cain Hall Room B118, phone 845-1637.

**Course Schedule: Reading Topics and Assignments**  
**POLS 681—Teaching Political Science Seminar**  
**Spring 2005**

**January 17: No Class (Martin Luther King Day)**

**January 24: Introductory**

*Do:* Go to the TAMU undergraduate catalogue and identify a current political science class (209 or any course at the 300 or 400 level) that you might wish to teach as a Graduate Assistant Lecturer. Write a brief explanation of why you want to teach this class.

**January 31 and February 7: Thinking Like a Political Science Teacher**

*Read:* McKeachie, *Teaching Tips*, Chaps. 1, 2, 4, 5

*Do:* “Shadow” two classes, one a lower division introductory course (206 or 207), the other an upper division (300 or 400) course. “Shadowing” involves the following set of activities: 1) select 2 courses from among the list on p. 4 below and speak with the professor about attending them; 2) show up for at least two meetings of the course in the two-week period between February 2 and February 14; 3) interview the professors about her or his approach to teaching (methodology and philosophy); 4) write a 1- or 2-page exposition and analysis of both the classes that you have shadowed.

*Note:* Class will not meet on January 31.

**February 14: Community College Teaching Opportunities** (Guest: Dr. Dana Morales and Craig Livingston, Montgomery College)

*Read:* “Teaching Opportunities at Montgomery College”

*Do:* Write a short statement explaining why teaching the TAMU undergraduate class that you have selected would aid in your professional development in some way

**February 21: Establishing a Teaching Philosophy**

*Read:* Ryan and Martens, *Planning a College Course*, pp. 1-19 (handout)

*Do:* Turn in the expositions and analyses of the two classes that you have shadowed.

**February 28: Constructing a Syllabus**

*Read:* Lowther, Stark, and Martens, *Preparing Course Syllabi for Improved Communication*, pp. 1-12 (handout)

*Do:* Turn in a statement of YOUR teaching philosophy suitable for inclusion in a teaching application packet.

### **March 7: Tests and Assignments: Designing and Grading Assessment Instruments**

*Read:* McKeachie, *Teaching Tips*, Chaps. 6, 8

*Do:* Turn in a draft of your syllabus for the class that you propose to teach.

### **March 21: Ethical and Legal Issues: Inside and Outside the Classroom**

*Read:* McKeachie, *Teaching Tips*, Chaps. 7, 11-12

*Do:* Turn in two different kinds of sample assignments (test, essay topics, research paper, other research or thought activities) that you might use in your course.

### **March 28: Diversity** (Guest: Associate Dean Larry Oliver)

*Read:* McKeachie, *Teaching Tips*, Chap. 10

*Do:* TBA

### **April 4: Technology and Teaching** (Guest: B. Dan Wood)

*Read:* McKeachie, Chaps. 15, 16, 19

### **May 2: Sample Course Sessions**

*Do:* Prepare and deliver to the class an exemplar 50-minute course from your prospective syllabus. This may take the form of a lecture, group activity, seminar discussion, or any other appropriate classroom activity. You may assign a reasonable amount of background reading for the class, but you are responsible for duplicating and providing this reading. Depending on the number of students enrolled in the course, we may have to schedule further times

#### **Lecturers:**

April 11:

April 18:

April 25:

May 2:

### **FACULTY VOLUNTEERS FOR 'SHADOWING' ASSIGNMENT**

POLS 206 sec. 505—John Robertson—T/TH 8-9:15 a.m.—CHEM 100

POLS 206 sec. 506—Alex Pacek—T/TH 9:35-10:15 a.m.—BLOC 102

POLS 206 sec. 509—Jon Bond—T/TH 5:30-6:45 p.m.—BLOC 102

POLS 207 sec. 507—Norm Luttbeg—T/TH 9:35-10:50 a.m.—CHEM 100

POLS 207 sec. 509—Norm Luttbeg—T/TH 2:20-3:35 p.m.—CHEM 100  
POLS 323 sec. 200—Michelle Taylor-Robinson—T/TH 4:40-5:55 p.m.—ALLN 1005  
POLS 323 sec. 500—Maria Escobar-Lemmon—MWF 10:55-11:45 a.m.—ALLN 1015  
POLS 328 sec. 500—Maria Escobar-Lemmon—MWF 9:45-10:35 a.m.—ALLN 1015  
POLS 424 sec. 500—Michelle Taylor-Robinson—T/TH 1:30-3:45 p.m.—ALLN 1015  
POLS 454 sec. 200—Lisa Ellis—M/W/F 12:05-12:55—ALLN 1005  
POLS 475 sec. 500—Dan Wood—T/TH 4:40-5:55 p.m.—ALLN 1016

## **ADDITIONAL READING AND RESOURCES**

Ann Curzan and Lisa Damour, *First Day to Final Grade* (Michigan, 2000)  
B.G. Davis, *Tools for Teaching* (Jossey-Bass, 1993)  
L.M. Lambert et al, *University Teaching* (Syracuse University Press, 1996)  
Bernice Pescosolido and Ronald Aminzade, eds., *The Social Worlds of Higher Education: Handbook for Teaching in a New Century* (Pine Forge Press, 1999)  
John Ory and Katherine Ryan, *Tips for Improving Testing and Grading* (Sage)  
Helen Roberts et al, *Teaching from a Multicultural Perspective* (Sage)  
Maryellen Weimer, *Improving Your Classroom Teaching* (Sage)  
Marcia Whicker and Jennie Kronenfeld, *Dealing with Ethical Dilemmas on Campus* (Sage)