

Ana Bracic
Teaching statement

While at OU, I have taught Human Rights and Contentious Politics, Non-Governmental Organizations, Introduction to Political Analysis, and Ethnic Politics, all undergraduate courses, and the graduate Comparative Politics and Ethnic Politics Seminars. During Fall 2016, I co-taught the Election Exit Poll course, which I am co-teaching again this fall. My teaching philosophy focuses on continuously improving the learning environment: understanding how individual students learn, moving beyond traditional educational models, and refining course materials based on what works in practice. In all of my courses, I look for opportunities to blend rigorous substance with opportunities for students to actively engage in the practice of political science and public policy.

Non-Governmental Organizations provides an example of this approach. The course addresses the transformative power of NGOs as well as their limitations, and covers a variety of topics ranging from transnational advocacy to ground-level mobilization. Students develop their own mock NGO. By fielding their own online survey of potential audiences, they gain a first-hand understanding of framing: they are required to present several frames to their participants and assess which is most effective. During this exercise, students learn how to design and run a survey experiment in Qualtrics. They then build an NGO website and create a final presentation. Two of these NGOs have developed into functioning student organizations; one is currently partnering with local prisons to provide sanitary products to inmates who need them.

In Introduction to Political Analysis, I teach the fundamentals of research design, basic statistics (up to and including OLS), and basic programming in R. When I asked to teach undergraduate methods, the department was exclusively teaching SPSS. I developed my own materials to teach R in order to provide students with an appropriate grounding for advanced data work, using a program that was free and accessible in any number of settings, including not-for-profit work. As the course is limited to twenty students, I provide substantial hands-on help, which is vital during lab sessions. Undergraduates learn enough R to complete a very simple research project. Students design a survey, perform a pilot, field the survey among their peers, analyze the data, and write a comprehensive final paper. In 2017, for instance, students explored millennials' trust in the US democratic system. The data-gathering exercise included a field component, using the resources of CEEL (Community Engagement + Experiments Lab), which I co-founded and co-run.

The Election Exit Poll course is a field-based research course I co-teach with Profs. Allyson Shortle and Mackenzie Israel-Trummel. In Fall 2016, 65 students took this course and conducted an exit poll in 12 diverse precincts in Oklahoma City. Students read about and learn how to design a survey, pilot a survey, take the CITI training for research with human subjects (and are then certified to conduct such research), recruit and run survey participants on election day, and help with data entry once data collection is complete. Finally, students write a group research paper using the data gathered in the exit poll. In 2016, seven graduate students from the Political Science department served as precinct leaders on election day, leading teams of undergraduates assigned to their precinct. This course utilizes the resources

of CEEL. So far, data gathered in the course produced several award-winning undergraduate papers and two publications by the three co-PIs. Using data from this year’s election, Profs. Shortle, Israel-Trummel, and I are co-authoring a paper on sexism and education attitudes in Oklahoma with a graduate student. Also this year, I am directing a talented undergraduate in a pre- and post-course student survey aimed at capturing learning outcomes and attitude changes regarding civic engagement as a result of the community-based learning experience. Finally, this year, PhD students have the opportunity to put their own questions on the exit poll and, under our guidance, generate original data for their dissertations.

The Comparative Politics Seminar is a graduate seminar designed to introduce graduate students to the field of comparative politics and to prepare them for the General Exam. It is a small, discussion-based seminar. Likewise, Ethnic Politics is a small, discussion-based seminar during which students produce either a research proposal or a full paper. For both courses, I have significantly updated the course syllabi used in the department to include more recent work and more work by women and scholars of color. The undergraduate version of the Ethnic Politics course is similar to the graduate course, but simplified.

Finally, Human Rights and Contentious Politics addresses various mechanisms of rights change at international, state, and local levels, with a focus on the roles of incentives and norms. Contentious human rights issues (e.g. universality vs. cultural relativity of rights) are debated in formal debate settings, with teams assigned beforehand. During the class on the development of international human rights, students build an elaborate timeline, which I then use to highlight trends and shocks that lead to change. Student presentations and final papers are based on in-depth case studies of their choice.

I am happy to teach a variety of courses. I would very much welcome the opportunity to teach field methods at the graduate level; like my undergraduate methods courses, these course would have a major data-gathering component.

Table 1: Summary of evaluations
(median score, term and year in parentheses)

	Human Rights and Contentious Politics	Political Analysis	NGOs	Comparative Politics Seminar	Ethnic Politics (undergrad)
Extent to which the instructor contributed to your learning	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	4 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 4 (S 2016) 4 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)

Table 1, continued

	Human Rights and Contentious Politics	Political Analysis	NGOs	Comparative Politics Seminar	Ethnic Politics (undergrad)
Ability of the instructor to respond to a wide range of questions about the material in this course	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016)	3 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 5 (S 2016) 5 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 4 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
Instructor's promptness in returning exams/assignments so they could be useful for learning	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016)	4 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 5 (F 2016) 4 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 5 (S 2016) 5 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 4 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
Instructor's ability to encourage critical and independent thinking	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016)	4 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 5 (S 2016) 5 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
Instructor's ability to stimulate continuing interest in the subject matter	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	3 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 4 (S 2016) 5 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
Overall instructor's teaching effectiveness	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	4 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 5 (S 2016) 4 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
Instructor's management of the course was	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	3 (F 2014) 5 (S 2016) 4 (S 2018) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 5(F 2015) 4(F 2016)	5 (S 2016)	5 (S 2018)
Amount you learned in this class	5 (F 2014) 4 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	3 (F 2014) 4 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 4 (S 2016) 3 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)

1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent

Table 1, continued

	Human Rights and Contentious Politics	Political Analysis	NGOs	Comparative Politics Seminar	Ethnic Politics (undergrad)
Workload of this course compared to others at a similar level	4 (F 2014) 3 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	3 (F 2014) 3 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016) 4 (F 2017)	3 (S 2015) 3 (S 2016) 3 (S 2018)	3 (S 2016) 3 (F 2017)	4 (S 2018)
Quality of readings and/or assigned materials	4 (F 2014) 4 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016)	3 (F 2014) 4 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016) 4 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 3 (S 2016) 5 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
Overall, this course was	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016)	4 (F 2014) 4 (F 2015) 3 (F 2016) 4 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 4 (S 2016) 4 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)
This course was graded fairly	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 4 (F 2016)	5 (F 2014) 5 (F 2015) 5 (F 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2015) 5 (S 2016) 5 (S 2018)	5 (S 2016) 5 (F 2017)	5 (S 2018)

1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent