

Teaching Statement

My primary goal in teaching is to help students understand how social phenomena may be studied and understood. I consider myself first and foremost a social scientist and as such try to communicate and foster practical understanding of the scientific method as it applies to social sciences. I pursue this goal by giving students opportunities to actively problem-solve and by challenging them to think critically. I value synthesis and analysis over regurgitation and repetition. I believe in "hands on" learning, in which students – be they undergraduate or graduate – are engaged in discovery. As a teacher, I view my role as helping to facilitate that discovery.

In addition to incorporating general scientific principals in my teaching, the social sciences offer special opportunities to motivate and excite students. Social science is not merely an academic discipline; it is all around us. It is vital to bring course material to life for students by incorporating current events into discussion where possible.

Why do I want to teach? Simply put, because I love learning and love to help others learn. Being inspired by outstanding teachers myself, I am motivated to help students develop skills and understand critical concepts. I can think of nothing more exciting and worthwhile as facilitating learning – the application of knowledge and critical analysis to social phenomenon – in bright young pupils. I also see teaching as a tangible way to have a positive impact on the world around me. I can think of few careers more exciting and rewarding than having dialogue with, and hopefully motivating, future voters, candidates and activists to think critically and deeply about social issues.

Descriptions of Past Teaching

Instructor, Formal Political Analysis II (graduate) - – University of Texas at Austin, Spring 2011 [approx. 8 students]

The second semester core for formal theory at the graduate level in the Government department. Topics focused on game theory.

Responsibilities: course design; lecture; assessment; office hours

Instructor, Public Choice (Undergrad level) – University of Texas at Austin, Fall 2010, Spring 2011 [approx. 30 students]

An elective undergraduate class concerning the voting theory and democracy (with a comparative focus on electoral systems).

Responsibilities: course design; lecture; assessment; office hours

Instructor, Statistical Analysis in Political Science (undergraduate) – University of Texas at Austin, Fall 2010 [approx. 20 students]

Introductory quantitative analysis course for government majors

Responsibilities: course design; lecture; assessment; office hours

Instructor, Game Theory for Political Scientists II (undergraduate)- University of Oxford, Trinity Term 2009 [Tutorial]

Second-semester undergraduate course extending and applying the logic of strategic interaction to political environments

Responsibilities: course design; lecture; assessment

Instructor, Game Theory for Political Scientists (undergraduate)- University of Oxford, Hilary Term 2009 [Tutorial]

Introductory undergraduate course developing the logic of strategic interaction

Responsibilities: course design; lecture; assessment

Teaching Fellow, Introduction to Agent-Based Modelling (undergraduate), Department of Government - Harvard University, Spring 2007 [approx. 25 students]

An elective project-centred class introducing students to computational, mostly agent-based modelling in the social sciences.

Responsibilities: work closely with the students, assisting with the technical, computer-related troubles as well as with the professors, planning assignments and evaluating projects; grading; programming assistance.

Teaching Fellow, Formal Political Theory II (graduate), Department of Government - Harvard University, Spring 2007 [approx. 15 students]

The second semester core for formal theory at the graduate level in the Government department. Topics focused on game theory.

Responsibilities: Organized weekly recitations to review material/ problem sets; graded and contributed to exam questions.

Teaching Fellow, Formal Political Theory I (graduate), Department of Government - Harvard University, Fall 2006 [approx. 20+ students]

Scott Moser, Teaching Portfolio

The first semester core for formal theory at the graduate level in the Government department. Topics focused on social choice and deductive logic. Responsibilities: Organized weekly recitations to review material/ problem sets; graded and contributed to exam questions.

Teaching Fellow, Mathematics of Elections (undergraduate), Department of Government - Harvard University, Fall 2006 [approx. 15 students]
An elective undergraduate class with a comparative focus on electoral systems. Responsibilities: Graded homework; weekly office hours; contributed problems and graded exams.

Teaching Fellow, American Government: A New Perspective (undergraduate), Department of Government - Harvard University, Spring 2006 [total students: approx. 90. Students in my recitations: two sections of approx. 15 each]
Responsibilities: Weekly office hours; organized and led hour-long discussions weekly; assigned and graded essays.

Teaching Fellow, Psychology of Politics in the US (undergraduate), Department of Government - Harvard University, Spring 2006 [approx. 25 students]
Responsibilities: weekly review session; graded exams and essays.

Teaching Assistant, Decision Processes in American Political Institutions (undergraduate), Social & Decision Sciences Dept - Carnegie Mellon University, Fall 2004 and Fall 2005 [Total students: approx. 75+]
Introductory American political science course.
Responsibilities: Occasional lecturer; office hours; graded exams.

Grader, Policy Analysis II (undergraduate), Social & Decision Sciences Dept - Carnegie Mellon University, Spring 2005 [approx. 25 students]

Grader, Decision Analysis and Decision Support Systems (undergraduate), Social & Decision Sciences Dept - Carnegie Mellon University, Spring 2002 [Total students: approx. 75+. Students in my sections: <20]
Upper-level quantitative class covering decision theory and risk assessment.

Teaching Assistant, Experiments in Economics (undergraduate), Social & Decision Sciences Dept - Carnegie Mellon University, Fall 2001 & Fall 2003 [approx. 25 students]
An introductory micro-economics class for undergraduates with a focus on learning principals via experiments and hands-on participation.
Responsibilities: grading, conducting class-room experiments, office hours.

Teaching Assistant, Abstract Algebra I (undergraduate), New College of USF, Fall 2000 [approx. 15 students]
Held office hours; grading.

Teaching Assistant, Theory of Calculus II (undergraduate), New College of USF, Spring 2000 [approx. 20 students]
Held office hours; grading.

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Economic Analysis (undergraduate), New College of USF, Fall 1999 [approx. 25 students]
Lead weakly review sessions; help office hours; grading.

Teaching Evaluations (unsolicited comments from students)

Selected Comments from Undergraduate Students:

`` Professor Moser made a dull topic voting theory as interesting as it can possibly be. However, what I liked most about Professor Moser was his genuine interest in his student's success. He made a great effort to make sure that the topics being cover were clear to the class, which is not always easy considering the subject matter.”

-student, Public Choice Gov 342N (University of Texas at Austin): Fall 2010

`` A methodology class in political science has always the risk of being boring by being too abstract and formal, therefor I really enjoyed this class because the instructor presented the subject vividly and showed me how public choice applies to reality and especially other subfields of poli sci. Although there were few discussion in class, I liked the way of teaching and also enjoyed the jokes funny reference because they made the subject a lot less monotonous and humor also makes me memorize the material better.

-student, Public Choice Gov 342N (University of Texas at Austin): Fall 2010

`` Great teacher, really enjoys what he does and was able to communicate the information in an effective manner.”

-student, Public Choice Gov 342N (University of Texas at Austin): Fall 2010

`` I spent hours working with Scott outside of class, and he was always willing to sit down and work through problems from mundane coding issues to real modelling questions. The class would have been terrible without his help.”

`` He is extremely helpful outside of class. I really appreciated all of the hard work he did to help me get up to speed in terms of my programming ability.”

`` Was very helpful and generous with his time.”

`` Scott was very passionate about the subject. He related to the students very well and was very sharp and alert with all his actions.”

Selected Comments from Graduate Students:

``Scott is a *superb* teacher. He does an outstanding job conveying the information, he is excited about what he is teaching, and he is always cheerful. It really was a pleasure having Scott as a TF [teaching fellow]--I learned a lot both as a student and how to conduct myself as a TF.”

``Scott is extremely talented at explaining difficult material. He is always open to questions, anytime anywhere.”

``Scott was the only reason why I understood anything in the class.”

``Scott Moser is friendly and provides great feedback on assignments. He seems very involved in his work--kind of a grad student's grad student.”

``Scott was a GREAT TF [teaching fellow]. His teaching style is very laid back and welcoming to questions so that I always felt comfortable asking for clarification. As a result, our sections had a constructive atmosphere in which no one felt stupid for asking anything and we all benefitted from it. I understand the material as well as I do in large part because of Scott.”

``Scott was instrumental in my understanding of the material. He was always willing to meet and discuss the class and was able to summarize difficult concepts in more easily understandable language. He was a real asset to the class.”