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STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I have two central goals as a political science instructor. First, I work to help my students to understand the numerous ways in which they are affected everyday by the legal and political environment about which I am teaching. Second, I work to help my students to be independent thinkers and researchers on political science questions that remain unresolved. These goals have been reinforced through my serving as Preceptor for the Senior Honors Seminar, and in teaching my own courses of Law and Public Policy (summer 2014, Columbia), Politics in Bureaucracies (fall 2015, Washington University in St. Louis), Introduction to Statistics (fall 2016, co-taught at Yale), Courts, Media and Politics (spring 2017, Yale), American Institutions (spring 2017, Yale), and Constitutional Law (summer 2017, Columbia University Summer Program for High School Students). I am comfortable teaching a wide number of courses on American politics as well as research methods. In spring 2017, I taught an undergraduate course on Courts, Media, and Politics, in which we evaluated mainly the Supreme Court as a political institution in the separation of powers environment, as well as the media's portrayal of various aspects of the Court. I additionally taught that semester a graduate seminar on American Political Institutions, which covers such diverse topics as judicial politics, the presidency, executive branch agencies, Congress, and interest groups.

Apart from simply learning the salient Supreme Court cases and gaining familiarity with reading legal opinions, a central motivation in my Law and Public Policy course is to understand the effects of doctrine on the separation of powers system and the policies that emerge. By discussing ways in which judicial decisions affect the balance of power among Congress, courts, the president, and the states, students gain a better grasp on the complex policymaking system in which these institutions operate, and the downstream effects of these decisions. Through active discussion about the policy debates and the modes of regulation, I work to encourage my students to develop their own voice within these political science and legal debates over the separation of powers and the reach of the institutions' regulatory authority. Similarly in my Politics in Bureaucracies course, I worked to engage my students with seminal political science research on American institutions and to introduce them to the methodologies that they employed, such as working through simple spatial models of legislative, presidential, agency, and judicial preferences, but also to bring it into a real-world context, such as having my students listen to a Supreme Court oral argument centered on judicial deference to agency expertise, read rules and comments submitted by interest groups, and to research an administrative agency and the factors that led to its design and how its design (e.g., cabinet, independent agency) has shaped its subsequent decisionmaking and interactions with other institutions.

My work toward helping students to be independent thinkers and researchers has been reinforced in a number of ways. In the Senior Honors Seminar, I helped students from across political science subfields to develop and execute research ideas through the conducting of original research and the development of 150-page theses projects. This included the discussion of case studies as well as assisting students with measurement development, data collection, and statistical analysis that was supplemented with qualitative research. A number of these students went on to receive university-wide recognition for their theses.

In my Law and Public Policy course, I assign my students to draft brief original statutes and to walk through the legal and political implications of its implementation, considering the issues of statutory interpretation, deference to administrative agencies, the effects of statutory design, and the effects of separation of powers conflict on the policy outcomes observed. This enables students to gain a better grasp on the challenges of legislating and the political and enforcement issues that must be resolved in designing legislation, as well as bringing together the various theories of legislation and delegation that are central to American institutional analyses and applying the theories to concrete policy problems of their choosing. The project additionally exposed students to a number of legal databases which are invaluable in facilitating their continued research in these fields. The assignment challenged the students to pool the knowledge acquired from the class and to consider the vast complexity associated with the policymaking system in which these institutions operate, and gave them hands-on experience in thinking as future lawyers and policy analysts.

My Politics in Bureaucracies course combines historical, positive, and quantitative empirical evaluations of bureaucratic politics over time, with careful attention to the development of the modern administrative state and its consequences with respect to division of power, and the more technical analyses of delegation and rulemaking in recent decades. The students ultimately come away from the course having successfully evaluated the history of an administration from birth to dissolution, rational choice delegation dynamics among the branches, and having conducted original research on rulemaking behavior in recent years. In order to allow students to emphasize a policy area in which they themselves are interested, in my Politics in Bureaucracies course, I had each student conduct a 15-18 page paper identifying a regulatory agency, a rule that it promulgated, the statutory authority from which the rule originated, and the history leading to the rule's development and the consequences of its promulgation (e.g., litigation, political challenges, overall acceptance, rescission). All of these projects work to push beyond rote memorization and toward tying together a number of themes of the course in ways that allow for originality of thought as well as development of academic research skills that will prove useful to them should they go on to graduate or professional school.

To further help my students to develop their research skills, I assign in my Law and Public Policy and Politics in Bureaucracies courses readings from a disciplines spanning law, political science, economics, and policy analysis, evaluating issues of regulation and the separation of powers from a number of methodological approaches including positive theory and quantitative research on American institutions. This includes exposure to original source materials such as administrative rules and court cases, as well as a heavy focus on methodologically rigorous formal and quantitative analyses of legal and political issues in the United States. Few of my students entered the course with any prior exposure to game theory or statistical methods. Thus, I helped them to work through the models of delegation at the core of the lawmaking literatures and explain the wide variety of approaches to studying these separation-of-powers questions, in addition to pushing my students to consider the advantages and limitations of each methodological approach to understanding political institutions and the policy outcomes they have produced over time.

My Introduction to Statistics course is of a more applied focus, helping students to bridge the probability theory and other underlying mathematics, and the ability to utilize those skills to become clear thinkers in reading data and statistical analyses. Capitalizing on the election season, I am having my students evaluate polling data, turnout data, and other datasets related to current events (including healthcare outcomes of the Affordable Care Act, which is also highly topical) to learn the necessary mathematics but to focus in a hands-on way the proper model specifications and interpretations of data to lay groundwork for their future quantitative research.

In Courts, Media, and Politics, I have been able to capitalize on the Supreme Court confirmation

proceedings that were underway, and work hard to engage my students in ways that link scholarly political science research with the world around them. Interspersing lecture with footage of confirmation hearings and coverage of landmark holdings, I work to foster a dialogue about the important legal and policy issues of the day, grounded in academic findings of the effects of judicial ideology, public opinion, and separation-of-powers constraints on judicial behavior. In their final paper, I have my students pick a landmark holding of their choosing and work through the various things that led to its conclusion and how it was received.

These teaching opportunities, along with my own research agenda, have prepared me for success in teaching a range of American politics and research design courses, in particular those emphasizing United States political institutions, public law, and policymaking. In particular, I am equipped to teach – and am interested in teaching – courses on American Institutions, Political Economy of Regulation, The Politics of Policymaking, Law and Public Policy, and undergraduate courses on research design and data analysis, which are all courses that relate closely to my research agenda of quantitative American policymaking research. I believe that this set of courses will contribute to undergraduate and graduate students' understandings of American policymaking and the administrative state. Having studied policymaking processes extensively in my own research, I am also equipped to teach a foundational policy analysis course, as well as Environmental Politics and Healthcare Politics, both of which are the issue areas on which I have focused in my separation-of-powers research.