Teaching Portfolio

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February 11, 2019

The Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning
George Mason University
Suite 412 Innovation Hall
Fairfax Campus

Dear Evaluation Committee:

I am honored to be among an esteemed group of finalists being considered for the George Mason University Teaching Excellent Awards.

The primary message I aim to convey is that I emphatically believe in the teacher-scholar model. Any success I've had as a teacher is due to my enthusiasm as a scholar, and any success I've had as a scholar has been in part due to stimulation I've received in the classroom. The mental process I go through to figure out how to convey concepts and information to students helps me to learn it better, see its boundaries, and know how and when breaking it might be useful. My students' curiosities invigorate my research ideas. The constant, self-reinforcing feedback I get from simultaneously teaching and researching is exhausting, rewarding, and essential.

I reflect the teacher-scholar model through three consistent aims that I bring to every teaching moment. I want students to take with them *knowledge*, *skills*, and *curiosity* about the topics we explore together in ways that have a lasting effect on their lives. This portfolio provides key examples of these instances by highlighting innovative programs (e.g., Undergraduate Research Assistants Program), pliability (e.g., updating research methods course to teach state-of-the-art programming), engagement (e.g., teach about judicial review with a short play), and thinking of students beyond the classroom (e.g., public scholarship).

Importantly, George Mason University is an ideal place to engage in the teacher-scholar pursuit. Our students are curious, enthusiastic and highly receptive to the type of energy I bring to the classroom. An academic job can feel like an infinite treadmill, but the rewards I get from my students will always make it worth it. I appreciate your time and interest in my contributions.

Sincerely,

Associate Professor of Political Science
Schar School of Policy and Government

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Teaching Statement

I approach teaching with a straightforward philosophy: students should be challenged to think critically about information and use it to generate original, well-developed ideas. Every class that I teach has three basic objectives: (1) to help students develop a **curiosity** about the subject that will persist beyond the timeframe of the course, (2) to help students develop a base level of **knowledge** and understanding about the topic, and (3) to help students improve their research, reading, writing, and analytical **skills**. I design my courses with these objectives in mind and structure the syllabi, lectures, activities, exams, and assignments in a manner that helps to achieve these goals. In addition, I bring these goals into the public sphere through blogging and media appearances in an attempt to help bring evidence-backed explanations to political puzzles. All together, these goals frame my commitment to being a teacher and a scholar, providing direction to these mutually reinforcing roles.

In addition to these general goals, my attitude about teaching is highly pliable. I aim to be responsive to feedback and to treat each instructional experience as an opportunity to learn how it can be better. This willingness to change and adjust has had a profound effect on my ability to incrementally improve my strategies and administration of teaching over time. The self-reflection I've engaged in means I think I am a much better teacher now than I was when I taught my first class in 2000.

I stimulate students' lasting **curiosity** about politics by incorporating current events into classroom discussions, building on student-directed topics, and fully displaying my own enthusiasm for solving political puzzles. I begin nearly every class with some form of brief class discussion that I call, "What's happening in politics?" In these sessions, students are expected to have read news items related to the class and to bring them up for discussion. I do my best to provide an analytical, non-partisan, and course-relevant perspective to every topic that is raised. These sessions are often fun and engaging for me and the students. It also serves as a way to "warm them up" to class participation in an easy-going environment.

In recent years, I have found these sessions to be increasingly challenging. As a professor of politics, it is critical for me to remain politically neutral in the classroom. If I show personal, partisan, or ideological bias, students will stop engaging critically with the material. Those who believe they are predisposed to agree with me, will be less likely to be analytical or skeptical of what I say; those who believe they are predisposed to disagree with me, may take everything I say with a grain of salt. Either way, when students filter the information I provide through a partisan lens, I've lost the social scientific focus of my courses.

Unfortunately, in the last few years this priority has become more challenging. My social science focus is often about objectivity and empiricism, and I therefore tend to stay away from normative claims. However, there is enough unusual turmoil in American politics (the focus of most of my courses) that it is impossible not to forge into normative territory. For example, in

today's political environment it is appropriate for me to point out that when political leaders use racism to attract attention to themselves, it has significant consequences for people in marginalized groups. Sadly, to some ears, it sounds partisan to say things like "racism is bad," or "the president used racist language." My strategy for handing this problem is twofold. First, I am painfully transparent with students. I tell them that I am aware that making critical statements about the President may seem partisan, and it could be construed that way, but that my purpose is to point out the ways in which contemporary politics violates traditional democratic norms, or threatens the stability of political institutions. Second, I use my **curiosity** objective. I constantly encourage students to engage politics with **curiosity**, rather than with emotion. If they approach politics with a sense of "Huh, I wonder why that happened?," rather than a sense of "That makes me so angry/fearful/sad," then we can use a sense of **curiosity** to encourage a dispassionate approach to politics that can expand our understanding.

When classes have fewer than 60 students, writing assignments are the best way to encourage critical thinking and logical development. In an ideal environment, all classes include at least one major (and several minor) writing assignments that forces students to gather information, develop original ideas, and express them in a logical and persuasive format. In my view, students who learn to articulate their ideas through writing become better thinkers. My teaching style and approach to classroom learning reflects my belief that it is the job of higher education institutions to train students that are educated about the world around them and who have a confidence regarding how to think about and approach the world.

My teaching style is one that encourages student participation, even in high-enrollment courses. I teach students with a Socratic-style that forces students to interact with me as I lead them down a road of logic. I frequently ask questions to get the students to make the point I am trying to make. If a student can articulate or discover something on his/her own, they are much more likely to retain the information. I therefore make conscious attempts to learn students' names and to use a variety of instructional methods—lecturing, small group activities, multi-media, and discussion. In general, I find that students are responsive to my teaching style and it helps to keep them interested in the course and its material. I make special attempts to include shy or less-vocal students and to keep the classroom environment comfortable, respectful, and focused.

I have also learned to adjust my courses and classroom when it is appropriate. For example, last year I taught a research methods course for the first time in several years. I completely redesigned and updated the course from the last time I had taught it five years earlier. The course is challenging and introduces students to social science research methods, statistical inference, and computational programming. During the course of the semester I found that some assignments were not spaced out correctly and I adjusted the course structure that eased students' minds. I am to create an environment where students can focus on the content, rather than the rules. At the same time, I go to great lengths to ensure transparency in my grading system, rubrics, and feedback.

In addition to regularly bringing current events into the classroom to use as a pedagogical tool for understanding politics, I also talk regularly with students about various forms of bias. Political science is a male dominated field, and I often observe male voices to be more frequent and prominent in classroom discussion than female voices. I also notice how students of color react differently to material and respond at different rates than white students. I ask students to take note of these as well. We talk about the importance of hearing a diversity of voices and learning from others. We talk about ways to become aware of our own privilege, and what the costs and benefits are of insisting on our positions of privilege, versus promoting sidelined voices. I sometimes do this explicitly (e.g., I will announce that only men have spoken so far and I will only call on women for the next three responses), and sometimes do it implicitly (e.g., making encouraging eye contact with students and having casual discussions after class). I make it clear to students that I am open to their feedback and aim to be responsive to their concerns in how we address topics in class. I use tools that help me to attain greater gender and racial balance on my syllabi and assigned readings. Without making it the focus of any class session, I make students aware that I am aware of the power differentials in education and I seek to break some of them down to help equalize access to information. Students often respond openly and positively to me about these discussions and how they have helped them gain confidence in the classroom. I recognize an increasing number of women of color, for example, excelling in the statistical programming aspect of my methods course, and I know that having a woman as a role model in a technical class is a service to all the students in the class. By talking about these strategies transparently with students, I reinforce that my goals of **knowledge** (including self-reflection), **skills**, and **curiosity**.

Also, I have changed my approach to technology in the classroom over the years. I used to encourage students to use laptops in class, to help facilitate note taking, or to allow them to rapidly look up information. However, my experience and the current research on this topic, suggests that this approach is ineffective. Laptops become a distraction for students (and their neighbors), and I have therefore banned them from my classes, except in special circumstances. The results of this policy have been fantastic—more students paying attention to the information conveyed in lectures and less screen time in the classroom. I am not, however, a Luddite when it comes to technology in teaching. I am constantly searching for innovative technological tools to use in classroom instruction. Over the years I've experimented with Blackboard features, in-class response systems, web-based interactives, social media and other tools to keep students engaged and interacting with material. I also freely communicate with students via email, chatting, Twitter, Slack, or Blackboard and find that I today's college students often prefer these means of communication.

Through assignments and examinations, I expect students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts introduced in class. To me, the ideal class would include in-class essay exams, which require more thought and creativity on behalf of students than multiple choice exams. In large classes, the opportunities for such assessments are more limited, but I continue to experiment with technological classroom tools that can provide students with experience at articulating their comprehension, questions, and ideas in a way that is manageable in a large

group. With respect to statistics courses, I feel that the more interaction and practice the students have with the material, the more they will retain. For such courses, I use regular homework assignments with problem sets, which I grade and return. I also use a series of small projects to get students to think about more complicated problems and learn how to solve them. Such assignments are vital to the success of any technical course.

My approach to graduate-level teaching reflects these philosophies but leans toward self-directed learning. In graduate seminars I encourage students to lead classroom discussions and we delve much deeper into the relevant literatures. I ensure that students are reading the cutting-edge research in the field and that they have a working knowledge of the methodological analyses they read in the major journals. I maintain an open-door policy so that students feel welcome to talk with me about their research and ideas, and I provide ample and rapid feedback on their written work.

Mentoring is an important and intense form of teaching that I really enjoy. In my career I have mentored dozens of undergraduate and graduate students, particularly through serving as an advisor for research projects, theses, and dissertations. I push theoretical and empirical rigor with my students, and provide constructive feedback at regular intervals. I provide advice about workflow, time management, life balance, and stress. I maintain appropriate boundaries with students that allow me to help them when they are in distress, but not so much that they see me as a healthcare provider. I'm constantly helping students discover resources, academic and otherwise, and providing connections and introductions that I think will help them. Many of my PhD students have gone on to successful academic careers, finding good academic jobs and thriving in them. I'm quite proud of my academic progeny; however, one of the most rewarding parts of mentoring for me is how much I tend to get from these relationships. I often learn new things from the students I mentor, whether it is exposure to a literature that I didn't know well, familiarity with a method, or just observing their creative minds make new discoveries. Mentoring is intense teaching, but it serves me as much as it serves them.

In my role as undergraduate director at the Schar School (2014-2018) I pioneered the Undergraduate Research Assistants Program (URAP). This program matches undergraduate students with faculty to work on specific projects that faculty are doing. The program provides real world experience in social science research for students, and much needed assistance for faculty. While mentoring can be time consuming, I see it as one of the most rewarding parts of being a teacher because the byproducts are so tangible.

The teacher-scholar model that is at the heart of a research university is the ideal place to find the most valuable teaching. I know that I am a better teacher when I'm deeply involved with my research, and I'm a better researcher when I'm doing my most interactive teaching. Bringing the latest research findings from my field into the classroom helps students to get exposed to cutting-edge findings and keeps me on my toes in helping them to incorporate new results into existing knowledge. This forces me to really understand what the changes are and what's most important, and to be able to articulate that to others. Likewise, when my classroom is engaging

and curious my students often help me advance an idea to bring new light to an approach. Sometimes I have found it difficult to stay truly motivated about my research when I'm away from the classroom because I miss the constant injection of inquisitiveness from the students. While being a teacher and a scholar can sometimes feel like two full-time jobs, they complement each other so well that I cannot imagine doing them separately.

I also see public scholarship as a part of the teacher-scholar model. The political world is awash with puzzles that have a profound effect on people's lives. Understanding how and why things happen is a critical service that political scientists can provide to our communities. Political scientists have insightful knowledge about how conspiracies form and spread, what triggers civil violence, what conditions increase the likelihood of interstate conflict, how people can improve their civic experience, and more. It is our responsibility to share our knowledge— based on books, experiments, empirical study, and experience—with the world around us. Helping other humans understand current events can have a profound impact on the human condition. Five years ago, I started a political science blog with some friends to help engage with the public and it's been a rewarding and successful experience. I speak out publicly and regularly about how political scientists can use their voice to maintain academic credibility and participate with a rapidly changing political world in an ethical way. I write regularly about how to understand politics in a way that reaches non-students who may not be at all familiar with the study of politics. I see this mission of speaking, writing, and working with groups as a key part of being a teacher and using my expertise to encourage collaboration, community, learning, and to improve democracy.

In conclusion, I am passionate about teaching. I enjoy the thrill of a new classroom and the challenge of infecting students with a life-long **curiosity** about politics and the world. I see it as one of my missions in life to encourage students to read, question, think, and embrace mathematics, statistics, and graphical representations of data. Teaching and learning is a never-ending process that I find personally rewarding.

Teaching Vita

JENNIFER NICOLL VICTOR

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Website: http://jvictor.gmu.edu/ Twitter: @jennifernvictor

EDUCATION

Ph.D. 2003   WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS, Political Science
Fields: American Politics, Formal Theory and Methodology

M.A. 1999   WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS, Political Science

B.A. 1997   UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO, Highest Honors in Political
Science, *Magna Cum Laude*

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor of Political Science with tenure, George Mason University (Aug. 2015 – Present)
Assistant Professor of Political Science, George Mason University (2012 – 2015)
American Political Science Association, Congressional Fellowship (2004 – 2005)
Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh (2003 – 2012)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Introduction to American Politics GOVT 103 (FA 2014, FA 2015, FA 2016, FA 2017, FA 2018) This course provides a foundation for studying American politics. The course covers critical theory to explain the purpose of government, the functions of American political institutions, the science of understanding group inputs into politics through campaigns, parties, and organizations, and the basic process of policy making.

Social Science Research Methods GOVT 300 (SP 2018, FA 2018) This is a required research methods course for Schar School majors and covers three major topics: the process of social scientific research design and causal inference, basic statistical inference, and statistical software and programming.

Legislative Process GOVT 307 (FA 2012, SP 2013, SP 2014, FA 2015, FA 2016) This course is focused on the lawmaking process in the US Congress and studies the strategic behavior of members of congress. The course covers lawmaking, representation, strategies of policymaking, campaigns and elections, campaign finance, and lobbying. The course focuses on real world cases and analytical strategies for understanding lawmaking.

Interest Group Politics GOVT 318 (SP 2013) This course studies organized interests in the United States. Beginning with theories of individual and group behavior we studying the conditions under which people form groups. We examine lobbying, campaign finance, redistricting, advocacy, networks, and political parties in a journey to see how all politics and policy is a function of group interactions.

Political Networks GOVT 319/400 (SP 2017, SP 2019) Politics is about relationships. This course takes that observation seriously from the perspective of theories of political behavior and empirical strategies for understanding politics. Borrowing from sociology and mathematical graph theory, students learn the properties of networks and how they affect politics at the individual, group, and societal levels. Software is introduced to conduct empirical analyses of network graphs.

Partisan Polarization in American Politics GOVT 490 (FA 2017) This senior seminar provides an in-depth exploration of the roots of polarization in contemporary US politics. Using a lens of history, democratic theory, race and gender theory, and modern political psychology, we uncover how American politics became polarized and what the consequence are for modern (and future) politics.

Social Science Research Methods GOVT 500 (SP 2016) This is a graduate level course in social science research design. The course is focused on the tools of causal inference and introduces students to the logic of designing causal research and the tools of statistical inference. We make brief introductions of a variety of methodologies so students understand the benefits and drawbacks to various research designs.

American Politics Pro-Seminar GOVT 510 (FA 2012, FA 2014, SP 2015) This is a graduate level seminar in American politics designed to prepared students for advanced in-depth research on American politics. Beginning with democratic theory, we explore foundational ideas about democracy and how they were applied in the design of American political institutions. We examine the state of the literature in each branch of government and in political behavior, parties, groups, elections, and public opinion.

Legislative Politics GOVT 604 (SP 2014, SP 2019) This is an advanced seminar in legislative politics, focused on the US Congress. This course explores the state of the literature in lawmaking, legislative decision making, legislative networks, legislative campaigns and campaign finance, separation of powers, representation, and policy formation. Students gain advanced **skills** in applying social science research methods to questions of relevance in legislative politics.

BOOKS

Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Alexander H. Montgomery, and Mark Lubell, eds. 2017 *The Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ringe, Nils and **Jennifer Nicoll Victor**. 2013. *Bridging the Information Gap: Legislative Member Organizations in the United States and European Union*, with Christopher J. Carman. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press*.* http://bridgingtheinformationgap.wordpress.com

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLISHED ARTICLES (RECENT)

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll and Gina Yanitell Reinhardt. 2016. "Competing for the Platform: How Organized Interests Affect Party Positioning in the United States." *Party Politics*. First published on-line December 29, 2016.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll and Gregory Koger. 2016. "Financing Friends: How Lobbyists Create a Web of Relationships among Members of Congress." *Interest Groups & Advocacy*. On-line first 24 May 2016. doi:10.1057/iga.2016.5

Ringe, Nils, **Jennifer Nicoll Victor**, and Justin H. Gross. 2013. "Keeping Your Friends Close and Your Enemies Closer? Information Networks in Legislative Politics. *British Journal of Political Science*, 43(3): 601-628.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2011. "Legislating versus Campaigning: The Legislative Behavior of Higher Office Seekers." *American Politics Research,* 39(1): 3-31.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll and Nils Ringe. 2009. "The Social Utility of Informal Institutions: Caucuses as Networks in the 110th U.S. House of Representatives." *American Politics Research*, 37(5): 742-66.

Koger, Gregory and **Jennifer Nicoll Victor**. 2009. "Polarized Agents: Campaign Contributions by Lobbyists." *PS: Politics & Political Science*, 42(3): 485-488.

BOOK CHAPTERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS (RECENT)

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2017. "Unraveling 2016: Comments on Gelman and Azari's 19 Things." *Statistics and Public Policy* 4 (1): 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1080/2330443X.2017.1399846.

Ringe, Nils, **Jennifer Nicoll Victor**, and Wendy Tam Cho. 2017. "Legislative Networks," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks,* Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Alexander H. Montgomery, and Mark Lubell, eds. Oxford University Press.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2016. "Campaign Finance and Political Polarization: When Purists Prevail." *The Forum* 14 (4). https://doi.org/10.1515/for-2016-0042.

Van Thomme, Jack, Ringe, Nils, and **Jennifer Nicoll Victor**. 2015. "Explaining Reelection: Expertise, Influence, and Intergroups." In Kaeding, Michael and Niko Switek (eds.): *Die Europawahl* 2014. Wiesbaden (Germany): Springer VS.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2012. "Gridlock Lobbying: Breaking, Creating, and Maintaining Legislative Stalemate." In *Interest Group Politics*, 8th ed, Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, eds. Washington, DC: CQ Press. Reprinted in *Principles and Practice of American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 6th ed., Samuel Kernell and Steven S. Smith, eds., Washington, DC: CQ Press (2015).

HONORS AND AWARDS (RECENT)

Distinguished Senior Scholar, Visions in Methodology, hosted by The Ohio State University, May 7 – 10, 2018: http://visionsinmethodology.org/conf/2018/

 "Political Ties Award," 2017 APSA Political Networks Section best political networks paper published in a peer-reviewed journal in 2016-2017 for "Financing Friends: How lobbyists create a web of relationships among members of congress," *Interest Groups & Advocacy*, 5(3): 224-262.

George Mason University, School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs Teaching Award (2015)

Pi Sigma Alpha (political science honor society) honorary inductee, GMU chapter (2015)

"Professor of the Year," presented by students of IFC/NPHC, University of Pittsburgh (2009)

GRADUATE STUDENTS MENTORED

Chair, *Aubrey Grant*, PhD Candidate, (2020) Public Policy, Schar School of Policy and Government

Chair*, Brian Alexander*, Ph.D. (2015), George Mason University, Schar School (formly School of Policy, Government, & International Affairs (SPGIA)). Now tenure track faculty at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA.

Chair, *Matt Snyder*, PhD. Candidate, George Mason University, SPGIA

Committee Member, *Ayah Ibrahim*, PhD (2017), George Mason University, SPGIA

Committee Member, *Elsa Talat Khwaja*, PhD Candidate (2019), George Mason University, SPGIA

Committee Member, *John Nelson*, PhD Candidate (2019), George Mason University, Computational Social Sciences

Committee Member, *Mark Brunner*, PhD Candidate (2019), George Mason University, SPGIA

Committee Member, *Scott Atherley*, PhD Candidate, George Mason University, SPGIA

Committee Member, *Tiffany Turner*, PhD Candidate, George Mason University, SPGIA.

Committee Member, *Andrew Armstrong*, PhD Candidate, George Mason University, SPGIA

Chair, *Kristen C. Allen*, Ph.D. (2013), University of Pittsburgh, Political Science. Tenure-track position at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, as of August 2013.

Committee Member, *Hirokazu Kikuchi*, Ph.D. (2012) University of Pittsburgh, Political Science. Now a researcher at University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki, Japan.

Committee Member, *Justin H. Gross*. Ph.D (2010) Department of Statistics and Heinz School of Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University. Now, Asst. Prof. of Political Science, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Committee Member, *Nils Ringe*. Ph.D (2005) Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh. Now, a tenured Professor of Political Science, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

INVITED TALKS (RECENT)

"The Future of Political Parties," John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress, May 21, 2018.

Visions in Methodology, Distinguished Scholar. Ohio State University, May 8, 2018.

St. Louis Area Methods Meeting (SLAMM). Invited presentation at Iowa State University, April 20, 2018.

"Why the Senate is Broken," American University Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies, October 30, 2017

Introduction to Inferential Statistics (10-day course), Georgian Institute of Public Affairs, Tbilisi, Georgia. Invited instructor on US State Department Grant (PIs: Priscilla Regan and Eric McGlinchey), July 17 – August 4, 2017

Ohio State Election Panel, December 2016, Columbus, Ohio

Wesleyan Median Project Post-Election conference, November 2016, Middletown, Connecticut

Introduction to Inferential Statistics (10-day course), Georgian Institute of Public Affairs, Tbilisi, Georgia. Invited instructor on US State Department Grant (PIs: Priscilla Regan and Eric McGlinchey), July 25 – August 6, 2016

St. Louis Area Methods Meeting (SLAMM). Invited presentation at American University, April 22, 2016.

"Congressional Gridlock and Legislative Politics" presented to the National Association of County Collectors, Treasurers, and Finance Officers. Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC, February 19, 2016

TEACHING RELATED SERVICE AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY (RECENT)

Director, Undergraduate Programs, Schar School of Policy & Government, 2014-2018.

Undergraduate Council, George Mason University, 2017 – 2018.

Search Committee Chair, Assistant Professor of Political Methodology, 2017

Search Committee Member, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, 2016

Member, Provost's Task Force for a Multidisciplinary Education Platform (appointed) 2014-2017

Coordinator, Undergraduate Research Assistants Program (SPGIA), 2015-2018

Coordinator for Workshop for Research in Political Science, 2014-2015

PhD Admissions Committee, Public Policy, GMU, 2015

PhD American Politics Field Examinations Committee, Member, 2014, 2015
Member, Search Committee for Department Chair, College of Humanities and Social Sciences,
    (Dean's Appointment), 2013-2014
PhD American Field Examinations, Committee Chair, GMU 2013-2014.
Elected member, Faculty Senate, GMU, Admissions Committee, 2014-2016

BLOGGING, COMMUNITY OUTREACH, MEDIA (SELECTED)

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2018. "Shutdown under a Unified Government? Blame Trump." *The Conversation*. January 20, 2018. http://theconversation.com/shutdown-under-a-unified-government-blame-trump-90423. Invited submission.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2017. "The Persistence of America's Political Polarization." *Medium.* April 7, 2017. https://medium.com/@jennifernvictor/the-persistence-of-americas-political-polarization-40b264c17e3b. Invited submission.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2017. "Parties Are More Likely to Form Coalitions with Groups That Are like Them and Show Loyalty, but Not Those That Are Rich." *USAPP* (blog). March 13, 2017. http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2017/03/13/parties-are-more-likely-to-form-coalitions-with-groups-that-are-like-them-and-show-loyalty-but-not-those-that-are-rich/. Invited submission.

Victor, Jennifer. 2016. "Can Congress Build Bipartisanship through Caucuses?" *The Conversation*. Accessed September 22. http://theconversation.com/can-congress-build-bipartisanship-through-caucuses-64286. Invited submission.

Victor, Jennifer. 2016. "What Is a Party Platform, and Why Do Candidates Often Ignore Them?" *The Conversation*. July 27. http://theconversation.com/what-is-a-party-platform-and-why-do-candidates-often-ignore-them-62595. Invited submission.

Victor, Jennifer. 2016. "Campaign Fund Raising Is an Arms Race With Limited Impact - NYTimes.com." *New York Times*, February 25, on-line edition, sec. Room for Debate. http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2016/02/25/does-money-really-matter-in-politics/campaign-fund-raising-is-an-arms-race-with-limited-impact. Invited submission

Victor, Jennifer. "What Good Are Elections, Anyway?" Vox, October 30, 2018. https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction/2018/10/30/18032808/what-good-are-elections.

Victor, Jennifer. 2018. "Use Big Data to Explain Politics Rather than Predict It." Vox. February 5, 2018. https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction/2018/2/5/16973996/big-data-explain-politics.

Victor, Jennifer. 2017. "Being a Good Scientist and a Good Human: Thoughts on Teaching during Trump - Vox." August 28, 2017. https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction/2017/8/28/16215972/teaching-during-trump.

Victor, Jennifer N. 2017. "On the Importance of Political Science Blogging." Vox. May 29, 2017. https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction/2017/5/29/15701600/on-the-importance-of-political-science-blogging.

Victor, Jennifer N. 2017. "The Dangers of Partisan Animosity." Vox. April 3, 2017. https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction/2017/4/3/15153780/partisan-animosity-danger.

The Teacher-Scholar Exponent

I taught my very first class when I was a PhD student at Washington University in the summer of 2000. It was an undergraduate statistics class designed for political science majors. I was young and inexperienced, but eager to lead my own class after having been a teaching assistant for several others, and a student all my life. There's no question that I have always enjoyed the performance aspect of being in front of the classroom. A captive audience that looks to the person at the front of the room for wisdom, direction, and leadership appealed to my inner ego. In that first classroom experience, however, I quickly learned the importance of content and preparation. There can be no performance, no wisdom, no leadership provided without mastering the material. I was acutely aware that students were spending their time and money to be in the classroom and that the product that I delivered to them during that time needed to be meaningful and rich.

I didn't realize it at the time, but this was the beginning of my journey as a teacher–scholar. These two primary roles are at the heart of academia. They each present sufficient challenges, such that it seems to be common for academics to choose to focus on one role over the other. Those who excel at articulation, performance, and application become exemplary teachers, while those whose research pursuits make profound contributions to the state of knowledge on important questions of our time are academia's essential researchers. It is not at all unreasonable for an excellent teacher to decide to eschew scholarship in favor of perfecting the craft and embracing the dedication of being a full-time teacher. Likewise, one can find considerable praise and acceptance in academia for a scholar who demeans their role as an educator and even pokes fun at, and diminishes any time spent preparing for the classroom. Indeed, research requires intense focus, without which it can be impossible to make true progress. So, it makes sense to me that many academics choose to focus their careers on their role as a teacher or their role as a scholar; however, I am certain that these roles are entirely interdependent for me.

Being a good teacher makes me a better scholar; being a good scholar makes me a better teacher. This basic axiom is the foundation of my academic career. I know that my most successful teaching experiences have been those in which I have been able to articulate material to others in a way that can only come from true mastery and comprehension of the material. Those best teaching experiences have also been those that have included sharing with students the most recent and cutting-edge discoveries in my field. In short, I could not perform as an excellent teacher in the absence of scholarship. My scholarly pursuits keep me abreast of the literature and constantly reading, challenging, and dissecting what we do and do not know. My scholarship leads me to engage with others who expand my understanding and allow me to convey that to my students. Being an active scholar is an essential part of how I teach and what I bring to the classroom.

My students help me to be a better scholar. There is no better way to invigorate a research agenda than to spend time in a classroom filled with curious and engaged students who raise questions, demand answers, challenge me, or simply share with me their understanding of some material. Doing so helps me to advance my own thinking. The experience is different with undergraduate and graduate students in that undergraduate students show more **curiosity**, which I find infectious, while graduate students tend to display more critical and in-depth insights into our extant knowledge on topics, which helps to broaden my understanding of the world.

I've titled this narrative "The teacher-scholar exponent" to evoke two meanings. First, I mean to say that I will use this document to expound on the idea of a teacher-scholar and to demonstrate how it shapes my attitudes toward teaching. Second, I mean also to suggest that teaching and scholarship have a mathematical relationship. For me, the teacher-scholar model has an exponential effect on my pursuits. The interdependent feedback between my scholarship and teaching is an endless cycle of stimulation, such that the sum of each of these roles is worth more than the individual parts. The narrative and evidence provided here demonstrates the ways in which the teacher-scholar approach has enriched my academic career.

Identity, Growth, and Reflective Practice as an Educator

My identity as a teacher-scholar is constantly evolving. I have developed a number of habits over the years that have strongly contributed to my ability to improve my courses, instruction, and mentorship and that allow me the self-awareness required to be in a constant state of evolution. In the following section I focus on syllabi as a way to understand my self-reflective pedagogical practices, not because syllabi are particularly revealing per se; rather, my syllabi are thoughtful reflections of each course I teach, including standard and unique elements in each, and a discussion of their elements is the best way to gain a sense of my classes' content, character, goals, and evolutions over time. In this section, I provide a tour of my syllabi to introduce you to my classrooms and show how they reflect a teacher-scholar by reinforcing **knowledge**, **skills**, and **curiosity**.

Tour of a Course—Standard Syllabi Components

The way that I generally establish my *identity* with my students is through my syllabi and a good introduction session on the very first day of class. Every syllabus that I write has a standard template, that I adjust and revise to tailor it to a particular topic or level of student. Each syllabus has complete information about the logistics of the course and contact information in an easy to read format at the top. Figure 1 shows how I accomplished this in my Spring 2018 syllabus for GOV 300, Research Methods. I want to convey to students that I am available, accessible, and interested in their educational goals.

Figure 1 Sample Syllabus Introductory Material

The second and third components of every syllabus I write includes a description of the course and the objectives of the course. This information is important for setting expectations. The course description needs to be more detailed than the few sentences students may have seen in the general course catalog, but not so long and detailed as to be unruly. I generally write my course descriptions so that it follows the organization of the readings and assignments for the semester. The course description typically gives examples of the subsections or subtopics that will be main content in the course. The course description is also my first sales pitch for the course and my opportunity to provide a motivation that explains why the content is worth knowing. The sample course description in Figure 2 below shows how I used the course description to pique students' **curiosity** about a topic about which I expect they have little prior intuition or preconceived notion of what a course on "Political Networks" might be about.

The course goals are meant to be somewhat straightforward. I like to keep them simple, but tactile. Students should have an immediate intuition about what they will learn in the course. I avoid jargon completely and try to strike a balance between sounding accessible,

enticing, but also challenging. The following excerpt from my Political Networks class shows an example of clear and non-complicated goals. Here you can directly see how I articulate my goals of **knowledge**, **skills**, and **curiosity**.

I.   Course Description

The study of networks, connections, or relationships in politics is intuitive. In this course we learn the theory, methods, and applications of a systematic study of networks in politics. For many decades the study of politics has been dominated by studying individuals and institutions. In this course, we challenge the basic assumptions of those individualistic approaches and look at specific cases where it may be unreasonable to assume that people or events are independent of one another. The course is interdisciplinary, drawing strongly from sociology, statistics, and computer science. Networks are a ubiquitous feature of the natural and social world and we will draw upon examples and lessons from many fields, from genetics to anthropology, to understand how networks operate in politics. The course covers theories of social network analysis and applies them to questions of politics. To do so, we will also apply methodological tools and software to social network data. The course is introductory and provides somewhat of a survey of the field. Students are not required to have a quantitative background, but those who have previous experience with statistics or data analysis may have an advantage in becoming familiar with the techniques.

II.   Course Objectives

I have three broad objectives for this course. First, students will learn the fundamental theoretical and methodological concepts in social network analysis as it relates to politics. Second, students will learn basic network analytical skills and develop the ability to use basic tools in at least one software program. This will include best practices for gathering and managing network data. Third, I aim to stimulate students' curiosity about politics and creative means of studying questions pertinent to modern problems and interests.

Figure 2 Sample Course Description and Goals (GOV 400)

Another component that is a staple of every one of my syllabi is a section that clearly outlines the course requirements and graded elements of the course. This section is consistent with the teacher-scholar model in that integrity, trust, and transparency are common critical elements of scientific research, teaching, and learning. This is often the section that students read most closely. It is imperative that it is easy to read, specific, and comprehensive. In my view, a syllabus is a contract. There is nothing worse than being a student in a course and feeling like your course grade is a mysterious black box. The syllabus must be a complete record of the exact elements that comprise the course grade, and the weight given to each. I believe strongly in transparency in the teacher-student relationship, especially when it comes to grading. I always include a grading scale. I use a pretty standard one, but I do not want student

to have uncertainty about how graded values convert to letter grades. It is my intention that every student could exactly calculate their own grade using their returned scores and the weighted algorithm provided in the syllabus. I have only very rarely provided extra credit assignments because they violate my belief in the syllabus as contract. I do not like adding or subtracting graded elements outside of what is outlined in the syllabus. I occasionally use this section to include basic instructions about how to access graded elements on-line, or where students can find further instructions, or basic policies about making up missed assignments. The following excerpt shown in Figure 3 from my GOV 103, Introduction to American Politics course, shows how I do this.

III. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

There are five graded requirements for this course, described below. Grades will be calculated on a non-curved typical A-F scale where,

97-100 A+	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	<60 F
93-96 A	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

Quizzes (15%) Nearly every class meeting will be accompanied by a quiz that highlights the main points from lectures and readings assigned on that day. Quiz instructions will be given verbally in class, thus providing a strong incentive for attendance and participation. Students will access these quizzes electronically via *Blackboard*. **Each quiz will only be available on the day it is assigned**; activities must be completed in the window of time after class ends and before midnight on the same day. Students are encouraged to download the free *Blackboard* application for their smart phones or tablet devices because sometimes we will have time to do quizzes together in class (but please see policy below on electronic devices in the classroom). The lowest *three* quiz scores will be dropped for each student. **It is not possible to make up missed points for quizzes.**

Midterm Exams (25% each) There will be TWO midterm exams. Each exam will be multiple-choice format (closed book, closed note). Questions will be based on material presented in class and in the readings. The exams will be in-class on **Thursday, September 27 & Thursday, October 25.** These are the ONLY days to take the exams. If you do not come to class on this day or you arrive after the first person to complete the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

Final Exam (35%) This will be a comprehensive, in-class exam covering material from the entire course. The exam will be multiple-choice format (closed book, closed-note). Questions will be based on material presented in class and in the readings. The exam will be in-class on **Tuesday, December 18, 10:30am – 1:15pm.** This time has been designated by the University and cannot be changed; it is the ONLY date and time to take the exam. If you do not come to class on this day or you arrive after the first person to complete the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

Figure 3 Sample Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation, from GOV 103 Introduction to American Politics

In addition to detailed information about how the course grade is calculated, all my syllabi contain explicit policies about late and missing work. In introductory courses, I leave little room leeway, as I have found clear expectations about this are the best way to get compliance. In practice, students who face hardships, challenges, or other difficulties during the semester will find that I generally have a sympathetic ear and I'm willing to work with them to help them meet the course requirements. In more advanced classes at the undergraduate level, particularly methods classes where there are many assignments, I find it useful to provide students with the opportunity to improve their scores on assignments where they've struggled. This is also an example of something that I have *changed* over the years. I used to have a rather ad-hoc approach to missing and late work, and have found this clear and transparent policies to benefit students and me. After all, the goal of the course is not a grade, but it is to learn the material. If re-doing an assignment helps to facilitate the most essential goal of learning, I am in favor. Samples of these are shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5 below.

IV.   Extra Credit, Missing and Late Work

There are NO opportunities for earning extra or bonus credit in this course. You accumulate points toward your final grade through the exams and quizzes described above. If you are aware that you will miss an exam you must notify the instructor *at least two days* prior to the due date or exam date. Make-up exams are conducted at the instructor's discretion and are granted only in extraordinary circumstances, such as a verified illness (with doctor's note) or family emergency (be prepared to provide documentation). Make-up exams will be closed-book essay exams.

Figure 4 Sample Missing Work Policy, Intro level

VI. Policies on late work, make-ups and extra credit

A.   *Can I submit an assignment late?* Students may submit an assignment after its due date for a 5% (off the total possible score) penalty per-24-hour period that the assignment is late.

B.   *What if I miss an exam?* Make-up exams are only given in the case of verified illness or family emergency, such as a death in the family. Documentation is necessary to receive a qualified make-up examination. Students who arrive late to an in-class exam may still sit for the exam if no other student has already submitted their exam; once a single student hands-in their exam, no others may begin the exam.

C.   *What can I do if I perform poorly on an assignment?* Students who receive a 72% or less on a homework assignment or essay (not exam) may re-do the assignment for a replacement grade. Re-do assignments are subject to a 5% per day penalty starting from the day graded assignments were returned to students in class (regardless of attendance). Assignments that were originally submitted past the due date are NOT eligible for re-do.
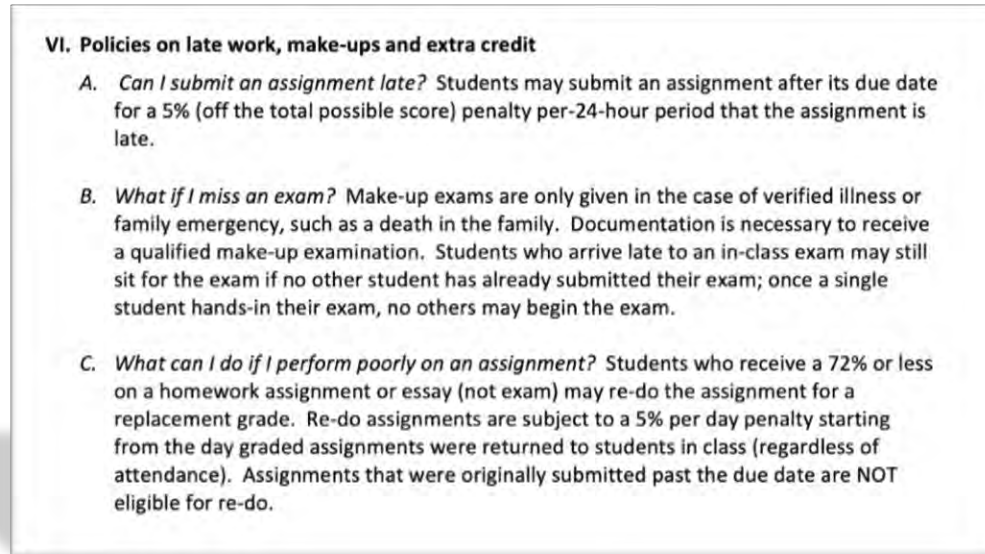
Figure 5 Sample Missing Work Policies, advanced level

The next standard part of all my syllabi include clear statements on course policies and student responsibilities, as shown below. I make sure that students are aware of these things, without belaboring them. They include policies on attendance, readings, technology, cheating, students with disabilities, email usage, and withdrawing. I mention them on the first day, assuming most of them will not actually read the syllabus. I keep the language clear and direct. I think of this part of the syllabus as a reference point. Most students will not need to know about these policies, but if they have questions, they know where to find their answers. Sample of these statements are in Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 8.

> **VII.   Student Responsibilities**
>
> *A.   Class Attendance and Participation.* Learning is an *active*, rather than *passive*, exercise. Accordingly, every student is expected to attend class as well as be prepared to ask questions about and comment on the readings. You need to complete the daily reading assignment *prior* to the class meeting. <u>You will be much more successful in this class if you attend regularly, take notes, pay attention, and participate.</u>
>
> *B.   Readings.* As is the case with attendance, keeping pace with the reading is essential to succeeding in this class. It is *your* responsibility to obtain copies of the readings prior to the date we will discuss them in class. I will do everything I can to make this task easier for you. <u>You will be much more successful in this course if you complete the assigned readings and **take notes** on them.</u>
>
> *C.   Technology.* **The use of laptop computers and tablets is strongly discouraged.** Generally, the costs associated with electronic distractions, to you and those around you, outweigh the benefits of immediate supplementary classroom information and notetaking. Please try taking notes in class by hand. If you strongly prefer to use a computer please sit in the first two rows, or the last two rows of the classroom. If you do this, commit to only using your electronics for class-related activities. Do not text or take phone calls during class. For more information on the benefits of taking notes by hand, see this.

Figure 6 Sample Course Policies on attendance, reading, and technology

I also want to point to Figure 6 as an example of an area that shows *growth*. I did not used to include a technology statement or policy in my syllabi, and even after I started including it several years ago I significantly amended it over the years. I've followed the pedagogical literature on use of technology in the classroom and have come full circle in my thinking about how to best use technology. In the early 2000s, when I started teaching, laptops were an uncommon tool that a few students brought with them to class. At first, I was encouraging of it. I knew students could supplement their education by facilitating note-taking, looking up terms on demand, and accessing ancillary resources during a lecture. However, as the use of student laptops began to be studied, and research was produced, my thinking eventually changed. I learned that students retain more information by taking notes by hand, and that for many students, laptops are more of a distracting that a tool (all the buzzing, blinking, and whirling of shiny objects that scream "look at me!" are a lot for me to compete with). In addition, it's not just a distraction for an individual student but for the students sitting around or near the buzzing and blinking. So for about five years, I completely banned laptops in the classroom and the result was positive. I had more of their attention and there were fewer live twitter feeds of my lectures. But in the last couple of years, I've re-evaluated this politics. I no longer use a strict

ban of laptops because I know that some students do benefit from them, and in some courses they are much more useful than in others (e.g., it's hard to teach about how to write computer code if students can't try it when you're there with them.). So, in the spirit of my *teacher-scholar model,* I share with students my reasoning about my technological policies, and we have an open discussion in which I share with them the pedagogical research about when technology helps and when it hinders the educational experience. Flexibility and a willingness to update are key parts of successful teaching.

As further evidence of student response to this policy, take the following quote from a teaching evaluation from a student in GOV 103 in fall 2016:

> "I very much enjoyed the lecture styles. Being required to take notes by hand minimized the distraction I normally have in lecture halls (I'm a student with misophonia, and the noises made by typing are very distracting). I'm glad Professor Victor has this rule. I felt very focused and engaged."
> –GOV 103, fall 2016

D. *Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity.* Students in this course will be expected to comply with the George Mason University Honor Code (see https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/). There are three simple guidelines to follow with respect to academic integrity: (1) all work you submit must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the expectations for any assignment, ask for clarification. Any student engaged in any academic misconduct *will receive an F on the offending exam or assignment.* Egregious violations will result in an F grade for the course and will be reported to the appropriate Dean's office. These violations include cheating on an exam, using someone else's work as your own, and plagiarizing the written word. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without providing credit or citation) is a serious offense. *If you have any questions at all about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, please ask the instructor.*

E. *Students with Disabilities.* If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact Disability Services at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Figure 7 Sample Course Policies on Cheating, Plagiarism, and Students with Disabilities

F. **Email.** Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class. *Email etiquette:* An email is a professional correspondence; do not write it as if it is a text message, snap, tweet, or IM. Always use a salutation and sign your name. Consider creating a signature that automatically inserts your name and basic contact information at the bottom of your emails. Use proper punctuation and grammar.

G. *Dropping or withdrawing.* The last day to add this course is September 4, 2018. The last day to drop the class with no tuition penalty is September 9, 2018. Students may elect to withdrawal from the class (with 100% tuition liability) between September 9 – September 30. From October 1 – October 30 students may elect to use a Mason "selective withdrawal" to drop the course (you can only do this three times during your time as a Mason student). After October 28 there are no options for withdrawing from the course. More information on drop and withdrawal policies is here. If you have concerns about your performance in the course, or you find yourself unable to perform for any reason, you should discuss your concerns with your teaching assistant, professor, advisor, and Assistant Dean (in that order). Students seeking to drop or withdrawal are responsible for doing so on their own in Patriot Web. If you need help or advice, please see your academic advisor. The advisors in the Schar School main office (3rd floor Research Hall) can also help.

Figure 8 Sample Course Policies on using Email and Withrawing

In general, I try to treat my students as adults. I find that if I treat them with respect, maintain clear guidelines and expectations, and deliver quality content to them, then I have very few problems with inappropriate behavior or policy violations. To me, an attitude of maturity and integrity are a part of teaching and scholarship.

The next standard section of every syllabus is the section that describes the readings and required texts. This generally amounts to a complete citation for the required books and information about how to acquire them. An example is shown in Figure 9.
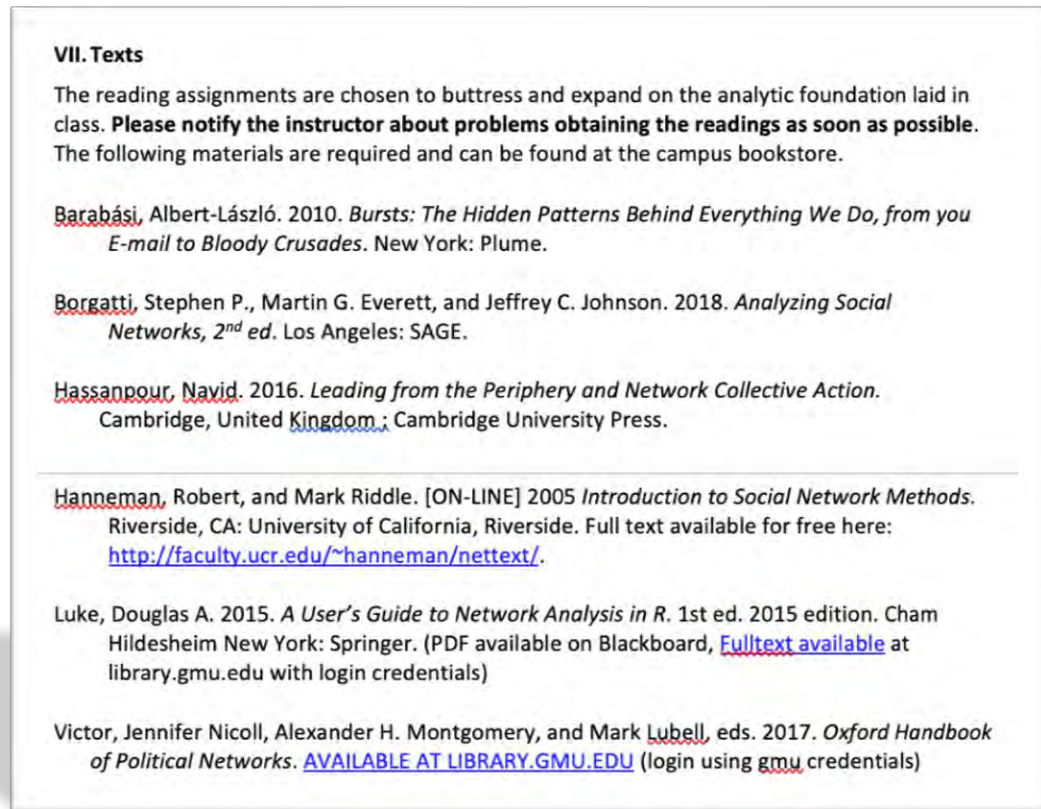
VII. Texts

The reading assignments are chosen to buttress and expand on the analytic foundation laid in class. **Please notify the instructor about problems obtaining the readings as soon as possible.** The following materials are required and can be found at the campus bookstore.

Barabási, Albert-László. 2010. *Bursts: The Hidden Patterns Behind Everything We Do, from you E-mail to Bloody Crusades*. New York: Plume.

Borgatti, Stephen P., Martin G. Everett, and Jeffrey C. Johnson. 2018. *Analyzing Social Networks, 2nd ed*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Hassanpour, Navid. 2016. *Leading from the Periphery and Network Collective Action.* Cambridge, United Kingdom : Cambridge University Press.

Hanneman, Robert, and Mark Riddle. [ON-LINE] 2005 *Introduction to Social Network Methods.* Riverside, CA: University of California, Riverside. Full text available for free here: http://faculty.ucr.edu/~hanneman/nettext/.

Luke, Douglas A. 2015. *A User's Guide to Network Analysis in R.* 1st ed. 2015 edition. Cham Hildesheim New York: Springer. (PDF available on Blackboard, Fulltext available at library.gmu.edu with login credentials)

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll, Alexander H. Montgomery, and Mark Lubell, eds. 2017. *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Figure 9 Sample Syllabus Section on Required Texts

In graduate courses, I add some other information to the section that describes the required texts. Graduate students face heavy reading loads and often need advice about how to get through all the material. I use series of standard questions that they can use to help them dissect any book or article for the class. Gaining practice at applying these questions to their readings helps to train them to consume more material at a faster pace, as they get accustomed to the standard organization of most scientific texts. In addition, I use this part of the syllabus to give some instruction about using Zotero for bibliographic citations. Zotero was created by a Mason student and is now an industry standard. It's the best reference software I've ever used and I make it clear to students that it will change their life. This is also an example of an element that I have *updated* over the years. As new technological tools come to the market, I am often eager to try them out or experiment with students. Zotero is an example

of one that has been a smashing success. I've never known anyone to regret moving their bibliographic needs to Zotero. Figure 10 shows how I do this.

V. Required Texts

The reading load for this course is intense and dense. It is vital that you keep up with the readings. One of the most important skills you will learn as a graduate student (most important in terms of being successful in graduate school) is how to efficiently digest a large volume of readings. I know that you will not be able to read every word that is assigned; but you will need to learn how to quickly glean the most important points from each reading. While I cannot require it, I *strongly* encourage you to take notes on everything you read. Good organization and careful note taking will increase your retention of the material, improve your ability to recall information, lead to superior classroom discussions, and reduce your research and study time at later points. Taking notes may mean it takes longer to get through some material, but the (long term) benefits of doing so, far exceed the (short term) costs.

For each article or book you read, as a minor guide to digesting volumes of information in an efficient way, use the following questions to help focus your attention about each piece of research:

1.) What is the main question the author is asking?
2.) What motivates the question, or why is the author asking the question?
3.) What is the primary expectation, hypothesis, or claim the author seeks to test?
4.) On what theory or logic is the expectation based?

5.) What methods of investigation has the author used to evaluate the claim?
6.) What are the primary findings? Were the expectations met?
7.) How does this research advance, or contribute to, our knowledge of this topic?

In addition to the following required texts, a series of articles are listed in the detailed weekly description below. I strongly recommend that students use bibliographic software to access, document, and catalog the items they read. While there are many such software options around, I recommend using Zotero, a free add-in for your web-browser. Information and tutorials on Zotero are available here (https://infoguides.gmu.edu/politics/cite). **As a first assignment, I ask that students explore this software and download all the readings into Zotero.** All the articles are available through web access at Mason's library, and most of the books are available in the library. This guide has resources about finding articles. You can also search for the title or journal from the library homepage, or use Political Science Complete or Google Scholar to find the articles listed below (you'll need to use your GMU login and the Duo Mobile two factor authentication to access these). We will go over these strategies in class. Using bibliographic software will make your life easier—never fret about formatting a bibliography ever again! For graduate students who expect to take field exams, this approach is essential.

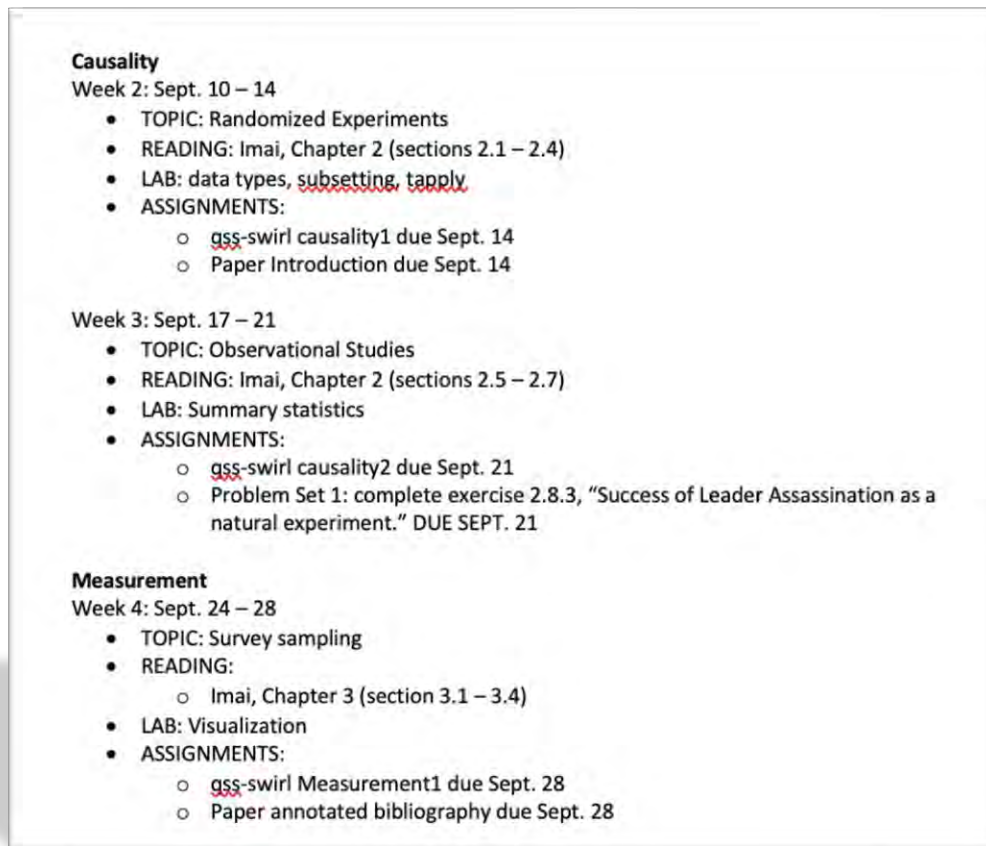*Figure 10 Sample Graduate Syllabus Advice about Approaching Scientific Texts, and using Zotero*

The final standard section on all my syllabi is the schedule of reading assignments. This is likely to be the most read section of the syllabus so I always try to ensure that it is comprehensive and clear. I use different strategies for different classes, depending on the level and content. Below I show three examples of how I tailor these sections. First, Figure 11 shows a sample course schedule for an introductory class. Here you can see that in addition to

showing which readings are due on which days, I try to assist students' understanding of how the readings fit into the context of the course, which helps students retain the **knowledge** I try to impart. In addition, I take steps to helps students draw key points from the readings. In the example in Figure 11, you can see that my syllabi are broken into sections. The section shown is the course section on government institutions. Providing a few (3-4) categories or buckets of topics helps students to organize an overwhelming amount of content. Second, I also provide "concentration questions" to help students focus their attention on some of the most important aspects of the readings.

INSTITUTIONS: RULES, POLITICIANS, AND GOVERNMENT	
Tues., Oct. 2 & Thurs., Oct. 4 *Readings:*	Congress Lowi, et al., Chapter 6 ("Congress")
Concentration Questions:	*What are the steps in the lawmaking process?* *Where does one find the Rules Committee and what does it do?* *What are some major differences between the House and Senate?* *What is a filibuster?* *What is a logroll? What is a Gerrymander?*
Tues. Oct. 9	**No Class, Monday classes held today due to Fall Break.**
Thurs., Oct. 11 *Readings:*	The Presidency Lowi, et al., Chapter 7 ("The Presidency as an Institution")
Concentration Questions:	*What is the difference between being a head of state and a head of government?* *Under what conditions can the President claim "executive privilege?"* *What is an "executive order"? A "signing statement"? An "executive agreement?"* *Does the President make the federal budget?* *Can the President take the country to war?*
Tues., Oct. 16 *Readings:*	The Bureaucracy Lowi, et al., Chapter 8 ("The Executive Branch")
Concentration Questions:	*How many cabinet secretaries are there?* *In which Department can one find the National Park Service? The Forestry Service?* *What is the OMB?* *What is a government corporation? What is an example of one?* *By what means does Congress oversee the bureaucracy?* *Who is the Secretary of Defense?*

Figure 11 Sample Course Schedule for an Introductory Course

In a methods-oriented course, I lay things out a bit differently. The challenge with a methods class is that there is a lot of hands-on activities to keep students engaged and practicing the techniques. A syllabus can quickly get cluttered with assignments and due dates. Rather than opt to leave these off the syllabus, thus violating my contract approach, I keep the information systematically structured. As shown in Figure 12, each week has a topic, reading assignments, lab topics, and activity assignments. I find that I teach students a lot of organizational **skills** in classes that have a research project or that aim to develop technical **skills**. I use the syllabus to reflect the importance of clear organization of information that I hope serves as an example for them in their work. By modeling organization in my syllabus and talking about workflow habits in class, I show students how important structure and organization can be to learning and discovery.

Figure 12 Sample Course Schedule for a Methods Course

In a graduate class, the list of scheduled readings has two purposes. As shown in Figure 13, I list the articles and books (in bold) that will form the basis of a 2.5 hours discussion for the weekly class meeting. In addition, I list a series of recommended readings primarily for the benefit of PhD students who may refer to the syllabus as a reference for material that might be covered on a comprehensive examination. I do not expect Master's degree students to pursue the recommended readings, unless it is a topic of strong interest, but I do expect PhD student to explore the recommended readings for each topic that might assist them as foundational references if they encountered a comprehensive examination question on that topic. In this way, the syllabus becomes an *important reference tool that serves the student well-beyond the semester in which the course was offered.*

Figure 13 Sample Course Schedule for a Graduate Course

Tour of a Course—Additional Syllabi Components

Most syllabi I write include a statement of teaching philosophy. While many students may not read this, I will typically talk about it a bit on the first day of class. Too often, students get frustrated with an instructor or course because they do not understand *why* the instructor does what she does. Why are there so many assignments? What's the deal with these readings? Why does she expect me to learn coding when that's not relevant to main course content? I find that questions like these are best addressed by inoculating students from asking them in the first place. I want students to understand my personal goals and approach, and to see how they will observe that through the pedagogical experience. Figure 14 shows a sample such statement from a methods class, where social science students sometimes struggle to associate the math with the qualitative and substantive content of their other courses. Moreover, this section shows a commitment to the teacher-scholar model because my teaching philosophy is strongly related to the connection between research and teaching, for me.

My belief in using current events as a way to apply theories to phenomenon students may already have intuition about, is an example of connecting the theory strongly drawn from recent research, to current events as a teaching tool. As a clear example of how I do this in practice, I begin nearly every class by asking students, "What's happening in politics?" They tell me some headlines they've read, and then I talk about them how political science might help us understand WHY things have happened. This practice is challenging for me because it helps if I'm pretty informed on the events of the day, but it's extraordinarily successful as a way to grab students' attention and to model the way in which I hope they will consume news—with a sense of **curiosity** rather than a sense of emotion. This practice also helps to reinforce my goal of helping students to maintain a sense of **curiosity**, not just about course content, but also about the world.

> ### V. Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style
>
> My teaching philosophy is based on three primary principles.
>
> - First, I believe the gap between undergraduate and graduate coursework in political science is too broad. I therefore introduce advanced theoretical concepts in undergraduate classes so that students understand the true value of studying politics as a science; moreover, should any student choose to pursue advanced or graduate work in political science, they will be well prepared.
>
> - Second, I believe in incorporating current events into classroom lessons. Nothing in science seems concrete until one can "see it with their own eyes." Reading a daily newspaper and following current events, then applying theoretical concepts to political happenings helps to clarify theoretical concepts and demonstrate their utility.
>
> - Third, as learning a programming language is challenging and can be frustrating. I aim to help students develop workflow habits that can ease the frustrations and provide guidance in meeting the challenge of learning this software. The modern world demands today's graduates have transportable technical skills and I want those who complete this course to have added to these skills and have great confidence in your ability to continue to add to such skills beyond the course.
>
> - Finally, as an instructor and a leader of class discussions on everything from lawmaking to elections, I aim to remain politically neutral and non-partisan. Students should learn to collect and evaluate information on their own. I would not want students who disagree with my political views to hear all course information with a skeptical ear; nor would I want students who tend to agree with my views to accept everything I say at face value. I encourage students to express their views, be critical, and challenge information when it is appropriate.
>
> My teaching style is consistent with my philosophy. I use a Socratic-style in the classroom in which I frequently ask questions and encourage an interactive learning experience. I do my best to learn students' names, encourage participation, and create, what I hope is, an open learning environment where students feel free to question, comment, and explain how they view course content. Such an environment helps to foster student interaction, thinking, and analytical and creative skills. Moreover, while lectures are important because they help to distribute necessary information and facts, they are not usually the most effective way to learn information. For this reason, we will do a variety of activities in the classroom. Successful performance in this course will include classroom participation and working in and out of class with your peers.

Figure 14 Sample Syllabus Teaching Philosophy Statement

Students respond very positively in teaching evaluations to my "What's happening in politics?" segments. Many appreciate my agility in these sessions. These excerpts from comments left of teaching evaluations demonstrate their appreciation.

> *"It helped that she was reflexive to change and took the 2016 election as an opportunity to teach her class."*
> *–GOV 103, fall 2016*

"The 'What's Happening in Politics?' session during the first minutes of every class really helped to see the theoretical terms put into practice."
–GOV 103, fall 2016

Next, I'd like to share a new syllabus element that I've recently started incorporating. I got the following idea from a colleague at another university who posted on social media about a section of resources she includes on her syllabus. This section includes a statement about well-being and mental health. The section is complete with hyperlinks to campus offices, websites, and organizations that may help facilitate students' navigation of college life. I find that students are often unaware of the depth and variety of resources available to them as a Mason student, and are sometimes reluctant to use them even if they've heard of them before. A section of the syllabus devoted to reminding them about these resources and encouraging them to take advantage of them, helps to promote a healthy work-life balance. Figure 15 is an excerpt from a recent syllabus where I incorporated this strategy. Students quickly learn that when I aim to teach them **skills**, I mean to help them develop **skills** beyond the classroom.

IX. Resources for Students

College can be a stressful experience. It is normal to sometimes feel overwhelmed, out of place, or insecure. Self-care strategies are important for maintaining your physical, emotional, and academic health. Developing self-awareness about stress, anxiety, or health issues is an important part of your development and success as a student. The following campus resources are available to you to help you learn to manage the complexities of your college career:

Center for Academic Advising, Retention, and Transitions
Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics (including sexual misconduct and harassment; Title IX)
Counseling and Psychological Services
Disability Services
Financial Aid
International Programs and Services
Learning Services
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Resources
Mathematics Tutoring Center
Military Alliance Program
Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education
Student Conduct
Student Health Services
University Career Services
University Life
University Writing Center

Figure 15 Sample Syllabus Student Resources

Students reflect an appreciation of sense of openness I bring in teaching evaluations:

"I liked how approachable and respectful Professor Victor is. If I ever wanted to share or ask anything, I knew I was encouraged to do so."
–GOV 103, fall 2016

In methods classes, especially those for social science students who may not have as much experience, **skill**, or inherent interest in statistics and technology, students can get intimidated by exposure to new software. I use the syllabus as a way to introduce the software we'll learn together, and to show them the vast array of free support resources outside of our class that are available for learning more about statistical programming in R, the language I teach them. Figure 16 shows a sample of how I do this.

XI. Software

We will use the R statistical programming language to learn how to manipulate and analyze data. R is **free** and open-source, meaning enterprising users can contribute and share new R functions and sub-programs, leading to a constantly improving tool. To operate R we will use R-Studio, a user-interface that makes R a bit nicer to operate. R is a popular, powerful, and growing software with many publicly available resources to help learners. Links for downloading, installing, and learning about these resources appear below.

R https://www.r-project.org
Free, open-source, statistical programming language. Download R from the "Comprehensive R Archive Nework" (CRAN) from any mirror of your choice. Here is a 2 minute YouTube video on installing R and R-Studio

R-Studio https://www.rstudio.com
A user interface that operates "on top" of R and makes it friendlier to use.

Swirl http://swirlstats.com/
A "package" within R that helps you learn R. Completing swirl exercises associated with the textbook will help you learn the commands, syntax, and programming to do social science data analysis.

R for Data Science (optional) Wickham, Hadley, and Garrett Grolemund. 2017. *R for Data Science*. O'Reilly. http://r4ds.had.co.nz/ http://r4ds.had.co.nz/transform.html
This is a free on-line textbook that is very helpful for learning R, looking up commands, and getting advice. Please use it as a reference

R Bloggers (optional) https://www.r-bloggers.com/
This website is a wealth of resources, example code, and helpful users who can help troubleshoot problems.

StackOverflow (optional) https://stackoverflow.com/
A user's help website where people post questions and other users will answer them. Search their archives to find help with all sorts of puzzles.

Quick-R (optional) https://www.statmethods.net/index.html
Another resource for learning R, getting help, instructions, example help, etc.

Figure 16 Sample Syllabus Statement for Software Resources and Support

This also represents another way I have *updated* my practice over the years. When I first taught statistics to social science students, I taught them to use the STATA statistical software, because that is the software I was trained to use as a graduate student. R entered the programming scene in the late 1990s and early 2000 (the first sable beta release was in 2000). I was not introduce to it until 2008, at a conference when I was well into my career as an Assistant Professor. Over the last 10 years, R has rapidly risen to one of the most used, most power, and most flexible statistical programming languages available. Most advanced empirical work in political science is done in R. However, because of its nascence, there are still not many

political science faculty who use R. It's hard to change the statistical software one uses and many who are trained in SAS, SPSS, or STATA so no reason to learn something new; however, all the best graduate programs in political science train their students in R and it's increasingly used in the private sector because of it power and flexibility. People who know how to program in R have many more job opportunities in social science fields than those who don't. So I decided to learn R well enough to teach it to my students, both graduate and undergraduate. I know that it serves the student population much better to know R than its alternatives, and although it creates more work for me, it feeds directly into my teacher-scholar model because teaching R forces me to learn it better, which improves my data handling in my research. It's a positive feedback loop that pay dividends to me and my students.

This is also one of the key ways that I help students develop **skills** that will be relevant for them beyond the course. Statistical analysis and computing are highly valued **skills** in today's marketplace. I am to help students overcome any trepidations they may have about statistics, math, analysis, programming, and learning new software by making it accessible, providing lots of support and resources, and illustrating how valuable the **skills** are.

In a political science class, we talk a lot about politics. Whether the class is methodological or substantive, theory oriented or applied, it helps all students to have intuitive real-world examples, about which they already have some intuition, to apply new lessons to. To that end, I encourage my students to read and talk about the news, and we discuss how we can understand the headlines of the day using concepts we learn in class. Regular practice with this helps them to be better consumers of news. In my introductory level classes I include a section on my syllabus that provides advice about how to consume the news. Figure 17 shows how I do this in Introduction to American Politics. It serves three purposes. First, it communicates to students something about who I am, what I care about, and what I'm going to emphasize. It tells them that I'm ready and willing to talk about all aspects of politics, which may not be an environment they've been in before. Second, it provides practical advice about where to get news and how to consume it in a way that is beneficial and productive rather than ways that contribute to misunderstanding, bias, or emotional reaction. Third, this shows my *growth* and

flexibility as an educator. This is a new section of my syllabus that I didn't used to think was necessary to include—at least not with this level of detail. However, the reality of our media world and our politics means that many people have unhealthy habits for how they get exposed to new information and may not have self-awareness about how those habits contribute to their political and social attitudes and behaviors. I recognized this was the case and was compelled to directly address it in the classroom and to adjust my syllabus to include basic information. It is important to me that we discuss students' political ideas and questions in the classroom, and students need to feel safe and secure about doing so; but it's equally important that those discussions are based in facts, evidence, and conducted with respect. In the classroom I model non-partisan analysis of the news and politics and respond to all student queries about what's happening in the world. I encourage students to refrain from responding emotionally to politics, which is a foreign concept for many of them because for many of them their only exposure to politics so far has been from sources (like social media and television news) whose sole purpose is to elicit an emotional response. By encouraging students to consume news and respond with a sense of **curiosity**, rather than a sense of anger, sadness, or victory, I'm showing them how to approach politics like a political scientist. This is an example of how I embrace the teacher-scholar model, actively, starting with the course syllabus.

Figure 17 Sample Syllabus Statement on news consumption

Students show appreciation for my commitment to remaining balanced and non-partisan in class, which is a key part of making room for learning:

"The lectures were the best. She was so excited and truly cared about what she was saying. That made me even more excited about it too. She was so knowledgeable and very unbiased. I saw things as the facts, not through a lens."
–GOV 103, fall 2016

Syllabi—a tool for growth and improvement

One helpful habit that I've developed over the years is to leave myself notes and comments in the syllabus of the course that includes my own reflections about how well a set of readings worked, or whether an assignment seems to hit the mark, so that the next time I teach the course I can make appropriate adjustments based on my previous experience. In this way I don't benefit of experience in having previously taught a course, even if my own human memory is faulty. See the following example from GOV 300, which I taught in spring 2018, and again in fall 2018. My spring syllabus includes notes about how I would like to change the course that I can track in real-time. Figure 18 shows how I accomplish this using Microsoft Word's "Track Changes" and "Comments" tools.

Figure 18 Sample Syllabus Note tracker

Whole Syllabi

The previous section used excerpts from syllabi to exemplify particular aspects of how I set up a course, introduce myself to students, and adjust my teaching to reflect how ideas change and the world changes around me. In this section I provide examples of five whole syllabi that show how I incorporate these elements together for different topics, student levels, and type of courses. By showing how I incorporate all these elements into different types of syllabi in a holistic way I am to show the following:

- Flexibility and stylized content for each course to meet course goals

- How syllabi themselves can be a source of **knowledge** (e.g., complete bibliographic citations), **skills** (e.g., support resources), and **curiosity** (e.g., really, the answers to some of your questions are right here in the syllabus). These are highlighted throughout.

- Variation in basic and advanced elements for different levels of students

- Comprehensiveness that supports student learning

- Supporting learning through scaffolding of longer assignments

- Consistent demonstration of a commitment to learning through scholarship across a variety of courses

Course Number	Course Title	Introductory level	Intermediate level	Advanced level	Type
GOVT 103	Introduction to American Politics	X			Substantive
GOV 300	Social Science Research Design and Statistics		X		Methods
GOV 400	Topics in Political Analysis: Political Networks		X		Substantive/ Methods
GOV 490	Senior Synthesis Seminar: Partisan Polarization in American Politics			X	Substantive
GOV 604	Legislative Behavior/Congress			X	Substantive

Introduction to American Government
George Mason University
GOVT 103 001 (CRN 70847)
Tuesday/Thursday 10:30am – 11:45am
Enterprise Hall 80
Fall 2018

Professor: Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Ph.D.
Email: jvictor3@gmu.edu
Twitter: @jennifernvictor
Class Hashtag: #GOV103
Office: Research Hall, 3rd Floor 343
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00pm - 2:30pm, or by appointment
Course Website: Available for enrolled students at http://blackboard.gmu.edu

Schar School Main Office: Research Hall, Room 359

Teaching Asst.: Margaret Appleby
Email: mappleb@masonlive.gmu.edu
Office: Research Hall, 3rd Floor 359
Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 – 4:00pm; Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00pm, in Research Hall (3rd floor, Schar School TA carrels)

I.   Course Description

This course provides students with an introduction to American political institutions and public policy formation. No prerequisite classes or prior knowledge are required to enroll. The course is divided into four sections. In the first section, we examine the history of the formation of American government and the theoretical explanations for the existence of government. In the second section, we examine the institutions of government, such as the U.S. Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Presidency. In the third section, we explore the behaviors associated with government and the mechanisms by which political behaviors are expressed (e.g., voting, public opinion, interest groups, political parties, etc.). In the final section, we will examine U.S. foreign, economic, and social public policy.

II.   Course Goals

This course is designed to meet three primary objectives. First, I hope to stimulate your **curiosity** about government and politics and provide you with a life-long desire to be an informed, critical, and active citizen. Second, I hope students will develop a base level of **knowledge** and understanding about the institutions that form our government, the incentives of political actors, and the interactions between the two. Third, the course is designed to help students improve their analytical and critical thinking **skills**.

III.   Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

There are five graded requirements for this course, described below. Grades will be calculated on a non-curved typical A-F scale where,

97-100 A+	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	< 60 F
93-96 A	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-

Quizzes (15%) Nearly every class meeting will be accompanied by a quiz that highlights the main points from lectures and readings assigned on that day. Quiz instructions will be given verbally in class, thus providing a strong incentive for attendance and participation. Students will access these quizzes electronically via Blackboard. Each quiz will only be available on the day it is assigned; activities must be completed in the window of time after class ends and before midnight on the same day. Students are encouraged to download the free Blackboard application for their smart phones or tablet devices because sometimes we will have time to do quizzes together in class (but please see policy below on electronic devices in the classroom). The lowest three quiz scores will be dropped for each student. It is not possible to make up missed points for quizzes.

Midterm Exams (25% each) There will be TWO midterm exams. Each exam will be multiple-choice format (closed book, closed note). Questions will be based on material presented in class and in the readings. The exams will be in-class on **Thursday, September 27 & Thursday, October 25.** These are the ONLY days to take the exams. If you do not come to class on this day or you arrive after the first person to complete the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

Final Exam (35%) This will be a comprehensive, in-class exam covering material from the entire course. The exam will be multiple-choice format (closed book, closed-note). Questions will be based on material presented in class and in the readings. The exam will be in-class on **Tuesday, December 18, 10:30am – 1:15pm.** This time has been designated by the University and cannot be changed; it is the ONLY date and time to take the exam. If you do not come to class on this day or you arrive after the first person to complete the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

IV.   Extra Credit, Missing and Late Work

There are NO opportunities for earning extra or bonus credit in this course. You accumulate points toward your final grade through the exams and quizzes described above. If you are aware that you will miss an exam you must notify the instructor *at least two days* prior to the due date or exam date. Make-up exams are conducted at the instructor's discretion and are granted only in extraordinary circumstances, such as a verified illness (with doctor's note) or family emergency (be prepared to provide documentation). Make-up exams will be closed-book essay exams.

V.   Resources for Students

College can be a stressful experience. It is normal to sometimes feel overwhelmed, out of place, or, insecure. Self-care strategies are important for maintaining your physical, emotional, and academic health. Developing self-awareness about stress, anxiety, or health issues is an important part of your development and success as a student. The following campus resources are available to you to help you learn to manage the complexities of your college:

Center for Academic Advising, Retention, and Transitions
Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics (including sexual misconduct and harassment; Title IX)
Counseling and Psychological Services
Disability Services
Financial Aid
International Programs and Services
Learning Services
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Resources
Mathematics Tutoring Center
Military Alliance Program
Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education
Student Conduct
Student Health Services
University Career Services
University Life
University Writing Center

VI.   News, media, and consumption of political information

As a part of this course, it is your responsibility to be well-informed about current events and political news. We will discuss it each day in class, use political science theories to explain why things happen, and learn to consume news in a responsible way. Each class begins with a 20 minute discussion of "What's happening in politics?" in which students are expected to raise questions and demonstrate basic **knowledge** of current events. It is increasingly difficult to learn about political events in a way that is even-handed and non-partisan. Here are some tips about how to consume news in a way that will provide you with the most value:

1. Consume a variety of well-respected news sources. In general, for national political news I recommend *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *Politico,* Vox.com, and National Public Radio. Instructions for accessing subscription service through Mason are below.
2. Avoid television news altogether, except on election night.
3. Avoid getting your news exclusively from social media.
4. Avoid news sources that seek to provoke an emotional response. Try to consume news dispassionately. It's okay to have passion about politics, rights, justice, issues, etc. But try to consume news with a sense of **curiosity**, rather than an urge to be outraged, touched, or emotive in any sense. Train yourself to read a headline and response with, "Huh, that's interesting," rather than automatically clicking forward, like, retweet, etc.

Instructions for access to news sources. As a Mason student, your tuition provides you access to dozens of subscription-only resources through the Mason library. These include many expensive, high quality news sources.

1. Install the Duo Mobile app on your smart phone. For complete instructions on enrolling in Mason's two-factor authentication service (2FA) see this.
2. Sign up for your own *New York Times* and *Financial Times* accounts using the Mason libraries. See http://infoguides.gmu.edu/politics/news for instructions.
3. Access The Chronicle of Higher Ed and The Economist through the links given here, as they route you through the Libraries' proxy server.
4. Access many national and local newspapers (including the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*) through the Factiva News Pages.
5. Podcasts are also an excellent way to stay abreast of the news. Many podcasts also have written blog sites. I recommend the following politics and news themed podcasts, which you can find on iTunes, or your favorite podcast service:
    a. FiveThirtyEight Politics
    b. Vox, The Weeds
    c. NPR, Up First
    d. NPR, Politics Podcast
    e. The Economist Radio
    f. The Ezra Klein Show
    g. 5 on 45, Brookings
    h. Mischiefs of Faction
    i. Slate, Political Gabfest
    j. NYT, The Daily
    k. Political Research Digest, The Niskanen Center

VII.   Student Responsibilities

A.   Class Attendance and Participation. Learning is an *active*, rather than *passive*, exercise. Accordingly, every student is expected to attend class as well as be prepared to ask questions about and comment on the readings. You need to complete the daily reading assignment *prior* to the class meeting. <u>You will be much more successful in this class if you attend regularly, take notes, pay attention, and participate.</u>

B.   Readings. As is the case with attendance, keeping pace with the reading is essential to succeeding in this class. It is *your* responsibility to obtain copies of the readings prior to the date we will discuss them in class. I will do everything I can to make this task easier for you. <u>You will be much more successful in this course if you complete the assigned readings and **take notes** on them.</u>

C.   Technology. **The use of laptop computers and tablets is strongly discouraged**. Generally, the costs associated with electronic distractions, to you and those around you,

outweigh the benefits of immediate supplementary classroom information and notetaking. Please try taking notes in class by hand. If you strongly prefer to use a computer please sit in the first two rows, or the last two rows of the classroom. If you do this, commit to only using your electronics for class-related activities. Do not text or take phone calls during class. For more information on the benefits of taking notes by hand, see this.

D.   Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity. Students in this course will be expected to comply with the George Mason University Honor Code (see https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/). There are three simple guidelines to follow with respect to academic integrity: (1) all work you submit must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the expectations for any assignment, ask for clarification. Any student engaged in any academic misconduct *will receive an F on the offending exam or assignment.* Egregious violations will result in an F grade for the course and will be reported to the appropriate Dean's office. These violations include cheating on an exam, using someone else's work as your own, and plagiarizing the written word. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without providing credit or citation) is a serious offense. *If you have any questions at all about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, please ask the instructor.*

E.   Students with Disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact Disability Services at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

F.   Email. Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class. *Email etiquette:* An email is a professional correspondence; do not write it as if it is a text message, snap, tweet, or IM. Always use a salutation and sign your name. Consider creating a signature that automatically inserts your name and basic contact information at the bottom of your emails. Use proper punctuation and grammar.

G.   Dropping or withdrawing. The last day to add this course is September 4, 2018. The last day to drop the class with no tuition penalty is September 9, 2018. Students may elect to withdrawal from the class (with 100% tuition liability) between September 9 – September 30. From October 1 – October 30 students may elect to use a Mason "selective withdrawal" to drop the course (you can only do this three times during your time as a Mason student). After October 28 there are no options for withdrawing from the course. More information on drop and withdrawal policies is here. If you have concerns about your performance in the course, or you find yourself unable to perform for any reason, you should discuss your concerns with your teaching assistant, professor, advisor, and Assistant Dean (in that order). Students seeking to drop or withdrawal are responsible for doing so on their own in Patriot Web. If you need help

or advice, please see your academic advisor. The advisors in the Schar School main office (3rd floor Research Hall) can also help.

VIII.   Reading Assignments

There is one required book for this course and it is available at the campus bookstore. This text is also available on reserve at the Information Desk at Fenwick Library. The call number for this book is JK276.L695 2017. You may borrow this copy of the text for two hours at a time.

Lowi, Theodore J., Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2017.
    American Government: Power and Purpose, FULL 14th ed. (with policy chapters). New
    York: W.W. Norton & Company.

IX.   Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Tues., Aug. 28 <u>Introduction to the Course</u>

RULES OF THE GAME: THE FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Thurs. Aug. 30   **NO CLASS TODAY**
                        (Professor will be at Annual Meeting of the American Political Science
                        Association, Boston, MA**)**

Tues., Sept. 4   <u>Why Government?</u>
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 1 ("The Five Principles of Politics")

Concentration   *Define government and politics.*
Questions: *What are the two elements of every government?*
                        What are the three primary purposes of government?
                        What is a collective action problem?

Thurs., Sept. 6   <u>The Constitution</u>
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 2 ("Constructing a Government")
                        Lowi, et al., The Constitution of the United States of America (see
                          Appendix)

Concentration   *What was America's first constitution called?*
Questions: *Why did the Articles of Confederation fail?*
                        *What were some of the compromises reached in the drafting of the
                          Constitution?*
                        *How was the Constitution the solution to a collective action
                          problem?*

Tues., Sept. 11 &   <u>Federalism and Pluralism</u>

Thurs., Sept. 13 Lowi, et al., Chapter 3
Readings: Lowi, et al., Federalist No. 10 (see Appendix)
       Lowi, et al., Federalist No. 51 (see Appendix)

Concentration   *What is federalism?*
Questions: *What were the circumstances in* McCulloch v. Maryland*?*
       Are Madison's suggestions for quelling the violence of factions
        reasonable? Why or Why not?
       How does Madison think we should control the effects of factions?
       In Federalist No. 51, *why does Madison think that government*
        responsibilities should be divided?
       What "evil" is Madison worried about? Why?
       How does Madison think we can prevent tyranny of the majority?

Tues., Sept. 18   Cooperation in Politics
Readings: "Cooperation in Politics," Chapter 3 of *American Politics, Strategy*
       and Choice, by William T. Bianco (2001), W.W. Norton & Co., Inc.
       Available on Blackboard.

Concentration   *How can you find an equilibrium in a prisoners' dilemma?*
Questions: *How is a prisoners' dilemma a collective action problem?*
       What are some solutions to a collective action problem?

Thurs., Sept. 20 Civil Liberties
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 4

Concentration   *What is the difference between civil rights and civil liberties?*
Questions: *What liberties does each Amendment in the Bill of Rights protect?*
       What legal test must the government satisfy to legally restrict
        speech?
       What legal standard is used to determine whether government has
        violated the religious establishment clause?
       Can you recite the First Amendment?

Tues., Sept. 25   Civil Rights
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 5

Concentration   *Where in the Constitution does one find their right to "equal*
Questions: *protection" under the law?*
       What were the Civil War Amendments?
       What is the significance of Plessy v. Ferguson *and* Brown v. Board of
        Education*?*
       Is affirmative action legal? What type?

> *What guarantees women a legal right to vote? When was this
>   guarantee made?*
> *Which classes of Americans still experience illegal discrimination?
>   And legal discrimination?*

Thurs., Sept. 27   **MIDTERM EXAM I**

INSTITUTIONS: RULES, POLITICIANS, AND GOVERNMENT

Tues., Oct. 2 &   Congress
Thurs., Oct. 4
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 6 ("Congress")

Concentration   *What are the steps in the lawmaking process?*
Questions: *Where does one find the Rules Committee and what does it do?*
                        What are some major differences between the House and Senate?
                        What is a filibuster?
                        What is a logroll? What is a Gerrymander?

Tues. Oct. 9   **No Class, Monday classes held today due to Fall Break.**

Thurs., Oct. 11   The Presidency
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 7 ("The Presidency as an Institution")

Concentration   *What is the difference between being a head of state and a head
Questions: of government?*
                        *Under what conditions can the President claim "executive
                           privilege?"*
                        *What is an "executive order"? A "signing statement"? An
                           "executive agreement?"*
                        Does the President make the federal budget?
                        Can the President take the country to war?

Tues., Oct. 16   The Bureaucracy
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 8 ("The Executive Branch")

Concentration   *How many cabinet secretaries are there?*
Questions: *In which Department can one find the National Park Service? The
                           Forestry Service?*
                        What is the OMB?
                        What is a government corporation? What is an example of one?
                        By what means does Congress oversee the bureaucracy?

Who is the Secretary of Defense?

Thurs., Oct. 18 &	<u>The Judiciary</u>
Tues. Oct. 23	
Readings:	Lowi, et al., Chapter 9 ("The Federal Courts")

Concentration	*What is the significance of* Marbury v. Madison*?*
Questions:	*What Act of Congress created the federal judiciary system?*
	What are the rules of access a case must satisfy before the
	Supreme Court will hear it?
	What is the "rule of four?"
	What is the majority opinion?
	By what means do interest groups attempt to influence the Court?
	Who are the current Justices serving on the Supreme Court?

Thurs., Oct. 25	**MIDTERM EXAM II**

PEOPLE AND POLITICS: VOTING, PARTICIPATION, AND GOVERNMENT

Tues., Oct. 30 &	<u>Public Opinion</u>
Thurs., Nov. 1	
Readings:	Lowi, et al., Chapter 10 ("Public Opinion")

Concentration	*In polling, how can one obtain a representative sample?*
Questions:	*What is measurement error?*
	What are some common beliefs among liberals? Conservatives?
	What is an attitude and where does it come from?
	What is political socialization?
	Do individuals tend to have consistent and stable opinions? If not,
	how can we measure public opinion?
	What types of issues do Americans tend to agree on?

Tues., Nov. 6 &	<u>Elections, Voting, and Campaigning</u> *(NOV 6 is ELECTION DAY!)**
Thurs., Nov. 8	Lowi, et al., Chapter 11 ("Elections")
Readings:	
	When were African Americans guaranteed suffrage?
Concentration	*What guaranteed 18-year-olds the right to vote?*
Questions:	*Is it rational to vote? What is the "paradox of voting?"*
	How do citizens overcome the adverse selection problem?
	What type of people are more likely to vote?

Has turnout decreased or increased in recent years? Why?
What is "rational ignorance?"
What is FECA? BRCA?
How much money can an individual legally give to a candidate for
    office?

Tues., Nov. 13 &   Political Parties
Thurs., Nov. 15
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 12 ("Political Parties")

Concentration   *What is Duverger's Law?*
Questions: *What are the five party systems? Which parties and features*
                                 characterize each system?
                              Which coalitions of voters do the modern Republican and
                                 Democratic parties include?
                              What is the median voter theorem?

Tues., Nov. 20 &   Interest Groups
Tues., Nov. 27
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 13 ("Groups and Interests")

Concentration   *Do interest groups tend to serve an inherently positive or negative*
Questions: *role in American politics?*
                              Which characteristics describe groups that desire public goods?
                                 And private goods?
                              How do groups overcome the collective action problem?
                              What is a PAC? Which characteristics describe most PACs?

Thurs., Nov. 29   Media and Politics
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 14 ("The Media")

Concentration   *Which major events and technological advances significantly*
Questions: *changed the way Americans learn about the nation/world in*
                                 the 20th century?
                              How can a consumer determine whether the news source to which
                                 they are paying attention is a reliable one?
                              What is the best way to become/remain and informed citizen?
                              What makes a good campaign advertisement?

Tues., Dec. 4   Public Policy: Economic Policy (24)

Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 15 ("Economic Policy")

Concentration   *What is* laissez-faire *economics?*
Questions: *Under what conditions does government regulate?*
        Which characteristics describe an inefficient or failed market?
        What is the difference between fiscal and monetary policy?
        What tools does government have to stimulate a slowed economy?
        What is the "Fed" and what does it do?

Thurs., Dec. 6   Public Policy: Social Policy & Foreign Policy
Readings: Lowi, et al., Chapter 16 ("Social Policy")
        Lowi, et al., Chapter 17 ("Foreign Policy")

Concentration   *What trends describe poverty in America?*
Questions: *What is TANF? EITC?*
        How is Social Security funded?
        What is the difference between Medicare and Medicaid?
        What started/ended the Cold War?
        What is the primary goal of American foreign policy?
        What are the instruments of modern American foreign policy-makers?
        What is the IMF? World Bank? United Nations?

Tues., Dec. 18   **FINAL EXAM   10:30am-1:15pm**

Social Science Research Methods
Government 300 - 001 (CRN: 70852)
George Mason University
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:00pm – 4:15pm
Blueridge Hall 129
Fall 2018

Professor:	**Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Ph.D.**
Email:	jvictor3@gmu.edu
Twitter:	@jennifernvictor
Office:	Research Hall 343 (enter through Main Office, Research Hall 359)
Office Hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00pm – 2:30pm, or by appointment
Course Website:	Available for enrolled students at http://blackboard.gmu.edu

Teaching Assistant:	Erica Seng-White
TA Email:	esengwhite@gmail.com
TA Office:	Graduate Student carrels, accessed via Research Hall 359
TA Office Hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30am – 12:30pm

All students in this course are required to be enrolled in one of the following laboratory sections, led by the TA:
Section1: Mondays, 1:30 – 2:20pm, Innovation Hall 223 (section CRN 71702)
Section2: Fridays, 10:30 – 11:20pm. Innovation Hall 129 (section CRN 71703)

I.   Course Description

This course provides an introduction to social scientific research methods with applications to government and politics. Using tools we learn in this course, we can use data to answer questions like: Do police arrests show evidence of racial bias? Are women more likely to vote for Democrats than men? Do people of all income levels have equal access to healthcare services and health insurance? This course introduces basic principles of statistical inference, causal reasoning, and statistical programming. Broadly, the course covers causality, measurement, prediction, probability, and uncertainty. Based on the scientific method, students will learn how to organize, conduct, document, and report a scientific study on questions related to government or politics. Students will learn how to process and analyze data using the R statistical programming language. In addition to learning how to operate the software, students will learn how to manipulate and describe data, test univariate and multivariate hypotheses, and develop graphical visualizations of data and findings.

II.   Course Objectives

I have two broad objectives for this course. First, students will master the foundations of sound social scientific research design. Second, students will become comfortable using the R statistical language to manage and analyze data. The combination of these **skills** will lead to

greater confidence in conducting investigations on questions of interest in government, policy, and political science. I additionally hope this confidence feeds students' **curiosity** about the world and their ability to make contributions to important social and political problems.

III.   Course Structure

The class meets three times per week. All students will attend two lectures, conducted by Professor Victor. Additionally, each student will enroll in one weekly laboratory section. There are two options of lab sections in the schedule. Students are required to attend at least one per week. The sections will be led by the teaching assistant and conducted in a classroom computer laboratory. The primary activity in the lab section will be learning how to use the software and gaining practice with the techniques.

IV.   The value of GOV 300

Most of you have enrolled in this course because it is required. Some of you may have some anxiety about learning statistics or a programming language. If you have no experience with programming, there will be a challenging learning curve to overcome. The course is built with all of these challenges in mind. It is designed to help you overcome your trepidation about these topics and to appreciate the benefits of using data to make discoveries about the world. Graduates of GOV 300 have used statistics in other academic pursuit and been able to showcase their **skills** to their advantage on the job market upon graduation. Many students who take this course contact previous instructors to say how valuable it is in helping them to achieve their post-graduate goals. We live in a data heavy world. Students who graduate with the substantive **knowledge** about politics and the **skills** to manage and analyze data have valuable assets. In short, the pain of this course is worth it. Stick with it. And don't just take my word for it; you might like this 2009 *New York Times* article, "For today's graduate, just one word: statistics."

V.   Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style

My teaching philosophy is based on three primary principles.

- First, I believe the gap between undergraduate and graduate coursework in political science is too broad. I therefore introduce advanced theoretical concepts in undergraduate classes so that students understand the true value of studying politics as a science; moreover, should any student choose to pursue advanced or graduate work in political science, they will be well prepared.

- Second, I believe in incorporating current events into classroom lessons. Nothing in science seems concrete until one can "see it with their own eyes." Reading a daily newspaper and following current events, then applying theoretical concepts to political happenings helps to clarify theoretical concepts and demonstrate their utility.

- Third, as learning a programming language is challenging and can be frustrating. I aim to help students develop workflow habits that can ease the frustrations and provide guidance in meeting the challenge of learning this software. The modern world demands today's graduates have transportable technical **skills** and I want those who complete this course to have added to these **skills** and have great confidence in your ability to continue to add to such **skills** beyond the course.

- Finally, as an instructor and a leader of class discussions on everything from lawmaking to elections, I aim to remain politically neutral and non-partisan. Students should learn to collect and evaluate information on their own. I would not want students who disagree with my political views to hear all course information with a skeptical ear; nor would I want students who tend to agree with my views to accept everything I say at face value. I encourage students to express their views, be critical, and challenge information when it is appropriate.

My teaching style is consistent with my philosophy. I use a Socratic-style in the classroom in which I frequently ask questions and encourage an interactive learning experience. I do my best to learn students' names, encourage participation, and create, what I hope is, an open learning environment where students feel free to question, comment, and explain how they view course content. Such an environment helps to foster student interaction, thinking, and analytical and creative **skills**. Moreover, while lectures are important because they help to distribute necessary information and facts, they are not usually the most effective way to learn information. For this reason, we will do a variety of activities in the classroom. Successful performance in this course will include classroom participation and working in and out of class with your peers.

VI.   Student Responsibilities

A.   *Class Attendance and Participation*. Learning is an *active*, rather than *passive*, exercise. Accordingly, every student is expected to attend class as well as be prepared to ask questions about and comment on the readings. You need to complete the daily reading assignment *prior* to the class meeting. <u>You will be much more successful in this class if you attend regularly, take notes, pay attention, and participate.</u>

B.   *Readings.* As is the case with attendance, keeping pace with the reading is essential to succeeding in this class. It is *your* responsibility to obtain copies of the readings prior to the date we will discuss them in class. I will do everything I can to make this task easier for you. <u>You will be much more successful in this course if you complete the assigned readings and **take notes** on them.</u>

C.   *Technology.* Laptops, tablets, and smart phone are a considerable distraction in class. A student can become easily distracted by non-class alternatives that compete for your attention. In addition, [research](#) shows that students tend to retain more information by taking notes by

hand rather than on a computer. However, this course is technology heavy as we will be learning statistical software that is probably unfamiliar to you. It requires considerable practice and training. Therefore, I leave it to students to make their own choice about how to maximize their in-class learning. If you choose to use a laptop, make a commitment to only using content related to class.

D.   Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity. Students in this course will be expected to comply with the George Mason University Honor Code (see http://honorcode.gmu.edu/). There are three simple guidelines to follow with respect to academic integrity: (1) all work you submit must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the expectations for any assignment, ask for clarification. Any student engaged in any academic misconduct *will receive an F on the offending exam or assignment.* Egregious violations will result in an F grade for the course and will be reported to the appropriate Dean's office. These violations include cheating on an exam, using someone else's work as your own, and plagiarizing the written word. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without providing credit or citation) is a serious offense. *If you have any questions at all about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, please ask the instructor.*

E.   Students with Disabilities. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please let me (the instructor) know and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474 or *http://ods.gmu.edu*. All discussions with me regarding disabilities are confidential.

F.   Email. Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class. *Email etiquette:* An email is a professional correspondence; do not write it as if it is a text message, snap, tweet, or IM. Always use a salutation and sign your name. Consider creating a signature that automatically inserts your name and basic contact information at the bottom of your emails. Use proper punctuation and grammar.

G.   Dropping or withdrawing. The last day to add this course is September 4, 2018. The last day to drop the class with no tuition penalty is September 9, 2018. Students may elect to withdrawal from the class (with 100% tuition liability) between September 9 – September 30. From October 1 – October 30 students may elect to use a Mason "selective withdrawal" to drop the course (you can only do this three times during your time as a Mason student). After October 28 there are no options for withdrawing from the course. More information on drop and withdrawal policies is here. If you have concerns about your performance in the course, or you find yourself unable to perform for any reason, you should discuss your concerns with your teaching assistant, professor, advisor, and Assistant Dean (in that order). Students seeking to drop or withdrawal are responsible for doing so on their own in Patriot Web. If you need help

or advice, please see your academic advisor. The advisors in the Schar School main office (3rd floor Research Hall) can also help.

VII.   Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

There are four graded requirements for this course, described below. Grades will be calculated on a non-curved typical A-F scale where,

93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	< 60 F
90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

For your convenience and workflow management, this google calendar has all of the course due dates and events pre-loaded: https://goo.gl/wVu3Ci

Daily Quizzes (10%) Each lecture will begin with a short quiz that helps to reinforce the concepts or tools taught in class. The quizzes are open book, open note, and can be done collaboratively. Each student must submit their own, original work. Quizzes are due in class. Make-up quizzes can be taken with a grade penalty, unless there is an excused absence. Each student's three lowest quiz scores will be excluded from the course grade.

Programming assignments (qss-swirl) (10%) Programming assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis and expected to be completed on time. They will be available on Blackboard and evaluated by your teaching assistant. **Collaboration is permitted.** Each student must write up their own code. Assignments are based on the textbook and designed to check whether you understand the material. You will need access to R and R-Studio to complete these assignments. We'll do the following Swirl courses in qss-swirl (students may do any additional swirl tutorials they like on their own).

1. Intro1 ---due September 7
2. Intro2 ---due September 7
3. Causality1 ---due September 14
4. Causality2 ---due September 21
5. Measurement1 -------------------------------------due September 28
6. Measurement2 -------------------------------------due October 12
7. Prediction1 ---due October 19
8. Prediction2 ---due October 26
9. Prediction3 ---due October 26
10. Probability1--due November 2
11. Probability2--due November 9
12. Uncertainty1 ---------------------------------------due November 16
13. Uncertainty2 ---------------------------------------due November 30
14. Uncertainty3 ---------------------------------------due November 30

Problem Sets (10%) There will be four problem sets during the semester. Problem sets provide an opportunity to practice statistical concepts and engage analytically with data. **Collaboration is permitted.** Each student must write up their own responses.

> Problem Set 1 (Exercise 2.8.3) due **Sept. 21**
> Problem Set 2 (Exercise 3.9.2) due **Oct. 12**
> Problem Set 3 (Exercise 4.5.1) due **Nov. 9**
> Problem Set 4 (Exercise 7.5.1) due **Nov. 30**

Midterm Exam (20%) There will be a take home midterm examination that will be due in class on **Thursday, October 25.** NO COLLABORATION IS ALLOWED ON THE MIDTERM EXAM. Students will sign an honor code statement indicating that all work is their own.

Research Paper (25%). All students will write a research paper on a topic selected from a list of provided research questions. Final products will be 8 – 12 pages (excluding titles, bibliography, tables, graphs, notes). The paper will highlight the following **skills**: motivating a research question, stating a research question, reviewing literature on a question, developing testable hypotheses, describing the data, describing the statistical test, reporting the findings. In their papers, students are expected to showcase **skills** learned in class. The assignment will be scaffolded in the following way. Details and examples are available on Blackboard.

> Step 1: Paper introduction (state and motivate the research question; 1-2 paragraphs)
> > (**DUE: September 14**) 5%
> Step 2: Annotated bibliography (6-12 sources) (**DUE: September 28**) 5%
> Step 3: Literature Review, Theory, and hypotheses (2-4 pages) (**Due: October 19**) 10%
> Step 4: Research design (2-3 pages) (**Due: November 2**) 10%
> Step 5: Empirical test and findings (2-3 pages) (**DUE: November 20**) 20%
> Step 6: Complete draft (8-12 pages) (**DUE: December 6**). 50%

Final Exam (25%) There will be an in-class, comprehensive final examination. The exam will be OPEN note. The exam is on **Thursday, December 13, 1:30pm – 4:15pm.**

VIII.   Policies on late work, make-ups and extra credit

A.   *Can I submit an assignment late?* Students may submit an assignment after its due date for a 5% (off the total possible score) penalty per-24-hour period that the assignment is late.

B.   *What if I miss an exam?* Make-up exams are only given in the case of verified illness or family emergency, such as a death in the family. Documentation is necessary to receive a qualified make-up examination. Students who arrive late to an in-class exam may still sit for the exam if no other student has already submitted their exam; once a single student hands-in their exam, no others may begin the exam.

C.   *What can I do if I perform poorly on an assignment?* Students who receive a 72% or less on a homework assignment or essay (not exam) may re-do the assignment for a

replacement grade. Re-do assignments are subject to a 5% per day penalty starting from the day graded assignments were returned to students in class (regardless of attendance). Assignments that were originally submitted past the due date are NOT eligible for re-do.

IX.   Resources for Students

College can be a stressful experience. It is normal to sometimes feel overwhelmed, out of place, or insecure. Self-care strategies are important for maintaining your physical, emotional, and academic health. Developing self-awareness about stress, anxiety, or health issues is an important part of your development and success as a student. The following campus resources are available to you to help you learn to manage the complexities of your college career:

Center for Academic Advising, Retention, and Transitions
Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics (including sexual misconduct and harassment; Title IX)
Counseling and Psychological Services
Disability Services
Financial Aid
International Programs and Services
Learning Services
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Resources
Mathematics Tutoring Center
Military Alliance Program
Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education
Student Conduct
Student Health Services
University Career Services
University Life
University Writing Center

X.   Texts

The reading assignments are chosen to buttress and expand on the analytic foundation laid in class. **Please notify the instructor about problems obtaining the readings as soon as possible**. The following materials are required and can be found at the campus bookstore.

Required Readings
Imai, Kosuke. 2018. *Quantitative Social Science: An Introduction.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
    Textbook website with resources: http://qss.princeton.press/

Recommended Reading
Grolemund, Garrett, and Hadley Wickham. n.d. *R for Data Science*. Accessed January 16, 2018. http://r4ds.had.co.nz/.

Kellstedt, Paul M., and Guy D. Whitten. 2013. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. 2 edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Monogan, III, James E. 2015. *Political Analysis Using R*. 1st ed. 2015 edition. New York, NY: Springer.

XI.   Software

We will use the R statistical programming language to learn how to manipulate and analyze data. R is **free** and open-source, meaning enterprising users can contribute and share new R functions and sub-programs, leading to a constantly improving tool. To operate R we will use R-Studio, a user-interface that makes R a bit nicer to operate. R is a popular, powerful, and growing software with many publicly available resources to help learners. Links for downloading, installing, and learning about these resources appear below.

R https://www.r-project.org
Free, open-source, statistical programming language. Download R from the "Comprehensive R Archive Nework" (CRAN) from any mirror of your choice. Here is a 2 minute YouTube video on installing R and R-Studio

R-Studio https://www.rstudio.com
A user interface that operates "on top" of R and makes it friendlier to use.

Swirl http://swirlstats.com/
A "package" within R that helps you learn R. Completing swirl exercises associated with the textbook will help you learn the commands, syntax, and programming to do social science data analysis.

R for Data Science (optional) Wickham, Hadley, and Garrett Grolemund. 2017. *R for Data Science*. O'Reilly. http://r4ds.had.co.nz/ http://r4ds.had.co.nz/transform.html
This is a free on-line textbook that is very helpful for learning R, looking up commands, and getting advice. Please use it as a reference

R Bloggers (optional) https://www.r-bloggers.com/
This website is a wealth of resources, example code, and helpful users who can help troubleshoot problems.

StackOverflow (optional) https://stackoverflow.com/
A user's help website where people post questions and other users will answer them. Search their archives to find help with all sorts of puzzles.

Quick-R (optional) https://www.statmethods.net/index.html
Another resource for learning R, getting help, instructions, example help, etc.

XII.   Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

For your convenience and workflow management, this google calendar has all of the course due dates and events pre-loaded: https://goo.gl/wVu3Ci

Introduction
Week 0: August 27 – Aug. 31
- ***SPECIAL NOTE: NO CLASS ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 30 DUE TO APSA***
- TOPIC: Course overview, workflow, motivations
- READING: Imai, Chapter 1 (sections 1.1 – 1.2)
- LAB: Installation, getting started
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    o Download and Install R, R-Studio, qss-swirl (see p. 9)

Week 1: Sept. 3 – 7
- TOPIC: Studying politics scientifically, introduction to R
- READING:
    o Noel, Hans. 2010 "Ten Things Political Scientists Know that You Don't"
    o Imai: Chapter 1 (section 1.3)
- LAB: Data wrangling; workflow
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    o qss-swirl Intro1, Intro2 due Sept. 7

Causality
Week 2: Sept. 10 – 14
- TOPIC: Randomized Experiments
- READING: Imai, Chapter 2 (sections 2.1 – 2.4)
- LAB: data types, subsetting, tapply
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    o qss-swirl causality1 due Sept. 14
    o Paper Introduction due Sept. 14

Week 3: Sept. 17 – 21
- TOPIC: Observational Studies
- READING: Imai, Chapter 2 (sections 2.5 – 2.7)
- LAB: Summary statistics
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    o qss-swirl causality2 due Sept. 21
    o Problem Set 1: complete exercise 2.8.3, "Success of Leader Assassination as a natural experiment." DUE SEPT. 21

Measurement
Week 4: Sept. 24 – 28

- TOPIC: Survey sampling
- READING:
  - Imai, Chapter 3 (section 3.1 – 3.4)
- LAB: Visualization
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - qss-swirl Measurement1 due Sept. 28
  - Paper annotated bibliography due Sept. 28

Week 5: Oct. 1 – 5
- TOPIC: Research ethics, reviewing literature
- READING:
  - "History of Research Ethics | Research and Economic Development | University of Nevada, Las Vegas." n.d. Accessed January 18, 2018. https://www.unlv.edu/research/ORI-HSR/history-ethics.
  - "Ethical Codes & Research Standards." 2016. Text. HHS.Gov. February 19, 2016. https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/international/ethical-codes-and-research-standards/index.html.
  - Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 39 (01):127–132. http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1049096506060264
- LAB: Zotero, visualization
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - Complete Blackboard modules on IT ethics
  - Download and install Zotero

Week 6: Oct. 8 – 12
- ***SPECIAL NOTE: Monday, October 8 is "fall break." There will be no lecture on Tuesday, October 9 because Monday classes will meet this day.***
- TOPIC: Clustering
- READING:
  - Imai, Chapter 3 (sections 3.5 – 3.7)
  - "7 Visualizations You Should Learn in R." 2016. *R-Bloggers* (blog). December 29, 2016. https://www.r-bloggers.com/7-visualizations-you-should-learn-in-r/.
  - Wickham, Hadley, and Garrett Grolemund. 2017. *R for Data Science*. O'Reilly. http://r4ds.had.co.nz/, Ch. 3 "Data Visualization"
  - Machlis, Sharon. 2017. "Beginner's Guide to R: Painless Data Visualization." Computerworld. August 18, 2017. https://www.computerworld.com/article/2497304/business-intelligence/business-intelligence-beginner-s-guide-to-r-painless-data-visualization.html.
- LAB: correlation, matrices, lists, k-means, cbind
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - qss-swirl Measurement2 due Oct. 12

- Problem Set 2: Exercise 3.9.2, "Political Efficacy in China and Mexico," DUE OCT. 12

Prediction
Week 7: Oct. 15 – 19
- TOPIC: Prediction and loops
- READING: Imai, Chapter 4 (section 4.1)
- LAB: loops
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    - Paper literature review due Oct. 19
    - qss-swirl Prediction 1 due Oct. 19
    -

Week 8: Oct. 22 – 26
- TOPIC: Regression
- READING: Imai, Chapter 4 (sections 4.2 – 4.3)
- LAB: regression
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    - qss-swirl Prediction2 and Prediction3 due Oct. 26
    - Take home midterm available Monday, Oct. 22
    - **TAKE HOME MIDTERM EXAM DUE IN CLASS OCT. 25**

Probability
Week 9: Oct. 29 – Nov. 2
- TOPIC: Probability
- READING: Imai, Chapter 6 (sections 6.1 – 6.2)
- LAB: Simulations and conditional probability
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    - qss-swirl Probability 1 due Nov. 2
    - Paper research design due Nov. 2

Week 10: Nov. 5 – 9
- TOPIC: Random variables and probability distributions
- READING: Imai, Chapter 6 (sections 6.3 – 6.5)
- LAB: Simulations and Monte Carlo
- ASSIGNMENTS:
    - qss-swirl Probability2 due Nov. 9
    - Problem set 3: Exercise 4.5.1 "Prediction Based on Betting Markets" DUE NOV. 9

Uncertainty
Week 11: Nov. 12 – 16
- TOPIC: Estimation

- READING: Imai, Chapter 7 (sections 7.1.1 – 7.1.3)
- LAB: standard error, confidence intervals
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - qss-swirl Uncertainty1 due Nov. 16

Week 12: Nov. 19 – 20
- ***Special Note: Thanksgiving Break Nov. 21-25***
- TOPIC: Estimation
- READING: Imai, Chapter 7 (sections 7.1.4 – 7.2.2)
- LAB: critical value, margin of error, student's-t distribution, hypothesis testing
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - Paper empirical section due Nov. 20

Week 13: Nov. 26 – 30
- TOPIC: Hypothesis Testing
- READING: Imai, Chapter 7 (sections 7.2.3 – 7.4)
- LAB: model-based inference
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - qss-swirl Uncertainty2 due Nov. 30
  - qss-swirl Uncertainty3 due Nov. 30
  - Problem set 4: Exercise 7.5.1, "Sex Ratio and the Price of Agricultural Crops in China," due Nov. 30

Week 14: Dec. 3 – 7
- TOPIC: Review, Practice, and paper workshops
- READING: None
- LAB: students' choice
- ASSIGNMENTS:
  - Paper final draft due Thursday, December 6

Week 15: Dec. 12 – 16
In-class, open-note, comprehensive final examination.
FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 13, 1:30pm – 4:15pm.

Political Networks
Government 400 002 (CRN: 20089)
George Mason University
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30am – 11:45am
Music Theater Building 1004
Spring 2019

Professor:	Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Ph.D.
Email:	jvictor3@gmu.edu
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Office:	Research Hall 343
Office Hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:30am – 3:00pm, or by appointment
Course Website:	Available for enrolled students at http://blackboard.gmu.edu

Teaching Assistant: Erica Seng-White, esengwhi@masonlive.gmu.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12:00 – 4:00, in graduate student carrels accessed via Research Hall 359

Schar School Main Office: Research Hall 359

I.   Course Description

The study of networks, connections, or relationships in politics is intuitive. In this course we learn the theory, methods, and applications of a systematic study of networks in politics. For many decades the study of politics has been dominated by studying individuals and institutions. In this course, we challenge the basic assumptions of those individualistic approaches and look at specific cases where it may be unreasonable to assume that people or events are independent of one another. The course is interdisciplinary, drawing strongly from sociology, statistics, and computer science. Networks are a ubiquitous feature of the natural and social world and we will draw upon examples and lessons from many fields, from genetics to anthropology, to understand how networks operate in politics. The course covers theories of social network analysis and applies them to questions of politics. To do so, we will also apply methodological tools and software to social network data. The course is introductory and provides somewhat of a survey of the field. Students are not required to have a quantitative background, but those who have previous experience with statistics or data analysis may have an advantage in becoming familiar with the techniques.

II.   Course Objectives

I have three broad objectives for this course. First, students will learn the fundamental theoretical and methodological concepts in social network analysis as it relates to politics. Second, students will learn basic network analytical **skills** and develop the ability to use basic tools in at least one software program. This will include best practices for gathering and managing network data. Third, I aim to stimulate students' **curiosity** about politics and creative means of studying questions pertinent to modern problems and interests.

III.   Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style

My teaching philosophy is based on three primary principles.

- First, I believe the gap between undergraduate and graduate coursework in political science is too broad. I therefore introduce advanced theoretical concepts in undergraduate classes so that students understand the true value of studying politics as a science; moreover, should any student choose to pursue advanced or graduate work in political science, they will be well prepared.

- Second, I believe in incorporating current events into classroom lessons. Nothing in science seems concrete until one can "see it with their own eyes." Reading a daily newspaper and following current events, then applying theoretical concepts to political happenings helps to clarify theoretical concepts and demonstrate their utility.

- Third, as this class has a significant practical component, I intend to provide ample opportunities for students to practice techniques in and out of class using exercises and other pedagogical devices. It will be important for students to remain active with the activities and to engage in practice with the software and techniques. Learning is an active, not passive, process.

- Finally, as an instructor and a leader of class discussions on everything from lawmaking to elections, I aim to remain politically neutral and non-partisan. Students should learn to collect and evaluate information on their own. I would not want students who disagree with my political views to hear all course information with a skeptical ear; nor would I want students who tend to agree with my views to accept everything I say at face value. I encourage students to express their views, be critical, and challenge information when it is appropriate.

My teaching style is consistent with my philosophy. I use a Socratic-style in the classroom in which I frequently ask questions and encourage an interactive learning experience. I do my best to learn students' names, encourage participation, and create, what I hope is, an open learning environment where students feel free to question, comment, and explain how they view course content. Such an environment helps to foster student interaction, thinking, and analytical and creative **skills**. Moreover, while lectures are important because they help to distribute necessary information and facts, they are not usually the most effective way to learn information. For this reason, we will do a variety of activities in the classroom. Successful performance in this course will include classroom participation and working in and out of class with your peers.

IV. Student Responsibilities

A.   Class Attendance and Participation. Learning is an *active*, rather than *passive*, exercise. Accordingly, every student is expected to attend class as well as be prepared to ask questions about and comment on the readings. You need to complete the daily reading assignment *prior* to the class meeting. <u>You will be much more successful in this class if you attend regularly, take notes, pay attention, and participate.</u>

B.   Readings. As is the case with attendance, keeping pace with the reading is essential to succeeding in this class. It is *your* responsibility to obtain copies of the readings prior to the date we will discuss them in class. I will do everything I can to make this task easier for you. <u>You will be much more successful in this course if you complete the assigned readings and **take notes** on them.</u>

C.   Technology Laptops, tablets, and smart phone are a considerable distraction in class. A student can become easily distracted by non-class alternatives that compete for your attention. In addition, [research](#) shows that students tend to retain more information by taking notes by hand rather than on a computer. However, this course is technology heavy as we will be learning statistical software that is probably unfamiliar to you. It requires considerable practice and training. Therefore, I leave it to students to make their own choice about how to maximize their in-class learning. If you choose to use a laptop, make a commitment to only using content related to class.

D.   Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity. Students in this course will be expected to comply with the George Mason University Honor Code (see http://honorcode.gmu.edu/). There are three simple guidelines to follow with respect to academic integrity: (1) all work you submit must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the expectations for any assignment, ask for clarification. Any student engaged in any academic misconduct *will receive an F on the offending exam or assignment.* Egregious violations will result in an F grade for the course and will be reported to the appropriate Dean's office. These violations include cheating on an exam, using someone else's work as your own, and plagiarizing the written word. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without providing credit or citation) is a serious offense. *If you have any questions at all about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, please ask the instructor.*

E.   Students with Disabilities. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please let me (the instructor) know and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474 or *http://ods.gmu.edu*. All discussions with me regarding disabilities are confidential.

F.   Email. Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university

information including messages related to this class. *Email etiquette:* An email is a professional correspondence; do not write it as if it is a text message, snap, tweet, or IM. Always use a salutation and sign your name. Consider creating a signature that automatically inserts your name and basic contact information at the bottom of your emails. Use proper punctuation and grammar.

G.   Dropping or withdrawing. The last day to add this course is Tuesday, January 29, 2019. The last day to drop the class with no tuition penalty is February 5, 2019. Students may elect to withdrawal from the class (with 100% tuition liability) between February 6 – February 12. From February 26 – March 25 students may elect to use a Mason "selective withdrawal" to drop the course (you can only do this three times during your time as a Mason student). After March 25 there are no options for withdrawing from the course. More information on drop and withdrawal policies is here. If you have concerns about your performance in the course, or you find yourself unable to perform for any reason, you should discuss your concerns with your teaching assistant, professor, advisor, and Assistant Dean (in that order). Students seeking to drop or withdrawal are responsible for doing so on their own in Patriot Web. If you need help or advice, please see your academic advisor. The advisors in the Schar School main office (3rd floor Research Hall) can also help.

V.   Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

There are four graded requirements for this course, described below. Grades will be calculated on a non-curved typical A-F scale where,

93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	< 60 F
90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

Warm-up activities (5%) We will start each class meeting with a warm up activity that helps to reinforce concepts taught previously in class. These activities will be open-book, open-note, and completely collaboratively with classmates. This counts as participation and attendance points.

Problem Set Assignments (20%) There will be regular exercises for students to complete. Most of these will be able to be completed on-line or completed through a software program (UCInet) and submitted on-line. Details on these assignments will be presented in class and on Blackboard.

Midterm Exam (25%) This will be an in-class exam covering material from the first half of the course. The exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and analytical (homework style) questions based on material presented in class and in the readings. A study guide will be posted on-line no later than one-week before the exam. The midterm will be in-class on **Thursday, March 7.**

Research Poster (25%) Each student will complete a research project that culminates in the production of an academic poster. Students will present posters in a public session (more details later). Posters will contain the content of a complete academic paper (statement of a research question, theory, hypotheses, test, analysis). In these projects students will use one of several suggested datasets and demonstrate ability to apply analytical concepts to original questions relating to the dataset of choice. Students must use proper citation in their posters.

Final Exam (25%). This will be an in-class exam covering material from the entire course (comprehensive), though concentrating on material from the last half of the course. The exam will include identifications, short answers, and analytical questions based on class exercises, material presented in class, and in the readings. A study guide will be posted on-line no later than one-week before the exam. The exam will be administered during the regular final exam scheduled time for our class on **Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 1:30pm – 4:15pm**. This is the ONLY time to take the exam.

VI.   Policies on late work, make-ups and extra credit

D.   *Can I submit an assignment late?* Students may submit an assignment after its due date for a 5% (off the total possible score) penalty per-24-hour period that the assignment is late.

E.   *What if I miss an exam?* Make-up exams are only given in the case of verified illness or family emergency, such as a death in the family. Documentation is necessary to receive a qualified make-up examination. Students who arrive late to an in-class exam may still sit for the exam if no other student has already submitted their exam; once a single student hands-in their exam, no others may begin the exam.

F.   *What can I do if I perform poorly on an assignment?* Students who receive a 72% or less on a homework assignment or essay (not exam) may re-do the assignment for a replacement grade. Re-do assignments are subject to a 5% per day penalty starting from the day graded assignments were returned to students in class (regardless of attendance). Assignments that were originally submitted past the due date are NOT eligible for re-do.

VII.   Texts

The reading assignments are chosen to buttress and expand on the analytic foundation laid in class. **Please notify the instructor about problems obtaining the readings as soon as possible**. The following materials are required and can be found at the campus bookstore.

Barabási, Albert-László. 2010. *Bursts: The Hidden Patterns Behind Everything We Do, from you E-mail to Bloody Crusades*. New York: Plume.

Borgatti, Stephen P., Martin G. Everett, and Jeffrey C. Johnson. 2018. *Analyzing Social Networks, 2nd ed*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Hassanpour, Navid. 2016. *Leading from the Periphery and Network Collective Action.* Cambridge, United Kingdom ; Cambridge University Press.

Hanneman, Robert, and Mark Riddle. [ON-LINE] 2005 *Introduction to Social Network Methods*. Riverside, CA: University of California, Riverside. Full text available for free here: http://faculty.ucr.edu/~hanneman/nettext/.

Luke, Douglas A. 2015. *A User's Guide to Network Analysis in R*. 1st ed. 2015 edition. Cham Hildesheim New York: Springer. (PDF available on Blackboard, Fulltext available at library.gmu.edu with login credentials)

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll, Alexander H. Montgomery, and Mark Lubell, eds. 2017. *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

VIII.   Software

The primary software we will learn in this course for doing network analysis is called *R*. You may have already learned some *R* in another class (GOV 300?). *R* is a command-line statistical programming language that is free and open source. It can be operated in Mac OS, Windows, or Linux. There are a number of free packages available in R for network analysis and visualization. R offers an ideal environment for network analysis, but the learning curve to learn the language is steep. You can download R here: https://cran.r-project.org/

Follow this tutorial for getting started: https://swirlstats.com/students.html

Alternatively, for students who are highly averse to learning how to code in a statistical language, there is an alternative software you can use called *UCInet*. *UCInet* is a graphical user interface (GUI) (i.e., point and click) for social network analysis. UCInet has network visualization software built-in, called NetDraw. It is described in two of the books below (Hanneman and Riddle, and Borgatti, et al.). A 90-day free trial is available; a student license is $40. UCInet can only be operated on Microsoft Windows operating software. We will not spend time in class learning UCInet because we will focus our time on learning R. The software is available here: https://sites.google.com/site/ucinetsoftware/home

IX.   Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Tues., Jan. 22   INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND THE STUDY OF NETWORKS IN POLITICS

Part I: Foundations and Tools

Thurs., Jan. 24   DEVELOPING INTUITIONS
Barabási, Chs. 1-5

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll, Alexander H. Montgomery, and Mark Lubell. 2017 (in press), "Introduction" in Oxford Handbook of Political Networks, Victor,

Montgomery, & Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Tues., Jan. 29 -   Fundamental Components of a Network
Thurs., Jan. 31   Borgatti, et al., Ch. 1

Luke, Ch. 1

Hanneman and Riddle, Preface, Chs. 1-2

Patty, John and Maggie Penn, "Network Theory and Political Science," (2016) in Oxford Handbook of Political Networks, Victor, Montgomery, & Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Tues., Feb. 5 -   Mathematical Foundations of Graph Theory/Software Introduction
Thurs., Feb. 7   Borgatti, et al., Ch. 2

Hanneman and Riddle, Chs. 5-6

Luke, Ch. 2

Gross, Justin H. and Joshua Jansa, "Relational Concepts, Measurement, and Data" (2017) in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, & Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Tues., Feb. 12 -   Social Network Research Design and Data Collection
Thurs., Feb. 14   Borgatti, et al., Chs. 3 - 5

Luke, Ch. 3

Tues., Feb. 19 -   Visualization of Network Data
Thurs., Feb. 21   Borgatti, et al., Ch. 7

Hanneman and Riddle, Chs. 3 – 4

Luke, Chs. 4 - 5

Pfeffer, Jürgen "Network Visualization," (2017) in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Tues., Feb. 26 -   The Ubiquity of Networks
Thurs., Feb. 28   Barabási, Chs. 6 - 10

 "Connected: The Power of Six Degrees," a documentary film by Annamaria Talas (2009). We will watch this movie in class on Tuesday, this week.

Tues., Mar. 5 -   Exam Review (Tues)
Thurs., Mar. 7   **Midterm Exam (Mar. 7)**

**Spring Break
March 11-17, 2019**

Part II: Network Properties & Applications

**Tues., Mar. 19 -
Thurs., Mar. 21**
NETWORK ANALYSIS
Borgatti, et al., Ch. 8

Perliger, Arie. 2017. "Terrorism Networks." In in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Kinsella, David and Alexander H. Montgomery. 2017. "Arms Supply and Proliferation Networks." in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Tues., Mar. 26
(JNV birthday) -
Thurs., Mar. 28
THE WHOLE ENCHILADA
Borgatti, et al., Chs. 9 - 10

Luke, Ch. 7

Hanneman & Riddle, Chs. 8, 10

**Tues., Apr. 2 -
Thurs., Apr. 4**
NETWORK APPLICATIONS
Barabási, Chs. 11 – 15

Rolfe, Meredith and Stephanie Chan. 2017 "Voting and Political Participation" in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Ratliff, Lauren Santoro and Paul A. Beck. 2017. "Social Networks and Vote Choice," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

**Tues., Apr. 9 -
Thurs., Apr. 11**
CONNECTIVITY
Hanneman & Riddle, Ch. 7

Barabási, Chs. 16 – 20

Herrnson Paul, and Justin H. Kirkland. 2017. "Political Parties and Campaign Finance," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials).

Koger, Gregory, Seth E. Masket, and Hans Noel. 2017. "American Political Parties as Networks," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery,

and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials).

Tues., Apr. 16 -
Thurs., Apr. 18

SUBGROUPS
Borgatti, et al., Ch. 11
Luke, Ch. 8

Hanneman & Riddle, Ch. 11

Tues., Apr. 23 -
Thurs., Apr. 25

NETWORKS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION
Hassanpour, Chs. 1 - 3

Heaney, Michael T. and James M. Strickland. 2017. "A network approach to interest group politics, " in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials).

Tues., Apr. 30 -
Thurs., May 2

ADVANCED TOPICS
Hassanpour, Chs. 4 - 6

Barabási, Chs. 21 - 28

Borgatti, et al., Ch. 12 (Equivalent Networks)

Hanneman & Riddle, 12. Equivalence

Hanneman & Riddle, 13. Similarity and Structural Equivalence

Tues., May 14   **FINAL EXAM 10:30AM – 1:15PM**

Partisan Polarization in American Politics
Government 490 005 (CRN: 74539)
George Mason University
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30pm – 2:45pm
Robinson Hall A 123
Fall 2017

Professor:	Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Ph.D.
Email:	jvictor3@gmu.edu
Twitter:	@jennifernvictor
Facebook:	jn.victor3
Office:	Research Hall 343
Office Hours:	Wednesdays 1 – 3pm, or by appointment
Course Website:	Available for enrolled students at http://blackboard.gmu.edu
Schar School Main Office:	Research Hall 359

I.   Course Description

Americans appear to be more divided than at any time since the Civil War. In this course, we will examine the political nature of divisions in American society and their partisan roots. We'll begin by asking how divided Americans really are, and what the main points of difference and commonality are. Next, we will read the state-of-the-art literature on polarization as we seek to establish the primary causes of existing divisions. We'll spend considerable time examining the racial, economic, and alternative schisms dominant in American society and seek to understand how these get translated into politics. In addition, we will look at the role of institutions in creating, perpetuating, or alleviating stifling divisions, including political parties, campaign finance, and inbred human characteristics. The course is reading and writing intensive, and is conducted similar to a graduate seminar, offering undergraduates the opportunity to hone their **skills** and deeply explore the subject.

II.   Course Objectives

I have three broad objectives for this course. First, students will learn the theoretical and historical underpinning of partisanship and political parties in the United States. Second, students will develop their critical thinking **skills** through regular reading and writing exercises Third, I aim to stimulate students' **curiosity** about politics and creative means of studying questions pertinent to modern problems and interests.

III.   Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style

My teaching philosophy is based on three primary principles.

- First, I believe the gap between undergraduate and graduate coursework in political science is too broad. I therefore introduce advanced theoretical concepts in

undergraduate classes so that students understand the true value of studying politics as a science; moreover, should any student choose to pursue advanced or graduate work in political science, they will be well prepared.

- Second, I believe in incorporating current events into classroom lessons. Nothing in science seems concrete until one can "see it with their own eyes." Reading a daily newspaper and following current events, then applying theoretical concepts to political happenings helps to clarify theoretical concepts and demonstrate their utility.

- Third, as this class has a heavy reading and writing load, I seek to help students develop strategies of workflow and time management that provide them with increased capacity for digesting significant quantities of dense material, while remaining active and critical of the subject. Written and oral articulation **skills** are in high demand in today's eonomy.

- Finally, as an instructor and a leader of class discussions on everything from lawmaking to elections, I aim to remain politically neutral and non-partisan. Students should learn to collect and evaluate information on their own. I would not want students who disagree with my political views to hear all course information with a skeptical ear; nor would I want students who tend to agree with my views to accept everything I say at face value. I encourage students to express their views, be critical, and challenge information when it is appropriate.

My teaching style is consistent with my philosophy. I use a Socratic-style in the classroom in which I frequently ask questions and encourage an interactive learning experience. I do my best to learn students' names, encourage participation, and create, what I hope is, an open learning environment where students feel free to question, comment, and explain how they view course content. Such an environment helps to foster student interaction, thinking, and analytical and creative **skills**. Moreover, while lectures are important because they help to distribute necessary information and facts, they are not usually the most effective way to learn information. For this reason, we will do a variety of activities in the classroom. Successful performance in this course will include classroom participation and working in and out of class with your peers.

IV. Student Responsibilities

A. *Class Attendance and Participation*. Learning is an *active*, rather than *passive*, exercise. Accordingly, every student is expected to attend class as well as be prepared to ask questions about and comment on the readings. You need to complete the daily reading assignment *prior* to the class meeting. <u>You will be much more successful in this class if you attend regularly, take notes, pay attention, and participate.</u>

B. *Readings.* As is the case with attendance, keeping pace with the reading is essential to succeeding in this class. It is *your* responsibility to obtain copies of the readings prior to the

date we will discuss them in class. I will do everything I can to make this task easier for you. <u>You will be much more successful in this course if you complete the assigned readings and **take notes** on them.</u>

C.	*Technology* **The use of laptop computers, tablets (such as iPads), and smart phones is prohibited in class,** except when instructed to do so. The costs associated with electronic distractions, to you and those around you, outweigh the benefits of immediate supplementary classroom information. Students may use specific instructional applications, such as *Blackboard*, only when instructed to do so. However, students may not use laptops or other devices on a general basis in this class. If these restrictions pose a challenge for you, please discuss it with me. For more information on the benefits of taking notes by hand, see this.

D.	*Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity*. Students in this course will be expected to comply with the George Mason University Honor Code (see http://honorcode.gmu.edu/). There are three simple guidelines to follow with respect to academic integrity: (1) all work you submit must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the expectations for any assignment, ask for clarification. Any student engaged in any academic misconduct *will receive an F on the offending exam or assignment.* Egregious violations will result in an F grade for the course and will be reported to the appropriate Dean's office. These violations include cheating on an exam, using someone else's work as your own, and plagiarizing the written word. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without providing credit or citation) is a serious offense. *If you have any questions at all about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, please ask the instructor.*

E.	*Students with Disabilities.* If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please let me (the instructor) know and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474 or *http://ods.gmu.edu*. All discussions with me regarding disabilities are confidential.

## V.	Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation
There are four graded requirements for this course, described below. Grades will be calculated on a non-curved typical A-F scale where,

93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	< 60	F
90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D		
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-		

Daily Writing Assignments (20%) Each class period will begin with a writing activity. All students will be expected to write, by hand, a response to a provided prompt in a limited time format. The prompts will relate to readings, current evets, and topics of class discussion. The activities are designed to hone students' writing **skills** through regular writing activity. Students who have not completed the assigned readings for the day will have difficulty with these activities. The activity will also include a peer-review component so students gain experience with

providing and receiving constructive reviews. The lowest two scores for these assignments will be dropped from each student's overall course grade.

Blog Posts (30%) Each student will write three 1000-word blog posts during the semester. The goal of the post is to apply political science insights, data, theories, or historical context to some current events. Due dates for blog posts will be determined on the first day of class, where each student will sign up for three dates throughout the semester on which to submit their posts. Each class period can have no more than 4 students submitting posts.

Midterm Exam (20%) There will be an in-class, midterm examination in essay format. The exam will be closed book and closed note. The exam is on **Tuesday, October 17.**

Research Paper (30%). All students will write a research paper on a topic of their choosing (minimum 18 pages, excluding titles, bibliography, tables, graphs, notes). Papers will not exceed 30 total pages, inclusive. Papers will explore an important question of American partisanship or politics and draw upon the latest literature in the field. Students are encouraged to undertake original analysis in their projects, although the course will not cover analytical techniques (students should draw on analytical strategies learned in other courses). Papers will be scaffolded in the following way.

      Step 1: State a research question (**DUE: Sept. 28**) 10%
      Step 2: Annotated bibliography (**DUE: Oct. 12**) 10%
      Step 3: Introduction (**Due: Oct. 26**) 10%
      Step 4: Theory and Literature Review (**Due: Nov. 9**) 15%
      Step 5: Complete Rough Draft/Submit for Peer-Review (**Due: Nov, 28**) 15%
      Step 6: Return Peer-Review (**DUE: Dec. 5**) 5%
      Step 7: Final Draft (**DUE: Dec. 15**). 35%

VI.   Policies on late work, make-ups and extra credit

G. *Can I submit an assignment late?* Students may submit an assignment after its due date for a 5% (off the total possible score) penalty per-24-hour period that the assignment is late.

H. *What if I miss an exam?* Make-up exams are only given in the case of verified illness or family emergency, such as a death in the family. Documentation is necessary to receive a qualified make-up examination. Students who arrive late to an in-class exam may still sit for the exam if no other student has already submitted their exam; once a single student hands-in their exam, no others may begin the exam.

I. *Do you offer extra credit?* No.

J. *What can I do if I perform poorly on an assignment?* Students who receive a 72% or less on a homework assignment or essay (not exam) may re-do the assignment for a replacement grade. Re-do assignments are subject to a 5% per day penalty starting

from the day graded assignments were returned to students in class (regardless of attendance). Assignments that were originally submitted past the due date are NOT eligible for re-do.

VII.   Texts

The reading assignments are chosen to buttress and expand on the analytic foundation laid in class. **Please notify the instructor about problems obtaining the readings as soon as possible**. The following materials are required and can be found at the campus bookstore.

Required Readings

Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2015. *Between the World and Me*. 1 edition. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

*Cramer, Katherine J. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago ; London: University Of Chicago Press.

*Desmond, Matthew. 2017. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. 1 edition. New York: Broadway Books.

*Hetherington, Marc J., and Jonathan D. Weiler. 2009. *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics*. 1 edition. Cambridge University Press.

*La Raja, Raymond J., and Brian F. Schaffner. 2015. *Campaign Finance and Political Polarization: When Purists Prevail*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago ; London: University Of Chicago Press.

McConnaughy, Corrine M. 2015. *The Woman Suffrage Movement in America: A Reassessment*. Reprint edition. Cambridge University Press.

Sides, John, and Daniel J. Hopkins, eds. 2015. *Political Polarization in American Politics*. Edition Unstated edition. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

*Items are on reserve at the Gateway Library at the Johnson Center

Recommended Reading

Schickler, Eric. 2016. *Racial Realignment: The Transformation of American Liberalism, 1932–1965*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Gest, Justin. 2016. *The New Minority: White Working Class Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality*. 1 edition. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Grossmann, Matt, and David A. Hopkins. 2016. *Asymmetric Politics: Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats*. 1 edition. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

VIII.   Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Tues., Aug. 29   COURSE INTRODUCTION, WORKFLOW, AND PLAN

PART I: TYPES & SOURCES OF POLARIZATION

Thurs., Aug. 31   **NO CLASS TODAY**
(Professor will be the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA)

Tues., Sept. 5   POLARIZATION BASICS
Abramowitz, Alan I., and Steven Webster. "The Rise of Negative Partisanship and the Nationalization of U.S. Elections in the 21st Century." *Electoral Studies* 41 (March 1, 2016): 12–22. doi:10.1016/j.electstud.2015.11.001.
Noel, Hans. "Polarization Is about More than Just Sorting, but Sorting Is Polarization Anyway." Mischiefs of Faction, June 25, 2014. http://www.mischiefsoffaction.com/2014/06/polarization-is-about-more-than-just.html
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 1
Webster, Steven W., and Alan I. Abramowitz. "The Ideological Foundations of Affective Polarization in the U.S. Electorate." *American Politics Research* 45, no. 4 (July 1, 2017): 621–47. doi:10.1177/1532673X17703132.

Thurs., Sept. 7   FORMS OF POLARIZATION, PART I
Achen & Bartels, Chapter 1
Sides & Hopkins, Chapters 2-5

Tues., Sept, 12   FORMS OF POLARIZATION, PART II
Sides & Hopkins, Chapters 6-9

Thurs., Sept. 14   CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY: THE MYTH OF POLICY VOTING
Achen & Bartels, Chapters 2-3

Tues., Sept. 19   CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY: THE MYTH OF RETROSPECTION, PART I
Achen & Bartels, Chapters 4-5
Busby, Ethan C., James N. Druckman, and Alexandria Fredendall. "The Political Relevance of Irrelevant Events." *The Journal of Politics* 79, no. 1 (November 2, 2016): 346–50. doi:10.1086/688585.

Thurs., Sept. 21   CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY: THE MYTH OF RETROSPECTION, PART II
Achen & Bartels, Chapters 6-7

Tues., Sept. 26   REGIONALISM AND RURAL AMERICA, PART I
Cramer, Chapters 1-4

Thurs., Sept. 28   REGIONALISM AND RURAL AMERICA, PART II
Cramer, Chapters 5-8

Tues., Oct. 3   R<small>EGIONALISM AND</small> U<small>RBAN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>, P<small>ART</small> I
Desmond, Prologue - Chapter 8

Thurs., Oct. 5   R<small>EGIONALISM AND</small> U<small>RBAN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>, P<small>ART</small> II
Desmond, Chapters 9 – 16

Tues., Oct. 9   R<small>EGIONALISM AND</small> U<small>RBAN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>, P<small>ART</small> III
Desmond, Chapters 17-24
Mason, Lilliana. "A Cross-Cutting CalmHow Social Sorting Drives Affective
 Polarization." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 80, no. S1 (January 1, 2016): 351–77.
 doi:10.1093/poq/nfw001.

Thurs., Oct. 12   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> M<small>EDIA</small>
Sides & Hopkins, Chapters 15-17

Tues., Oct. 17   **M<small>IDTERM</small> E<small>XAM</small>**

Part II: Political Institutions, Parties, Groups, & Identity

Thurs., Oct. 19   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> R<small>ACE IN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>
Coates, pp. 1 - 75

Tues., Oct. 24   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> R<small>ACE IN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>
Coates, pp. 76 – end
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 12

Thurs., Oct. 26   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> G<small>ENDER IN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>
McConnaughy, Introduction – Chapter 3

Tues., Oct. 31   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> G<small>ENDER IN</small> A<small>MERICA</small>
McConnaughy, Chapters 4 – 7
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 14

Thurs., Nov. 2   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> I<small>DEOLOGY</small>, P<small>ART</small> I
Hetherington & Weiler, Chapters 1-4
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 10

Tues., Nov. 7   P<small>OLARIZATION AND</small> I<small>DEOLOGY</small>, P<small>ART</small> II
Hetherington & Weiler, Chapters 5-7
Federico, Christopher M., Emily L. Fisher, and Grace Deason. "The Authoritarian
 Left Withdraws from Politics: Ideological Asymmetry in the Relationship

between Authoritarianism and Political Engagement." *The Journal of Politics* 79, no. 3 (May 10, 2017): 1010–23. doi:10.1086/692126.

Thurs., Nov. 9   POLARIZATION AND IDEOLOGY, PART III
Hetherington & Weiler, Chapters 8-10

Tues., Nov. 14   POLARIZATION AND CONGRESS, PART I
Lee, Chapter 1 – 3
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 11

Thurs., Nov. 16   POLARIZATION AND CONGRESS, PART II
Lee, Chapter 4-6
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 18

Tues., Nov. 21   POLARIZATION AND CONGRESS, PART III
Lee, Chapter 7-9
Sides & Hopkins, Chapters 19 - 20

Tues., Nov. 28   POLITICAL PARTIES AND CAMPAIGN POLITICS, PART I
La Raja & Schaffner, Chapters 1 – 3
Sides & Hopkins, Chapter 13

Thurs., Nov. 30.   POLITICAL PARTIES AND CAMPAIGN POLITICS, PART II
La Raja & Schaffner, Chapters 4 – 6

Tues., Dec. 5   POLARIZATION SOLUTIONS, PART I
Achen & Bartels, Chapters 8 – 9
Rogowski, Jon C., and Joseph L. Sutherland. "How Ideology Fuels Affective Polarization." *Political Behavior* 38, no. 2 (June 1, 2016): 485–508. doi:10.1007/s11109-015-9323-7.
Sides & Hopkins, Chapters 21 – 23

Thurs., Dec. 7   POLARIZATION SOLUTIONS, PART II
Achen & Bartels, Chapters 10 – 11
Masket, Seth. "When Polarization Isn't the Problem: Seeing Charlottesville for What It Really Is." *Pacific Standard*, August 14, 2017. https://psmag.com/news/when-polarization-isnt-the-problem-seeing-charlottesville-for-what-it-really-is
Sides & Hopkins, Chapters 24 – 26

Fri., Dec. 15   FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 5PM

Congress/Legislative Behavior
Government 604, Graduate Seminar (CRN 21331)
George Mason University
Thursday 7:20pm – 10:00pm
Music Theater Building 1002
Spring 2019
(updated January 21, 2019)

Professor: Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Ph.D.
Email: jvictor3@gmu.edu
Twitter: @jennifernvictor
Office: Research Hall 343
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:30am – 3:00pm, or by appointment
Course Website: Available for enrolled students at http://blackboard.gmu.edu

I.   Course Description

This graduate seminar on legislative behavior is designed to provide advanced graduate students an opportunity to begin to explore the literature, methodology, and theories about legislative processes. The class is organized in two sections. In the first portion of the class we will learn about the primary theories for understanding congressional institutions (lawmaking, spatial models, roll call voting, parties, committees, etc.). In the second portion of the course, we will examine the electoral connections of members of congress (elections, campaigning, campaign finance, decision making, careerism, etc.). For the most part, we will use the United States Congress as a lens through which to learn about general legislative issues. We begin with the national U.S. case because most of the advanced theory and methodology in this sub-discipline originates there. Students are encouraged to think about and apply the general U.S. case to other national legislatures, parliaments, or state-level analysis. The literature in this area is vast and we cannot hope to cover it all in one semester. We will touch on the most important topics and diverge when it seems appropriate or when students' interests demand it. This course is designed to help students prepare for advanced research in legislative process and graduate-level exams in this field.

II.   Course Goals

There are two primary goals for this course. First, students should gain a working familiarity with the literature on legislative process, and the U.S. Congress. Students planning to research and teach in this field should gain a fundamental grasp of substance of research in this vast field. Second, students will practice and improve their critical thinking, writing, and research **skills** in this class. Students will have a heavy reading load, which is necessary to begin to dissect the voluminous literature in this field. Students will also actively engage with one another in research, presentations, and writing assignments.

III.   Course Components

There are three graded components to this course.

Class Presentation (10%) Each week, one student will be responsible for presenting the required readings. The student presenter should circulate discussion questions to the rest of the class prior to the start of class (no later than Wednesdays at 5:00pm). The presenter will provide a brief oral summary of the readings and help to start discussion about the day's topics. The presenter should note points of interest, confusion, or controversy in the readings and provide a thoughtful criticism.

Weekly Reaction Papers (40%) Each week each student must write a memo that provides a reaction to the week's readings. There are 14 class meetings, and each student must write 10 reaction memos (meaning you get 4 optional bye-weeks, to be selected at your choosing).

> MASTER'S STUDENTS: This memo must not be more than 250 words or longer than 1 page. Your goals is to summarize key research findings in a concise and expert format.

> PHD STUDENTS: This memo should contain 3-5 sentences on each assigned reading, as well as a paragraph that summarizes the state of the field on the topic.

Research paper (50%) Each student is responsible for writing one journal or conference quality research paper. Use the literature to guide a creative thought process and to help you develop a reasonable research question. These papers will be completed in three stages. First, you will complete a 1-page introduction that states a thesis, or research question, and provides a basic outline of your paper **(due February 28)**. Second, you will write a literature review and research design **(due April 11)**. Third, you will hand in your completed project during our assigned final examination period on **Thursday, May 9 at 7:30pm**. Late assignments will result in a reduced score.

IV.   Logistics

A.   Class Attendance and Participation. Learning is an *active*, rather than *passive*, exercise. Accordingly, every student is expected to attend class as well as be prepared to ask questions about and comment on the readings. You need to complete the daily reading assignment *prior* to the class meeting. <u>You will be much more successful in this class if you attend regularly, take notes, pay attention, and participate.</u>

B.   Readings. As is the case with attendance, keeping pace with the reading is essential to succeeding in this class. It is *your* responsibility to obtain copies of the readings prior to the date we will discuss them in class. I will do everything I can to make this task easier for you.

<u>You will be much more successful in this course if you complete the assigned readings and **take notes** on them.</u>

C.   Technology Laptops, tablets, and smart phone are a considerable distraction in class. A student can become easily distracted by non-class alternatives that compete for your attention. In addition, research shows that students tend to retain more information by taking notes by hand rather than on a computer. However, this course is technology heavy as we will be learning statistical software that is probably unfamiliar to you. It requires considerable practice and training. Therefore, I leave it to students to make their own choice about how to maximize their in-class learning. If you choose to use a laptop, make a commitment to only using content related to class.

D.   Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity. Students in this course will be expected to comply with the George Mason University Honor Code (see http://honorcode.gmu.edu/). There are three simple guidelines to follow with respect to academic integrity: (1) all work you submit must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the expectations for any assignment, ask for clarification. Any student engaged in any academic misconduct *will receive an F on the offending exam or assignment.* Egregious violations will result in an F grade for the course and will be reported to the appropriate Dean's office. These violations include cheating on an exam, using someone else's work as your own, and plagiarizing the written word. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without providing credit or citation) is a serious offense. *If you have any questions at all about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, please ask the instructor.*

E.   Students with Disabilities. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please let me (the instructor) know and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474 or *http://ods.gmu.edu*. All discussions with me regarding disabilities are confidential.

F.   Email. Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class. *Email etiquette:* An email is a professional correspondence; do not write it as if it is a text message, snap, tweet, or IM. Always use a salutation and sign your name. Consider creating a signature that automatically inserts your name and basic contact information at the bottom of your emails. Use proper punctuation and grammar.

G.   Dropping or withdrawing. The last day to add this course is <u>Tuesday, January 29, 2019</u>. The last day to drop the class with no tuition penalty is <u>February 5, 2019</u>. Students may elect to withdrawal from the class (with 100% tuition liability) between February 6 – February 12. From February 26 – March 25 students may elect to use a Mason "selective withdrawal" to drop the

course (you can only do this three times during your time as a Mason student). After March 25 there are no options for withdrawing from the course. More information on drop and withdrawal policies is [here](#). If you have concerns about your performance in the course, or you find yourself unable to perform for any reason, you should discuss your concerns with your teaching assistant, professor, advisor, and Assistant Dean (in that order). Students seeking to drop or withdrawal are responsible for doing so on their own in Patriot Web. If you need help or advice, please see your academic advisor. The advisors in the Schar School main office (3rd floor Research Hall) can also help.

Grading. In this course, I will use a grading scale that is typical of Ph.D.-level courses that includes a four-part scale. You can think of the scale as being: high-pass, pass, low-pass, or fail. The grade scale and its interpretation is the following:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent work; high pass.
A-	Good work; pass.
B+	Work needs some improvement; low-pass. If you plan to take Ph.D.-level exams in American politics, you need to do some additional review of the material presented in this course.
B or lower	Your work has not demonstrated mastery of the material that would be appropriate for a career in academia as a professor. Alternative career paths may be a better option for you.

V.   Required Texts

The reading load for this course is intense and dense. It is vital that you keep up with the readings. One of the most important **skills** you will learn as a graduate student (most important in terms of being successful in graduate school) is how to efficiently digest a large volume of readings. I know that you will not be able to read every word that is assigned; but you will need to learn how to quickly glean the most important points from each reading. While I cannot require it, I *strongly* encourage you to take notes on everything you read. Good organization and careful note taking will increase your retention of the material, improve your ability to recall information, lead to superior classroom discussions, and reduce your research and study time at later points. Taking notes may mean it takes longer to get through some material, but the (long term) benefits of doing so, far exceed the (short term) costs.

For each article or book you read, as a minor guide to digesting volumes of information in an efficient way, use the following questions to help focus your attention about each piece of research:
1.) What is the main question the author is asking?
2.) What motivates the question, or why is the author asking the question?
3.) What is the primary expectation, hypothesis, or claim the author seeks to test?
4.) On what theory or logic is the expectation based?

5.) What methods of investigation has the author used to evaluate the claim?
6.) What are the primary findings? Were the expectations met?
7.) How does this research advance, or contribute to, our **knowledge** of this topic?

In addition to the following required texts, a series of articles are listed in the detailed weekly description below. I strongly recommend that students use bibliographic software to access, document, and catalog the items they read. While there are many such software options around, I recommend using Zotero, a free add-in for your web-browser. Information and tutorials on Zotero are available here (https://infoguides.gmu.edu/politics/cite). **As a first assignment, I ask that students explore this software and download all the readings into Zotero**. All the articles are available through web access at Mason's library, and most of the books are available in the library. This guide has resources about finding articles. You can also search for the title or journal from the library homepage, or use Political Science Complete or Google Scholar to find the articles listed below (you'll need to use your GMU login and the Duo Mobile two factor authentication to access these). We will go over these strategies in class. Using bibliographic software will make your life easier—never fret about formatting a bibliography ever again! For graduate students who expect to take field exams, this approach is essential.

Required:

Adler, E. Scott, and John D. Wilkerson. 2012. *Congress and the Politics of Problem Solving*. Cambridge [England] ; Cambridge University Press.

Binder, Sarah A. 2003. *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock*. Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press.

Fenno, Richard F. 1978. *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Harbridge, Laurel. 2015. *Is Bipartisanship Dead? : Policy Agreement and Agenda-Setting in the House of Representatives*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Koger, Gregory, and Matthew J. Lebo. 2017. *Strategic Party Government: Why Winning Trumps Ideology*. 1 edition. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press.

La Raja, Raymond J., and Brian F. Schaffner. 2015. *Campaign Finance and Political Polarization: When Purists Prevail*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago ; The University of Chicago Press.

Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Second edition. Yale Studies in Political Science ; 26. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Rubin, Ruth Bloch. 2017. *Building the Bloc: Intraparty Organization in the US Congress*. Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Sinclair, Barbara. 2017. *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress*. Fifth edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage CQ Press.

Theriault, Sean M. 2008. *Party Polarization in Congress*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Recommended:

Brady, David W., and Craig Volden. 2006. *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush*. 2nd ed. Transforming American Politics. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press. (Ch. 1)

Cox, Gary W. 2005. *Setting the Agenda Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. (Chs 1-3, 5)

Jacobson, Gary C., and Jamie L. Carson. 2015. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. Ninth edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Sulkin, Tracy. 2005. *Issue Politics in Congress*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Swers, Michele L. 2013. *Women in the Club: Gender and Policy Making in the Senate*. Chicago ; University of Chicago Press.

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll, and Nils Ringe. 2013. *Bridging the Information Gap: Legislative Member Organizations as Social Networks in the United States and the European Union*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Volden, Craig, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2014. *Legislative Effectiveness in the United States Congress: The Lawmakers*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

*Using the [Gender Balance Assessment Tool](#) (GBAT) developed by Jane Lawrence Sumner, the required BOOKS for this class are comprised of 13 authors who are 39% women. On the complete syllabus of <u>required</u> readings there are 181 authors who are 20% women, 5.5% Asian, 11% Black, 4% Hispanic, and 77% White authors.

VI.   Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Thursday, January 24
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF CONGRESS
Required Readings:
Fenno, Richard F. 1978. *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Boston: Little, Brown.
Sinclair, Barbara. 2017. *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress*. Fifth edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage CQ Press. (Chs. 1-4)
Weingast, Barry R. and William J. Marshall. 1988. "[The Industrial Organization of Congress; or, Why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized as Markets.](#)" *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 96, No. 1 (Feb., 1988), pp. 132-163.

PART I: CONGRESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Thursday, January 31

<u>LEGISLATIVE PROCESS</u>
Required Readings:

Binder, Sarah A. 2003. *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock*.
      Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press.

Madonna, Anthony J. 2011. "[Winning Coalition Formation in the U.S. Senate: The Effects of
      Legislative Decision Rules and Agenda Change]." *American Journal of Political Science*,
      55(2): 276-288.

Sinclair, Barbara. 2017. *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S.*
      ***Congress*. Fifth edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage CQ Press. (Chs. 5-10)**

Wilkerson, John, David Smith, and Nicholas Stramp. 2015. "Tracing the Flow of Policy Ideas in
      Legislatures: A Text Reuse Approach." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (4): 943–
      56. [https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12175].

Woon, Jonathan. 2009. "[Issue Attention and Legislative Proposals in the U.S. Senate]."
      Legislative Studies Quarterly. 34(1): 29-54.

Recommended Readings:

Binder, Sarah A. 1999. "[The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-1996]." *The American
      Political Science Review*, 93:3.

Binder, Sarah A. 1996. "[The Partisan Basis of Procedural Choice: Allocating Parliamentary
      Rights in the House, 1789-1990]." *The American Political Science Review*, 90:1 (pp. 8-20).

Binder, Sarah A. and Steven S. Smith. 1997. *Politics or Principle: Filibustering in the United
      States Senate*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Kessler, Daniel and Keith Krehbiel. 1996. "[Dynamics of Cosponsorship]." *American Political
      Science Review*, 90:3 (pp. 555-566).

Mayhew, David R. 1991. *Divided we Govern: Party Control, Lawmaking, and Investigations,
      1946-1990*.

Oleszek, Walter. 2013. *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*, 9th ed. Washington,
      DC: CQ Press.

Patty, John W. 2007. "[The House Discharge Procedure and Majoritarian Politics]" *Journal of
      Politics*, 69(3): 678.

Redman, Eric. 1973. *The Dance of Legislation*. New York: Simon & Schuster Inc.

Schickler, Eric and Gregory Wawro. 2004. "[Where's the Pivot? Obstruction and Lawmaking in
      the Pre-Cloture Senate]," *American Journal of Political Science, 48(4): 758.*

Schiller, Wendy J. 1995. "[Senators as Political Entrepreneurs: Using Bill Sponsorship to Shape
      Legislative Agendas]." *American Journal of Political Science*, 39:1 (pp. 186-203).

Thursday, February 7
<u>MODELING LEGISLATORS</u>
Required Readings:

Brady, David W. and Craig Volden. 2006. *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Jimmy
      Carter to George W. Bush*, 2nd ed. Boudler, CO: Westview Press. **Chs. 1-2**.

Dziuda, Wioletta, and Antoine Loeper. 2018. "Dynamic Pivotal Politics." *The American Political Science Review; Washington* 112 (3): 580–601. http://dx.doi.org.mutex.gmu.edu/10.1017/S0003055418000187.

Hitt, Matthew P., Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2017. "Spatial Models of Legislative Effectiveness." *American Journal of Political Science* 61 (3): 575–90. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12296.

Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Second edition. Yale Studies in Political Science ; 26. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Riker, William. 1980. "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions." *The American Political Science Review*, 74(2): 432-446.

Woon, Jonathan. 2009. "Change We Can Believe In? Using Political Science to Predict Policy Change in the Obama Presidency." *PS: Political Science & Politics*, April 2009. Available: http://www.pitt.edu/~woon/papers/ps_change.pdf

Recommended Readings

(See Symposium on Pivotal Politics in *JOP* 80(3), July 20180

Arrow, Kenneth J. 1963. *Social Choice and Individual Values*, 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale UP.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper Collins.

Enelow, James M. & Melvin J. Hinich. 1984. *The Spatial Theory of Voting: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Hinich, Melvin J. and Michael C. Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP: **Ch. 1** (pp. 3-20).

Hinich, Melvin J. and Michael C. Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP: Ch. 2 (pp. 21-49).

Krehbiel, Keith. 1988. "Spatial Models of Legislative Choice." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, XIII:3.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1-2.

Riker, William. 1982. *Liberalism Against Populism*. San Francisco: Freeman Press.

Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1979. "Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models." *American Journal of Political Science*, 23:1 (pp. 27-59).

Shepsle, Kenneth A. and Barry R. Weingast, eds. 1995. *Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press: pp. 5-35.

Shepsle, Kenneth A. and Mark S. Bonchek. 1997. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W.W. Norton: **pp. 5-35; 312-344**

Stewart, Charles. 2012. *Analyzing Congress*, 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton: **Ch. 1.**

Thursday, February 14

ROLL CALL VOTING

Required Readings

Bonica, Adam. 2018. "Inferring Roll-Call Scores from Campaign Contributions Using Supervised Machine Learning." *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (4): 830–48. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12376.

Grose, Christian R., Neil Malhotra, and Robert Parks Van Houweling. 2015. "Explaining Explanations: How Legislators Explain Their Policy Positions and How Citizens React." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (3): 724–43. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12164.

Koger, Gregory, and Matthew J. Lebo. 2017. *Strategic Party Government: Why Winning Trumps Ideology*. 1 edition. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press.

Londregan, John. 1999. "Estimating Legislators' Preferred Points." *Political Analysis* 8:35-56.

Poole, Keith T. 1999. "NOMINATE: A Short Intellectual History." *The Political Methodologist* 9:1-6.

Poole, Keith. Website: http://voteview.com

Recommended Readings:

Clinton, Joshua D. 2006. "Representation in Congress: Constituents and Roll Calls in the 106th House." *Journal of Politics* 68(2): 397-409.

Clinton, Joshua D. 2007. "Lawmaking and Roll Calls." *Journal of Politics* 69(2): 457-469.

Clinton, Joshua, Simon Jackman and Douglas Rivers. 2004. "The Statistical Analysis of Roll Call Data." *American Political Science Review* 98 (2): 355-370.Groseclose, Timothy and James Snyder. 2003. "Interpreting the Coefficient of Party Influence." *Political Analysis*, 11: 104-7.

Krehbiel, Keith. 2003. "Asymmetry in party Influence: Reply." *Political Analysis* 11: 108-9.

Krehbiel, Keith. 2003. "The Coefficient of Party Influence." *Political Analysis* 11: 95-103.

Poole, Keith T. 1998. "Recovering a Basic Space from a Set of Issue Scales." *American Journal of Political Science* 42:954-993.

Poole, Keith T. 2005. *Spatial Models of Parliamentary Voting*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

Poole, Keith T. and Howard Rosenthal. 1985. "A Spatial Model for Legislative Roll Call Analysis." *American Journal of Political Science*, 29:1 (pp. 357-384).

Poole, Keith T. and Howard Rosenthal. 1991. "Patterns of Congressional Voting." *American Journal of Political Science*, 35:1 (pp. 228-278).

Poole, Keith T. and Howard Rosenthal. 2007. *Ideology & Congress*. Transaction Publishers.

Poole, Keith T. Howard Rosenthal, and Kenneth Koford. 1991. "On Dimensionalizing Roll Call Votes in the U.S. Congress." *The American Political Science Review*, 85:3 (pp. 955-976).

Snyder, James M. and Timothy Groseclose. 2000. "Estimating Party Influence in Congressional Roll-Call Voting." American Journal of Political Science, vol. 44 (pp. 193-211).

Snyder, James M. Jr., 1992. "Artificial Extremism in Interest Group Ratings." Legislative Studies Quarterly, 17(3): 319-345.

Weisberg, Herbert F. 1978. "Evaluating Theories of Congressional Roll-Call Voting." American Journal of Political Science, 22:3 (554-577).

Thursday, February 21
STRATEGIES IN LEGISLATIVE VOTING
Required Readings:
Adler, E. Scott, and John D. Wilkerson. 2012. *Congress and the Politics of Problem Solving*. Cambridge [England] , Cambridge University Press.

Calvert, Randall L. and Richard F. Fenno, Jr. 1994. "Strategy and Sophisticated Voting in the Senate." *The Journal of Politics*, 56:2 (349-376).

Denzau, Arthur, William Riker, and Kenneth Shepsle. 1985. "Farquharson and Fenno: Sophisticated Voting and Home Style." *The American Political Science Review*, 79:4 (pp. 1117-1134).

Donnelly, Christopher P. 2019. "Yea or Nay: Do Legislators Benefit by Voting Against Their Party?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 0 (0). Accessed January 20, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12233.

Ferejohn, John. 1986. "Logrolling in an Institutional Context: A Case Study of Food Stamp Legislation," in *Congress and Policy Change*, Gerald C. Wright, Jr., Leroy N. Rieselbach, and Lawrence C. Dodd, eds. New York: Agathon Press, Inc.

Jenkins, Jeffery A., and Nathan W. Monroe. 2016. "On Measuring Legislative Agenda-Setting Power." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (1): 158–74. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12191.

Kingdon, John W. 1977. "Models of Legislative Voting." *Journal of Politics*, 39.

Recommended Readings

Bernhard, William, Daniel Sewell, and Tracy Sulkin. 2017. "A Clustering Approach to Legislative Styles." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42 (3): 477–506. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12162.

Gelman, Jeremy. 2017. "Rewarding Dysfunction: Interest Groups and Intended Legislative Failure." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42 (4): 661–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12173.

Jenkins, JefferyA., and Michael C. Munger. 2003. "Investigating the Incidence of Killer Amendments in Congress." *Journal of Politics*, 65(2): 498-517.

Kingdon, John W. 1973. *Congressmen's Voting Decisions*. New York: Harper & Row.

Krehbiel, Keith and Douglas Rivers. 1990. "Sophisticated Voting in Congress: A Reconsideration." *The Journal of Politics*, 52:2 (pp. 548-578).

Matthews, Donald R., and James A. Stimson. 1975. *Yeas and Nays: Normal Decision-Making in the U.S. House of Representatives*. New York: Wiley.

Ordeshook, Peter C. and Thomas Palfrey. 1988. "Agendas, Strategic Voting, and Signaling with Incomplete Information." *American Journal of Political Science*, 32:2 (pp. 441-466).

Stiglitz, Edward H. and Barry. R. Weingast. 2010. "Agenda Control in Congress: Evidence from Cutpoint Estimates and Ideal Point Uncertainty." Legislative Studies Quarterly, 35(2): 157-185.

Wilkerson, John D. 1999. "Killer' Amendments in Congress." *American Political Science Review*, 93(3).

Thursday, February 28   **Research Paper Introduction DUE Today**

CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES
Required Readings

Adler, E. Scott and John S. Lapinski. 1997. "Demand-Side Theory and Congressional Committee Composition." *American Journal of Political Science*, 41.

Berry, Christopher R., and Anthony Fowler. 2016. "Cardinals or Clerics? Congressional Committees and the Distribution of Pork." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (3): 692–708. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12192.

Gilligan, Thomas W. and Keith Krehbiel. 1990. "Organization of Informative Committees by a Rational Legislature." *American Journal of Political Science*, 34(2): 531-564.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1990. "Are Committees Composed of Preference Outliers?" *American Political Science Review*, 84:1.

Park, Ju Yeon. 2017. "A Lab Experiment on Committee Hearings: Preferences, Power, and a Quest for Information." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42 (1): 3–31. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12139.

Pearson, Kathryn, and Eric Schickler. 2009. "Discharge Petitions, Agenda Control, and the Congressional Committee System, 1929-76". *The Journal of Politics*, 71(4): 1238-1256.

Richman, Jesse. 2008. "Uncertainty and the Prevalence of Committee Outliers." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 33(2): 323-47.

Shepsle, Kenneth A. and Barry R. Weingast. 1987. "The Institutional Foundations of Committee Power." *The American Political Science Review*, 81:1 (pp. 85-104).

Recommended Readings:

Fenno, Richard. *Congressmen and Committees*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Fiorina, Morris and Charles R. Plott. 1978. "Committee Decisions Under Majority Rule: An Experimental Study." *The American Political Science Review*, 72.

Gilligan, Thomas W. and Keith Krehbiel. 1989. "Asymmetric Information and Legislative Rules with a Heterogeneous Committee." *American Journal of Political Science*, 33:2 (pp. 459-490).

Groseclose, Tim and Charles Stewart III.   1998. "The Value of Committee Seats in the House, 1947-91." *American Journal of Political Science*, 42(2): 453-474.

Hall, Richard L. 1987. "Participation and Purpose in Committee Decision Making." *The American Political Science Review*, 81:1 (pp. 105-128).

Jones, Bryan D., Frank R. Baumgartner and Jeffery C. Talbert. 1993. "The Destruction of Issue Monopolies in Congress." *American Political Science Review*, 87:3.

Hall, Richard L. and Bernard Grofman. 1990. "The Committee Assignment Process and the Conditional Nature of Committee Bias." *The American Political Science Review*, 84:4.

King, David C. 1997. *Turf Wars: How Congressional Committees Claim Jurisdiction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Krehbiel, Keith and Douglas Rivers. 1988. "The Analysis of Committee Power: An Application to Senate Voting on the Minimum Wage." *American Journal of Political Science*, 32:4 (pp. 1151-1174).

Krehbiel, Keith. 1991. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

McKelvey, Richard D. and Peter C. Ordeshook. 1984. "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Procedural Rules on Committee Behavior." *Journal of Politics*. Vol. 46.

Miller, Gary J. and Joe A. Oppenheimer. 1982. "Universalism in Experimental Committees." *The American Political Science Review*, 76:3 (pp. 561-574).

Smith, Steven S. and Christopher Deering. 1984. *Committees in Congress*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Stewart, Charles. 2012. *Analyzing Congress,* 2nd ed.. New York: W.W. Norton: **Ch. 8.**

Sulkin, Tracy. 2005. *Issue Politics in Congress*. Cambridge ; Cambridge University Press, Chs. 1-3, 6

Thursday, March 7

SOCIAL NETWORKS IN CONGRESS

Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M., Dino P. Christenson, and Alison W. Craig. 2019. "Cue-Taking in Congress: Interest Group Signals from Dear Colleague Letters." *American Journal of Political Science* 63 (1): 163–80. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12399.

Bratton, Kathleen A. and Stella M. Rouse. 2011. "Networks in the Legislative Arena: How Group Dynamics Affect Cosponsorship." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 36(3): 423-460.

Carpenter, Daniel P., Kevin M. Esterling and David M. Lazer. 2004. "Friends, Brokers, and Transitivity: Who Informs Whom in Washington Politics?" *Journal of Politics*, 66: 224-246.

Fowler, James H. 2006. "Connecting the Congress: A Study of Cosponsorship Networks." *Political Analysis*, 14: 456-87.

Koger, Gregory, Seth E. Masket, and Hans Noel. 2009. "Partisan Webs: Information Exchange and Party Networks." *British Journal of Political Science*, 39: 633-653.

Masket, Seth E. 2008. "Where You Sit is Where You Stand: The Impact of Seating Proximity of Legislative Cue-Taking." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 3: 301-311.

Montgomery, Jacob M., and Brendan Nyhan. 2017. "The Effects of Congressional Staff Networks in the US House of Representatives." *The Journal of Politics* 79 (3): 745–61. https://doi.org/10.1086/690301.

Nyhan, Brendan, and Jacob M. Montgomery. 2015. "Connecting the Candidates: Consultant Networks and the Diffusion of Campaign Strategy in American Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (2): 292–308. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12143.

Ringe, Nils, Jennifer Nicoll Victor and Justin H. Gross. 2013. "Keeping Your Friends Close and Your Enemies Closer? Information Networks in Legislative Politics." *British Journal of Political Science*, 43(3): 601-628.

Ringe, Nils, Jennifer Nicoll Victor, and Wendy Tam Cho. 2017. "Legislative Networks," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, Victor, Montgomery, & Lubell, eds. AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY.GMU.EDU (login using gmu credentials)

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll and Nils Ringe. 2009. "The Social Utility of Informal Institutions: Caucuses as Networks in the 110th U.S. House of Representatives," *American Politics Research*, 37(5): 742-766.

Recommended Readings:

Bendix, William, and Jon Mackay. 2017. "Partisan Infighting Among House Republicans: Leaders, Factions, and Networks of Interests." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42 (4): 549–77. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12168.

Koger, Gregory. 2003. "Position Taking and Cosponsorship in the U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 28(2): 225–246.

Porter, Mason A., Mucha, Peter J., Newman, M.E.J., Warmbrand, Casey M. 2005. "A Network Analysis of Committees in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 102:7057-7062.

Ringe, Nils and Jennifer Nicoll Victor. 2013. *Bridging the Information Gap: Legislative Member Organizations as Social Networks in the United States and the European Union*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Wojcik, Stefan, and Shawnna Mullenax. 2017. "Men Idle, Women Network: How Networks Help Female Legislators Succeed." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42 (4): 579–610. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12169.

Thursday, March 14   **SPRING BREAK**

Thursday, March 21
PARTIES IN CONGRESS: PART I
Required Readings:
Gailmard, Sean, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. 2007. "Negative Agenda Control in the Senate and House: fingerprints of Majority Party Power." *Journal of Politics* 69(3): 689-699.

Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago ; The University of Chicago Press.

Lee, Frances E. 2018. "The 115th Congress and Questions of Party Unity in a Polarized Era." *The Journal of Politics* 80 (4): 1464–73. https://doi.org/10.1086/699335.

Snyder, James M., Jr. and Timothy Groseclose. 2000. "Estimating Party Influence in Congressional Roll Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Scince*, 44: 193-211.

Recommended Readings:
Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, and Charles Stewart III. 2001. "The Effects of Party and Preferences on Congressional Roll Call Voting." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 26:533-72.

Binder, Sarah, Eric D. Lawrence, and Forrest Maltzman. 1999. "Uncovering the Hidden Effect of Party." *Journal of Politics*, 61: 815-831.

Covington, Cary R. and Andrew A. Bargen. 2004. "Comparing Floor-Dominated and Party-Dominated Explanations of Policy Change in the House of Representatives." *Journal of Politics* 66(4): 1069-1088.

Cox, Gary and Keith T. Poole. 2002. "On Measuring Partisanship in Roll Call Voting: The U.S. House of Representatives, 1877-1999." *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(3): 477-489.

Cox, Gary and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2005. Setting the Agenda, Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Cox, Gary W. and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1997. "Toward a theory of Legislative Rules Change: Assessing Schicker and Rich's Evidence." *American Journal of Political Science*, 41: 1376-1386.

Dodd, Lawrence C. and Bruce I. Oppenheimer. 2013. *Congress Reconsidered*, 10th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. **Chs. 7, 8**

Krehbiel, Keith. 1993. "Where's the Party?" *British Journal of Political Science*, 23, 235-266.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1995. "Cosponsors and Wafflers from A to Z," *American Journal of Political Science*, 41: 958-964.

Krehbiel, Keith. 2000. "Party Discipline and Measure of Partisanship," *American Journal of Political Science*," 44.

Lawrence Eric D., Forrest Maltzman and Steven S. Smith. 2006. "Who Wins? Party Effects in Legislative Voting." *Lesislative Studies Quarterly* 31(1): 33.

McCarty, Nolan, Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal. 2001. "The Hunt for Party Discipline in Congress." *American Political Science Review*, 95.

Schickler, Eric and Andrew Rich. 1997. "Controlling the Floor: Parties as Procedural Coalitions in the House." *American Journal of Political Science*, 41: 1340-1375.

Stewart, Charles. 2012. *Analyzing Congress*, 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton: **Ch. 7**.

Thursday, March 28

PARTIES IN CONGRESS: PART II

Required Readings:

Clark, Jennifer Hayes. 2012. "Examining Parties as Procedural Cartels: Evidence from the U.S. States." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 37(4): 491-507.

Dynes, Adam M., and Andrew Reeves. 2018. "Who Benefits from the Party Organization? Evidence from Republican House Members' Attendance at Caucus Meetings." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 43 (2): 207–43. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12193.

Finocchiaro, Charles J. and David W. Rohde. 2008. "War for the Floor: Partisan Theory and Agenda Control in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 33(1): 35-61.

Jenkins, Jeffrey A., Michael H. Crespin, and Jamie L. Carson. 2005. "Parties as Procedural Coalitions in Congress: An Examination of Differing Career Tracks." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 30(3): 365.

Rubin, Ruth Bloch. 2017. *Building the Bloc: Intraparty Organization in the US Congress*. Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Steven S., Ian Ostrander, and Christopher M. Pope. 2013. "Majority Party Power and Procedural Motions in the U.S. Senate." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 38(2): 205-236.

Recommended Readings:

Aldrich, John. 2011. Why Parties? A Second Look. University of Chicago Press.

Bianco, William T. and Itai Sened. 2005. "Uncovering Evidence of Conditional Party Government: Reassessing Majority Party Influence in Congress and State Legislatures." *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 361.

Brady, David W. 1985. "A Reevaluation of Realignment in American Politics: Evidence From the House of Representatives," *American Political Science Review*, 79.

Cooper, Joseph and David Brady. 1981. "Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn," *American Political Science Review*, 75.

Cox, Gary and Mathew McCubbins. 1993. Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House. University of California Press.

Evans, C. Lawrence. 1991. *Leadership in Committee: A Comparative Analysis of Leadership Behavior in the United States Senate*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Jones, Charles O. 1968. "Joseph G. Cannon and Howard W. Smith: An Essay on the Limits of Leadership in the House of Representatives." *Journal of Politics*, 30.

Nelson, Garrison. 1977. "Partisan Patterns of House Leadership Change, 1789-1977," *American Political Science Review*, 71.

Rhode, David. 1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. University of Chicago Press.

Sinclair, Barbara. 1999. "Transformational Leader or Faithful Agent? Principal-Agent Theory and House Majority Party Leadership," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 24.

Smith, Steven S. 2000. "Positive Theories of Congressional Parties," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 25.

Smith, Steven. 2007. *Party Influence in Congress*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

PART II: ELECTIONS AND CANDIDATES

Thursday, April 4

CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

Required Readings:

Abramowitz, Alan I., Brad Alexander, and Matthew Gunning. 2006. "Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 68(1) 75-88.

Carson, Jamie L., Erik J. Engstrom, Jason M. Roberts. 2007. "Candidate Quality, the Personal Vote, and the Incumbency Advantage in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 101(2): 289.

Desmarais, Bruce A., Raymond J. La Raja, and Michael S. Kowal. 2015. "The Fates of Challengers in U.S. House Elections: The Role of Extended Party Networks in Supporting Candidates and Shaping Electoral Outcomes." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (1): 194–211. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12106.

Edwards, Barry, Michael Crespin, Ryan D. Williamson, and Maxwell Palmer. 2017. "Institutional Control of Redistricting and the Geography of Representation." *The Journal of Politics* 79 (2): 722–26. https://doi.org/10.1086/690633.

Erikson, Robert S. 2016. "Congressional Elections in Presidential Years: Presidential Coattails and Strategic Voting." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 41 (3): 551–74. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12127.

Friedman, John N., and Richard T. Holden. 2009. "The Rising Incumbent Reelection Rate: What's Gerrymandering Got to Do With It?" *The Journal of Politics*, 71(2): 593-611.

Hall, Andrew B., and Daniel M. Thompson. 2018. "Who Punishes Extremist Nominees? Candidate Ideology and Turning Out the Base in US Elections." *The American Political Science Review; Washington* 112 (3): 509–24. http://dx.doi.org.mutex.gmu.edu/10.1017/S0003055418000023.

Henderson, John A., Brian T. Hamel, and Aaron M. Goldzimer. 2018. "Gerrymandering Incumbency: Does Nonpartisan Redistricting Increase Electoral Competition?" *The Journal of Politics* 80 (3): 1011–16. https://doi.org/10.1086/697120.

Jacobson, Gary C., and Jamie L. Carson. 2015. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. Ninth edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Kanthak, Kristin, and Jonathan Woon. 2015. "Women Don't Run? Election Aversion and Candidate Entry." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (3): 595–612. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12158.

Recommended Readings:

Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, Jr. and Charles Stewart III. 2001. "Candidate positioning in U.S. House elections," *American Journal of Political Science*, 45: 136-59.

Cox, Gary and Jonathan Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *American Journal of Political Science*, 40.

Erikson, Robert and Thomas Palfrey. 1998. "Campaign Spending and Incumbency." *Journal of Politics*, vol. 60.

Erikson, Robert and Thomas Palfrey. 2000. "Equilibria in Campaign Spending Games: Theory and Data." *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 94.

Erikson, Robert. 1972. "Malapportionment, Gerrymandering, and party Fortunes in Congressional Elections." *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 66.

Ferejohn, John A. 1977. "On the Decline of Competition in Congressional Elections." *The American Political Science Review*, 71:1 (pp. 166-176).

Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections.* New Haven: Yale UP.

Fiorina, Morris. 1989. *Congress: Keystone to the Washington Establishment*. 2nd ed. New Have: Yale University Press.

Gerber, Alan. 1998. "Estimating the Effect of Campaign Spending on Senate Election Outcomes Using Instrumental Variables." *The American Political Science Review*, 92:2.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1978. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in Congressional Elections." *The American Political Science Review*, 72:2.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1987. "The Marginals Never Vanished: Incumbency and Competition in Elections to the U.S. House of Representatives, 1952-1982." *American Journal of Political Science*, 31:1.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review*, 83:3.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1990. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections: New Evidence for Old Arguments." *American Journal of Political Science*, 34:2.

Mayhew, David. 1974. "Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals." *Polity*, vol. 6.

Stewart, Charles. 2012. *Analyzing Congress*, 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton: **Ch. 4.**

Thursday, April 11   <mark>**Research paper literature review and research design DUE today**</mark>

ELECTORAL RAMIFICATIONS

Required Readings

Ansolabehere, Stephen and Philip Edwards Jones. 2010. "Constituents' Responses to Congressional Roll-Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(3): 583-597.

Kalla, Joshua L., and David E. Broockman. 2016. "Campaign Contributions Facilitate Access to Congressional Officials: A Randomized Field Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (3): 545–58. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12180.

La Raja, Raymond J., and Brian F. Schaffner. 2015. *Campaign Finance and Political Polarization: When Purists Prevail*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lewis, Daniel C. 2012. "Legislative Term Limits and Fiscal Policy Performance." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 37(2): 305-328.

Martin, Paul S. and Michele P. Claibourn. 2013. "Citizen Participation and Congressional Responsiveness: New Evidence that Participation Matters." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 38(1): 59-81.

Recommended Readings:

Adler, E. Scott. 2002. *Why Congressional Reforms Fail: Reelection and the House Committee System*. University of Chicago Press.

Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale U.P.

Clausen, Aage. 1973. *How Congressmen Decide*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Cormack, Lindsey. 2016. "Extremity in Congress: Communications versus Votes." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 41 (3): 575–603. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12126.

Katz, Jonathan N. and Brian R. Sala. 1996. "Careerism, Committee Assignments, and the Electoral Connection." *American Political Science Review*, 90:1.

Kingdon, John W. 1989. *Congressmen's Voting Decisions*, 3rd ed. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lupia, Arthur and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1994. "Who Controls? Information and the Structure of Legislative Decision Making." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, XIX:3.

Thursday, April 18

POLARIZATION IN CONGRESS

Required Readings:

Harbridge, Laurel. 2015. *Is Bipartisanship Dead? : Policy Agreement and Agenda-Setting in the House of Representatives*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lawless, Jennifer L., Sean M. Theriault, and Samantha Guthrie. 2018. "Nice Girls? Sex, Collegiality, and Bipartisan Cooperation in the US Congress." *The Journal of Politics* 80 (4): 1268–82. https://doi.org/10.1086/698884.

Miller, Gary and Norman Schofield. 2003. "Activists and Partisan Realignment in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 92(2): 245.

Theriault, Sean M. 2008. *Party Polarization in Congress*. Cambridge ; Cambridge University Press.

Recommended Readings:

Bateman, David A., Joshua D. Clinton, and John S. Lapinski. 2017. "A House Divided? Roll Calls, Polarization, and Policy Differences in the U.S. House, 1877–2011." *American Journal of Political Science* 61 (3): 698–714. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12281.

Carson, Jamie L., Gregory Koger, Matthew J. Lebo, and Everett Young. 2010. "The Electoral Costs of Party Loyalty in Congress." *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(3): 598-616.

Lebo, Mattew J., Adam J. McGlynn, and Gregory Koger. 2007. "Strategic Party Government: Party Influence in Congress, 1789-2000." *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(3): 464-481.

Lee, Frances. 2009. *Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles, and Partisanship in the U. S. Senate*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. **Ch. 1**

Bartels, Larry M. 2008. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton UP.

Gelman, Andrew. 2010. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why American Vote the Way They Do.* Princeton UP.

Jones, David R. 2010. "Partisan Polarization and Congressional Accountability in House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(2): 323-337.

Lazarus, Jeffrey. 2010. "Giving the People What They Want? The Distribution of Earmarks in the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(2): 338-353.

McCarty, Nolan, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2006. *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. Boston, MA: MIT Press.

Patty, John W. 2008. "Equilibrium Party Government." *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(3): 636-655.

Sanders, Bailey. 2018. "Partisan Bridges to Bipartisanship: The Case of Contraceptive Coverage." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 43 (3): 521–46. https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12205.

PART III: REPRESENTATION AND CONSTITUENTS

Thursday, April 25
REPRESENTATION ISSUES: RACE, GENDER, AND...
Required Readings:

Anzia, Sarah F. and Christopher R. Berry. 2011. "The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect: Why Do Congresswomen Outperform Congressmen?" *American Journal of Political Science*, 55(3): 478-493.

Barreto, Matt A., Gary M. Segura, and Nathan D. Woods. 2004. "The Mobilizing Effect of Majority-Minority Districts on Latino Turnout." *American Political Science Review*, 98(1): 65-75.

Carson, Jamie L. Michael H. Crespin, Carrie P. Eaves, and Emily Wanless. 2011. "Constituency Congruency and Candidate Competition in U.S. House Elections." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 36(3): 461-482.

Fraga, Bernard L. 2016. "Candidates or Districts? Reevaluating the Role of Race in Voter Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (1): 97–122. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12172.

Griffin, John D. and Brian Newman. 2013. "Voting Power, Policy Representation, and Disparities in Voting's Rewards." *The Journal of Politics*, 75(1): 52-64.

Griffin, John D., Brian Newman, and Christina Wolbrecht. 2012. "A Gender Gap in Policy Representation in the U.S. Congress?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 37(1): 35-66.

Hayes, Danny and Seth C. McKee. 2012. "The Intersection of Redistricting, Race, and Participation." *American Journal of Political Science*, 56(1): 115-130.

Hutchings, Vincent L. Harwood K. McClerking and Guy-Uriel Charles. 2004. "Congressional Representation of Black Interests: Recognizing the Importance of Stability." *Journal of Politics* 66(2): 450-468.

O'Brien, Diana Z. and Johanna Rickne. 2016. "Gender Quotas and Women's Political Leadership." *The American Political Science Review; Washington* 110 (1): 112–26. http://dx.doi.org.mutex.gmu.edu/10.1017/S0003055415000611.

Schuit, Sophie, and Jon C. Rogowski. 2017. "Race, Representation, and the Voting Rights Act." *American Journal of Political Science* 61 (3): 513–26. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12284.

Swers, Michele L. 2013. *Women in the Club: Gender and Policy Making in the Senate*. Chicago ; University of Chicago Press. Chs. 1-3, 6.

Recommended Readings:

Cameron, Charles, David Epstein, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1996. "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substance Black Representation in Congress?'" *American Political Science Review*, 90: 794-812.

Cannon, David. 1999. *Race and Representation in Congress*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2012. "Does the Numerical Underrepresentation of the Working Class in Congress Matter?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 37(1): 5-34.

Carson, Jamie L. 2005. "Strategy, Selection and Candidate Competition in U.S. House and Senate Elections." *Journal of Politics* 67(1): 1-28.

Cox, Gary and Jonathan Katz. 2002. *Elbridge Gerry's Salamander*. Cambridge UP.

Durr, Robert H, John B Gilmour, and Christina Wolbrecht. 1997. "Explaining Congressional Approval." *American Journal of Political Science*, 41:1 (pp. 175-207).

Erikson, Robert S. 1978. "Constituency Opinion and Congressional Behavior: A Reexamination of the Miller-Stokes Representation Data." *American Journal of Political Science*, 22:3 (pp. 511-535).

Erikson, Robert S., Michael B. Mackuen, and James A. Stimson. 1998. "What Moves Macropartisanship? A Response to Green, Palmquist, and Schickler." *The American Political Science Review*, 92:4.

Fenno, Richard. 1978. *Homestyle*. New York: Little Brown.

Finocchiaro, Charles J., and Scott A. MacKenzie. 2018. "Making Washington Work: Legislative Entrepreneurship and the Personal Vote from the Gilded Age to the Great Depression." *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (1): 113–31. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12326.

Fowler, James. 2005. "Dynamic Responsiveness in the U.S. Senate." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): 29-312.

Griffin, John D. and Brian Newman. 2005. "Are Voters Better Represented?" *Journal of Politics* 67(4): 1206-1227.

Hibbing, John R. and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. 1995. *Congress as Public Enemy: Public Attitudes Toward American Political Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Hill, Kim Quaile and Patricia A. Hurley. 1999. "Dyadic Representation Reappraised." *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 45 (pp. 109-137).

Kanthak, Kristin and George A. Krause. 2010. "Valuing Diversity in Political Organizations: Gender and Token Minorities in the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(4): 839-854.

Ladam, Christina, Jeffrey J. Harden, and Jason H. Windett. 2018. "Prominent Role Models: High-Profile Female Politicians and the Emergence of Women as Candidates for Public Office." *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (2): 369–81. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12351.

Leighley Jan. E. and Jonathan Nagler. 2014. *Who Votes Now? Demographics, Issues, Inequality and Turnout in the United States*. Princeton UP.

Lublin, David. 1999. "Racial Redistricting and African-American Representation: A Critique of 'Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substance Black Representation in Congress?'" *American Political Science Review*, 93:1.

Miller, Warren E. and Donald E. Stokes. 1963. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 57.

Shotts, Kenneth W. 2003. "Does Racial Redistricting Cause Conservative Policy Outcomes? Policy Preferences of Southern Representatives in the 1980s and 1990s (in Research Notes)" *Journal of Politics*, 65(1): 216-226.

Stimson, James A. Michael B. Mackuen, Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *The American Political Science Review*. Vol. 89 (pp. 543-565).

Weissberg, Robert. 1978. "Collective vs. Dyadic Representation in Congress." *The American Political Science Review*, 72:2 (pp. 535-547).

Thursday, May 2

LOBBYING

Required Readings:

Box-Steffensmeier, Janet, Peter M. Radcliffe, and Brandon L. Bartels. 2005. "The Incidence and Timing of PAC Contributions to Incumbent U.S. House Members, 1993-94." *Lesigslative Studies Quarterly* 30(4): 549.

Drutman, Lee. 2015. *The Business of America Is Lobbying: How Corporations Became Politicized and Politics Became More Corporate*. 1 edition. Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Chs. 1-4, 10.

Esterling, Kevin. 2007. "Buying Expertise: Campaign Contributions and Attention to Policy Analysis in Congressional Committees." *American Political Science Review* 101(1): 93.

Fouirnaies, Alexander. 2018. "When Are Agenda Setters Valuable?" *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (1): 176–91. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12316.

Fouirnaies, Alexander, and Andrew B. Hall. 2018. "How Do Interest Groups Seek Access to Committees?" *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (1): 132–47. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12323.

Hall, Richard L. and Alan V. Deardorff. 2006. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* 100(1): 69-84.

Hojnacki, Marie and David C. Kimball. 1998. "The Who and How of Organizations' Lobbying Strategies in Committee." *Journal of Politics*, 61: 999-1024.

Hojnacki, Marie and David C. Kimball. 1998. "Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby in Congress." *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 92 (pp. 775-790).

McCrain, Joshua. 2018. "Revolving Door Lobbyists and the Value of Congressional Staff Connections." *The Journal of Politics* 80 (4): 1369–83. https://doi.org/10.1086/698931.

Recommended Readings:

Ainsworth, Scott and Itai Sened. 1993. "The Role of Lobbyists: Entrepreneurs with Two Audiences." *American Journal of Political Science*, 37:3 (pp. 834-866).

Ainsworth, Scott H. 1997. "The Role of Legislators in the Determination of Interest Group Influence." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, vol. 22 (pp. 517-534).

Ainsworth, Scott. 1993. "Regulating Lobbyists and Interest Group Influence." *The Journal of Politics*, 55:1 (pp. 41-56).

Austen-Smith, David and John Wright. 1994. "Counteractive Lobbying." *American Journal of Political Science*, (pp. 25-44).

Austen-Smith, David. 1993. "Information and Influence: Lobbying for Agendas and Votes." *American Journal of Political Science*, 37:3 (pp. 799-833).

Denzau, Arthur T. and Michael C. Munger. 1986. "Legislators and Interest Groups: How Unorganized Interests get Represented." *The American Political Science Review*, 80:1 (pp. 89-106).

Evans, Diana. 1996. "Before the Roll Call: Interest Group Lobbying and Public Policy Outcomes in House Committees." *Political Research Quarterly*, (pp. 287-304).

Hall, Richard L. and Frank L. Wayman. 1990. "Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees." *American Political Science Review*, 84: 797-820.

Schnakenberg, Keith E. 2017. "Informational Lobbying and Legislative Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 61 (1): 129–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12249.

Wright, John R. 1985. "PACS, Contributions, and Roll Calls: An Organizational Perspective," *American Political Science Review*, 79: 400-414.

Wright, John R. 1990. "Contributions, Lobbying, and Committee Voting in the U.S House of Representatives." *American Political Science Review*, 84:2 (pp. 417-438).

Wright, John. 1996. *Interest Groups & Congress: Lobbying, Contributions, and Influence*. Allyn and Bacon.

Thursday, May 9   **In-class presentations of research projects. <mark>Final paper DUE today.</mark>**

VIII.   Important Online Resources

CONGRESS

U.S. House	http://www.house.gov
U.S. Senate	http://www.senate.gov
Library of Congress	http://www.loc.gov
THOMAS- Legislative Information	http://congress.gov/
Federal Election Commission	http://www.fec.gov
Federal Digital System (congressional hearings, Federal Register, Congressional Record, etc.)	http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/
CRS Reports	http://opencrs.com/
Congressional Budget Office	http://www.cbo.gov/
Congressional ProQuest (formerly Lexis-Nexis)	http://congressional.proquest.com/profiles/gis/search/basic/basicsearch
Congressional Biographical Directory	http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp
Legistorm	http://www.legistorm.com/index/about.html
Lobbying Disclosure	http://sopr.senate.gov/

MoneyLine	http://moneyline.cq.com/pml/home.do
Center for Responsive Politics	http://www.opensecrets.org/
The Redistricting Game	http://www.redistrictinggame.com/index.php

REFERENCE/RESEARCH

APSA Citation Guide	http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA.html
Vote View (Poole & Rosenthal scores)	http://www.voteview.com
Congressional Bills Project	http://www.congressionalbills.org/

NEWS

CQ Weekly Report	http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/index.php
National Journal	http://nationaljournal.com/pubs/congressdaily/
Roll Call	http://www.rollcall.com/
Washington Post	http://www.washingtonpost.com/
The Hill	http://www.thehill.com/
New York Times	http://www.nytimes.com
Politico	http://www.politico.com/
C-SPAN	http://www.c-span.org/
NPR	http://www.npr.org/

Support for Student Learning via Assessments, Activities, and Feedback

The primary way that I support students' learning is by being engaging in the classroom. Students are more forgiving of challenging, tedious, or voluminous course content when they feel supported, entertained, and part of a collective. Through the use of interactive teaching strategies that help stimulate **curiosity**, students are better able to retain the **skills** and **knowledge** I try to pass along.

In the classroom, I do my very best to learn as many student names as possible. If the class has fewer than 25 students, I learn all their names within the first few class meetings, usually. In larger classes, I often don't learn all their names, but calling on students by name encourages participation and a sense of collectivity in the classroom. I will frequently call on a student by making eye contact, and saying, "Tell me your name again?" or "What letter does your name start with?" (to jog my memory).

One of the ways I keep students' attention is by using humor. I poke fun at politics, myself, typos on my slides, using rhyming games, or any other device that I think might get a cheap laugh from the students. On days when students seem particularly tired or disengaged, I double-down on these efforts. I will often play music at the beginning of class while everyone is getting settled to help foster an atmosphere of communal attention. I use my personality, for better or worse, and swallow all sense of self-doubt and pride, in an attempt to engage my students with one another and me. I sincerely believe that these efforts are part of my success as a teacher and help to explain any success I've had at bringing scholarship into the classroom. One can have very important things to share, but if you don't command attention, it will not get delivered; likewise, one can be a truly gifted entertainer, but with no meaningful content, it's just as empty as reality TV. The true magic happens when we can deliver meaningful, insightful, cutting-edge content with a delivery that demands attention, engages the senses, and stimulates the curious mind.

Assessments—Formal

In my classes I use several formal and informal means of assessment. Formal assessments include writing assignments, quizzes, exams, and problem sets. In this section I will briefly describe these and show how they intentionally contribute to developing **knowledge**, **skills**, and **curiosity**.

I use both short and long writing assignment to assess different **skills**. In GOV 490, the senior seminar on Political Polarization, I would "warm-up" the students at the beginning of each class with a short writing assignment. It was intended to be somewhat stream of consciousness, but also was directly connected to the assigned readings for the day. We would only spend 10 or 15 minutes on this activity, and it helped to keep the students accountable for the assigned readings (Figure 19). When I called time on the writing warm-up, I would collect the papers and redistribute them. No names were on the papers. I had assigned unique student numbers to each person. Students would then engage in peer review (Figure 20). They would use a rubric and provide comments and feedback on the writing, the content, and the ideas. I taught them to writing positive and constructive feedback for one another. There were about 20 students in the class and this daily activity helped to foster a bond among the students.

Engendering a sense of common connection in a classroom strongly contributes to my overall goals. Students are more willing to show courage to approach new material when they feel they are doing so as a group, rather than an individual. The sense of community in the classroom helps students to feel supported and opens them to more experiences and material. These attitudes help them access the **knowledge**, **skills**, and sense of **curiosity** I seek to generate.

GOV 490-005 PARTISAN POLARIZATION IN AMERICAN POLITICS
Fall 2017
Prof. Victor

STUDENT NUMBER _____
Reviewed by _____
Peer Score: _____
Final Score: _____

Ta-Nehisi Coates's book, *Between the World and Me*, is a letter to his 15-year-old son about the racial injustices that he has witnessed, and is likely to experience, in his lifetime. Coates is motivated to help his son develop awareness about inherent injustices in the world that are based on humans' physical attributes and seems to want his son to appreciate this fact, and to help him be prepared or armed when he is presented with them.

In the space below, do what Coates did: write a letter to a hypothetical teenage offspring of yours. Your letter should provide advice to your son or daughter (you choose) about a single imperative characteristic of humanity, politics, society, or life that you want your offspring to understand in order to keep them safe, or to help them navigate a successful and meaningful life path.

_____

_____

Figure 19 Sample Short Writing Assessment Tool

Grading Rubric

Category	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
SUBSTANCE			
The author provides a direct and coherent answer to the question(s)	2	0	1
The author draws on evidence and uses appropriate citations	2	1	0.5
The author makes connections between topics in the question and other theories, readings, or evidence in way that clarifies the author's point	2	1	0.5
STYLE			
The writing is clear, objective, easily understandable, and avoids personal opinion	2	1	0.5
Grammar & spelling	2	0	0

Total: _____

Figure 20 Sample Peer-review Rubric

As an example of a longer writing assessment tool, I turn to an assignment I use in GOV 300, the research methods course for undergraduates. The goal of this assignment is for students to produce a soup-to-nuts social piece of social science research. To facilitate this, the

research paper is scaffolded and submitted in 6 stages. A summary of the assignment is shown in Figure 21. At each stage, students are provided with feedback that they incorporate into their next submission. Final papers tend to be high quality products. I give students a longer (5 page) description of the assignment with detailed instructions that they can find on Blackboard.

Research Paper (25%). All students will write a research paper on a topic selected from a list of provided research questions. Final products will be 8 – 12 pages (excluding titles, bibliography, tables, graphs, notes). The paper will highlight the following skills: motivating a research question, stating a research question, reviewing literature on a question, developing testable hypotheses, describing the data, describing the statistical test, reporting the findings. In their papers, students are expected to showcase skills learned in class. The assignment will be scaffolded in the following way. Details and examples are available on Blackboard.
 Step 1: Paper introduction (state and motivate the research question; 1-2 paragraphs)
  (DUE: September 14) 5%
 Step 2: Annotated bibliography (6-12 sources) (DUE: September 28) 5%
 Step 3: Literature Review, Theory, and hypotheses (2-4 pages) (Due: October 19) 10%
 Step 4: Research design (2-3 pages) (Due: November 2) 10%
 Step 5: Empirical test and findings (2-3 pages) (DUE: November 20) 20%
 Step 6: Complete draft (8-12 pages) (DUE: December 6). 50%

Figure 21 Sample Long Writing Assessment (undergraduate)

In graduate courses, where I often have a mix of Master's and PhD students, I ask student to write weekly reactions to the assigned readings, but I give each level of student a different goal. Master's students are asked to write a 1-page white paper, which focuses on drawing out the most important top-line findings. PhD students are expected to write up to three pages that contextualizes the material and draws connections between readings. See Figure 22 for an example of the instructions. This is also an example of flexibility and growth, because I haven't always done this, but I find it works well.

Weekly Reaction Papers (40%). Each week each student must write a memo that provides a reaction to the week's readings. There are 14 class meetings, and each student must write 10 reaction memos (meaning you get 4 optional bye-weeks, to be selected at your choosing).

 MASTER'S STUDENTS: This memo must not be more than 250 words or longer than 1 page. Your goals is to summarize key research findings in a concise and expert format.

 PHD STUDENTS: This memo should contain 3-5 sentences on each assigned reading, as well as a paragraph that summarizes the state of the field on the topic.

Figure 22 Sample Differentiated Writing Assessments for Master's and PhD students

I also use quizzes to assess student learning. These are particularly useful in GOV 103, which often has more than 200 students enrolled. After each lecture, a "daily quiz" appears on Blackboard. Students must complete the quiz before midnight that day, and they cannot be made up. The quizzes help to reinforce the main take away points of the topics in lecture for the day, and often reference material from assigned readings. In Figure 23 I show a sample of a Daily Quiz question. Daily quizzes are typically short (3-5 questions) and there will usually be about 24 quizzes in a semester. The quizzes score automatically in Blackboard, provide students with immediate feedback and corrections if they make an incorrect answer, and are automatically incorporated into their course grade in a transparent way.


Figure 23 Sample Daily Quiz Assessment Tool (GOV 103)

In GOV 300, Research Methods, I use a different type of Daily Quiz. I will start class with a warm-up activity that reinforces concepts we learned in the previous class. The activity is open-book, open-note, and can be done collaboratively. It's not intended to be a quiz, but they do help me assess how student are picking up the material and where they might be struggling. Figure 24 shows an example of one such Daily Quiz.

GOV 300-001
Prof. Victor
Social Science Research Design and Analysis
Daily Quiz 18, November 1, 2018

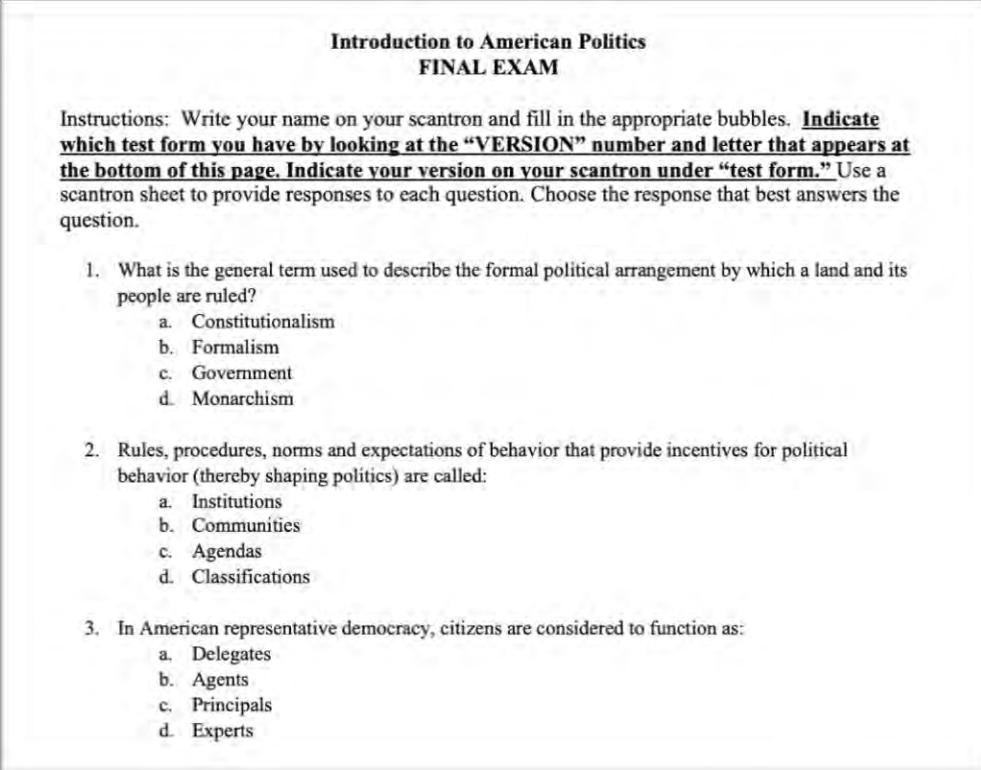NAME:_____

G#: _____

$y = 65.15 + 0.385x + e$
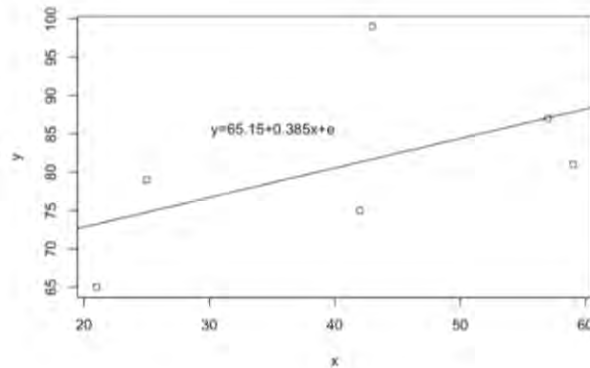
1. What are the general properties of a regression line (name all five)?

2. According to the regression line above, our analysis tells us that for each additional year older a person gets, they become _____ units more extreme in their political views. Somewhat nonsensically, we also know that when age is _____ , political extremism is _____.

3. What is the predicted value of political extremism for someone who is 22 years old?

Figure 24 Sample Daily Quiz Assessment for GOV 300

I also use traditional exams to assess students. In GOV 103, where there are often 200 students or more, I get one teaching assistant and there are no recitation sections. This is not an ideal set up, so I reluctantly use multiple choice exams in this class. The workload is unmanageable otherwise. In smaller courses, I write my own exams, typically using a combination of multiple choice, short answer, short essay, definitions, and such. I provide students with review guides and often run study sessions outside of class to help students prepare for exams. I emphasize that if they keep up with their readings, then studying for

exams is much easier. Figure 25 shows an example of multiple choice final exam (100

questions) that I use in GOV 103 (displaying only first 3 questions).

Introduction to American Politics
FINAL EXAM

Instructions: Write your name on your scantron and fill in the appropriate bubbles. **Indicate which test form you have by looking at the "VERSION" number and letter that appears at the bottom of this page. Indicate your version on your scantron under "test form."** Use a scantron sheet to provide responses to each question. Choose the response that best answers the question.

1. What is the general term used to describe the formal political arrangement by which a land and its people are ruled?
   a. Constitutionalism
   b. Formalism
   c. Government
   d. Monarchism

2. Rules, procedures, norms and expectations of behavior that provide incentives for political behavior (thereby shaping politics) are called:
   a. Institutions
   b. Communities
   c. Agendas
   d. Classifications

3. In American representative democracy, citizens are considered to function as:
   a. Delegates
   b. Agents
   c. Principals
   d. Experts

Figure 25 Sample Multiple Choice Final Exam --GOV 103

In methods classes, I also use problem sets to assess student learning. These are

typically assignment that I adopt and adapt from other instructors, or develop myself, that

include having students write a bit of computer code, analyze some data, or perform some task

that demonstrates their **skills**. Sometimes these assignments are long. Figure 26 shows an

excerpt from on that I used within the last year. My teaching assistant and I provide

considerable support outside the classroom (via office hours, Blackboard, email, etc.) as

students work through these problem sets. They submit their final code and the products the

code produces on Blackboard.

> **Government 300 - 003 (CRN: 20543)**
>
> **Social Science Research Methods**
>
> **Homework 2**
>
> This assignment must be submitted through Blackboard by 11:59 pm on Thursday, March 1, 2018.
>
> In this assignment, you will identify a concept and use tools of descriptive statistics and visualization explore related data.
>
> Select **one** of the following prompts.
>
>   a) Variation in differences in levels of representativeness across state legislatures (STATES).
>
>   b) Variation in levels of democratization across countries (WORLD)
>
>   c) Americans' attitudes about abortion (GSS).
>
>   d) Variation in Americans' opinions about federal spending across different policy areas (NES).
>
> For your selected prompt, select **three** appropriate variables from the specified dataset provided by Pollock and Edwards. For each variable:
>
>   1. Report appropriate summary statistics for the variable (e.g., mean, median, mode, variance, range, frequency) (25 points)
>
>   2. Create a graph that describes the variance in the variable. (25 points per graph)
>
>   RULES:
>
>   - Each variable must be a different level of measurement. (*e.g.*, dichotomous,

Figure 26 Sample Problem Set Assessment

Assessments—Informal

In addition to formal assessments, I use some informal assessment of my students' engagement and learning. The primary informal assessment I use is to develop a sense of awareness about a classroom or the "vibe" coming from the students. In the classroom, or through various communications, I use my basic human intuition to read the room and asses how well students are engaged with the material I'm trying to convey. I've been known to have students stand up and stretch, play music, ask students to do breathing exercises, or digress for a few minutes, to help focus the room. Frankly, anything that I can do that provides a sense of connection or common experience between all the people in the space, helps to bring them together for focus and reception. Anyone who regularly spends time presenting in front of

others develops intuitions through reading body language and observing reactions that help. I regularly assess my students' reception of delivered material through classroom observation and interaction.

I also informally assess student learning and engagement by noticing how many questions they ask. When no questions are asked, I do not assume that means I've done my job well. I assume it means I need to improve. One of my primary responsibilities is to spark **curiosity** in my students, and to help them make connections between lessons that I provide and other topics they've learned about from me or elsewhere. If there are no questions, then I've failed to spark **curiosity** or to help them make connections across topics. This also plays out into student communication. If they never email me or visit me in office hours, then I haven't really reached them. I do not expect to see them often or get emails everyday—that would present a different kind of concern—but I expect some communication that provides some information about what's been successfully received and what hasn't.

One of the challenges in every classroom is **imbalance in participation**. Regardless of the total number of students in attendance, it seems like it's always the case that about 10-15% of the class regularly participates, the rest does not. While some handful of regular participants is helpful, it's typically the case that those frequent hand-raisers are a random distribution of students. In fact, in nearly all my classes, it seems that white males raise their hands more than women or students of color. I have never collected systematic data, so I do not know for sure if this is the case, but I am aware and have some concerns about the diversity of voices that are expressed in my classroom. Sometimes, when it becomes very apparent to me that the women or people of color have not spoken in a while, I will take steps to rectify the pattern. Often, I find that gently providing self-awareness can help encourage a different pattern of participants. One time in an undergraduate congress class, I said aloud that it seemed like no women had spoken in a while and so I wasn't going to make any demands on anyone, I was just going to keep a tally. So I wrote male and female symbols on the board. Each time a man spoke, I made a hash mark under the male symbol. Each time a woman spoke, I made a hash mark under the female symbol. It is still the case that more men spoke than women, but some new volunteers spoke up, and a collective awareness was raised about the distribution of voices, which I think

was helpful. Another time, in a large lecture class, I simply noted that only men had spoken all day and that I would only call on women for the next three volunteers. The discrimination startled the students some, but it did contrive a different set of voice to be raised. At other moments, I've simply refused to call on anyone who had already spoken that day. I once ran an entire class session with the rule that I would only call on people who had never before participated in class. This type of forced participation seems somewhat draconian at times, and I do not do it often, but I like the way it forces students to think about the distribution of the perspectives of voices that are often raised, and those that are not. There's no question in my mind that this distribution affects the narrative that can come out of class discussion, even with expert guidance. Any class on American politics will, either at one point or constantly, deal with issues of racial and gender (and other forms of) injustice. It's built into the fabric and history of America. I do not ignore these in the classroom; rather, I discuss them and use them as opportunities to raise awareness about our own classroom and tie these issues to topics of civil rights, social justice, and public policy. Awareness of these issues in the classroom is a part of my regular system of self and student assessment.

The following direct quotes from anonymous students who left comments on Mason teaching evaluations support the case for providing support for student learning.

> "There are almost 200 kids in this class, but the way she instructs the class, you almost forget you are in a lecture hall."
> –GOV 103, fall 2016

> "I liked how approachable and respectful Professor Victor is. If I ever wanted to share or ask anything, I knew I was encouraged to do so."
> –GOV 103, fall 2016

> "She was involved; you could tell she loves what she teaches and aims to want students to like it. The way the class was set up was great. Was a friendly environment."
> –GOV 103, fall 2016

"I absolutely loved this course and Professor Victor made me enjoy American politics more than usual. The lecture styled lessons really work for this kind of class and she makes the course fun"
–GOV 103, fall 2016

"She was involved; you could tell she loves what she teaches and seems to want students to like it. The way the class was set up was great. Was a friendly environment"
–GOV 103, fall 2016

"Professor Victor's 'What's Happening in Politics?' engaged students to talk and debate. Her lectures were very interesting and enjoyable."
–GOV 103, fall 2015

"'What's Happening in Politics?' was incredibly insightful and educational. Very good way of discussing current events. Professor Victor's personal insights and knowledge was incredibly helpful."
–GOV 103, fall 2015

"Professor was phenomenal. Accessible and willing to meet and communicate with students."
–GOV 307, fall 2016

"Professor Victor offered a very stimulating and welcoming way to start class. Very innovative, clear and friendly."
–GOV 307, fall 2016

"Professor Victor was readily available and willing to help with any questions I brought to her. She actively engaged students in class and encouraged participation."
–GOV 307, fall 2016

"I thought it was a very interesting course. Professor Victor is always great at teaching material and giving students the opportunity to be engaged and learn from hands on simulations and examples in class."
–GOV 319, spring 2017

"Plenty of office hours and open availability for questions and one on one helping was extremely helpful."
–GOV 319, spring 2017

"She is responsive and genuinely invested in the education of her students"
–GOV 490, fall 2017

"I like that you made it interactive, and you did well coming up with activities and examples on the spot. Feedback on homework was always quick and helpful. You made a late night class lively, which is a rare talent! You were also very accessible which I appreciated."
–GOV 500 spring 2016

"I thought the material was balanced, comprehensive, and intellectually stimulating. The professor is incredibility intelligent and firmly grounded in the material. Professor Victor is also extremely personable and helped foster an enjoyable, yet challenging classroom environment. Despite personal challenges, I was never opposed to coming to class. I enjoyed this class!"
–GOV604, spring 2014

Activities

I enjoy the challenge of developing meaningful activities for college students that contribute to **knowledge**, **skill** development, or sparking **curiosity**. Occasionally, I will do this on the fly, where inspiration strikes in the middle of a session or while talking with a student in my office, and I'll go on a tangent, or display an interactive website, or run a quick survey experiment among the students present. Sometimes these work out, and sometimes they don't. But they help with student engagement, and even when they fail, I can explain the principles that drive my expectations and we can discuss why it might not have gone the way I expected. Here I'll describe a two of key designed classroom activities that I've used that I think were quite effective. Both invoke the idea of teacher-scholar, because they combine an aspect of transferring **knowledge** to others, through a pedagogical exercise, that conveys some

researched based practice. They are the "contagion experiment" and the "Marbury v. Madison short play."

Contagion Experiment

In my political networks class, one of the concepts we work with is network flow where we study the pattern and rate of exchange that something has across a network. You can think of this as the contagion of a disease being passed through a community, or the passage of critical information through a legislature. There are specific properties of a network that describe the rate of contagion or flow on a network. The activity that I developed to explain contagion to my networks class is intended to demonstrate that when connections between actors are systematic—that is, there is some pattern to the connections—then things can flow more quickly through a network, compared to one where there is no pattern, no connections, no social network.

To demonstrate this, I developed an activity in which students participate in a two-period experiment. In both periods, the objective is to pass a note from one end of the room to the other. Figure 27 shows my notes on how to run the experiment. In brief, period 1 is random walk. Students can only pass a paper to other under particular conditions (physically proximate and has a first or last name that begins with the same letter). When I did this experiment in the classroom in 2017 it took 16 steps and about 10 minutes to get the note to its target. Period 2 is a structured social network. Students can pass the paper to someone they consider a friend or acquaintance. In period 2, it took 6 steps and two minutes for the note to reach its target. The experiment worked great and help demonstrate through physical activity the power of social networks. Information spreads more efficiently through social connections compared to a population that has random connections. The activity was fun, instructive, and transparently based on the theories and principles we were studying in class.

I. Demonstrate spread and connection
   a. Show that spreading something along the social network of the classroom is more efficient than a random walk.
   b. PERIOD 1: Control—random walk
      i. Have students randomly walk around the classroom. 2 minutes. Chatting fine. Keep moving.
      ii. Hand paper to one student. Choose a target on the other side of the room. Announce the target and the student's first/last name.
      iii. Initiator student can hand it to another student if they are physically proximate AND
         1. First or last name begins with same letter
         2. (try other random assignment conditions? Birthday in the same month? Gender?)
      iv. Can it reach the target? How many steps? The structure has been imposed.
      v. [*It took 16 steps and about 10 minutes to get the paper to its target.*]
   c. PERIOD 2: Experimental condition—social structure
      i. Have students randomly walk around the classroom. 2 minutes. Chatting fine. Keep moving.
      ii. Hand paper to one student. Choose a target on the other side of the room. Announce the target and the student's first/last name.
      iii. Student can hand it to another student if they are physically proximate AND
         1. would consider the other person a friend or acquaintance
         2. (try other condtions: Spoke to the person during the walking period OR Know the student's name OR communicated with one another outside of class)
      iv. Can it reach the target? How many steps?
      v. *REPORT: Took less than 2 minutes to reach the target and exactly 6-steps.* (could use this for 6-degrees of separation/small world lecture)
      vi. This structure is social. The research suggests that the flow of information/emotion/etc. will be more efficient on the social network.

Figure 27 Contagion Experiment Activity

Marbury v. Madison short play

One of the topics I cover in Introduction to American Politics (a Mason Core course, GOVT 103) is *judicial review*. In short, judicial review is the power of the United States Supreme Court to declare laws, or parts of laws, to be unconstitutional. It is the only court that has the power to declare constitutionality of laws and the power to do so does not exist in the constitution. The power was created through the act of legal precedence in the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, in 1803. This court case is foundational to American jurisprudence, and the details of the case are somewhat tricky and nuanced. A number of years ago when I was prepping a

lecture on the topic, I realized it would make a great short play because of the various strategic twists and turns that contribute to the outcome.[1]

The first several times I did this activity it was, well, awkward. The students were stiff, the script wasn't very clear, and it kind of flopped. But I didn't give up on it because it seemed like a good way to present this material. I kept revising the script and changing the format until, a couple of years ago, I did it for the probably the 8th or 9th time, and it worked like magic. The production was still of incredibly low value, but that's part of its charm. It's the type of activity you can only do in a large class, because you need at least a dozen player of the right attitude, and a decent audience to pull this off. I select volunteers at the start of the class, I select a director to help organize the students, and I send them outside to run through the script a few times. Then they perform it at the end of the class. The play shows how clever the actors were and how the Court's decision in the case created the power of judicial review by simply assuming the Court already had the power. The section below includes the script of the play.

<u>The Players:</u>
John Adams – outgoing president, Federalist
John Marshall – John Adams' Secretary of State, later Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
Thomas Jefferson – incoming president, Anti-Federalist
James Madison – Thomas Jefferson's Secretary of State
William Marbury – appointed to a judgeship by John Adams, waiting for his commission
Congress – passed the Judiciary Act of 1789

SCENE 1
Narrator: Our story begins in 1789, during the first Congress.

CONGRESS: The Constitution gives us the power to create the courts of the federal judicial system, and as part of that responsibility we have passed the Judiciary Act of 1789. Among other things, this Act gives the Supreme Court the ability to issue *writs of mandamus* – court orders that direct governmental officials to take a specific legal action. Nice work, everyone!

Narrator: Eleven years pass.

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[1] It's notable that I had this idea, and first did a play of *Mv.M* in 2005 when I was on the faculty at the University of Pittsburgh. So as far as I can tell, Lin Manuel Miranda got the idea of a historical play about America's political foundations from me (not the other way around).

SCENE 2
John Adams and Thomas Jefferson have a conversation.

John Adams: [to Thomas Jefferson] The election of 1800 is only days away, and as the sitting President I intend to defeat you, Mr. Jefferson. I beat you 4 years ago, and I'll do it again.

Thomas Jefferson: [to John Adams] Mr. Adams, the country has grown tired of your pro-British leanings. It is time for us to build a new republic, freed from the injustices of our past and independent of our overly strict political parents. You and your federalist allies will cede your power.

Narrator: The voting begins on Friday, October 31 and continues until Wednesday, December 3, 1800. Jefferson has won the popular vote, but the Electoral College now meets in Congress to cast their votes. Back then, Electors cast two votes: one for president and another intended to be for vice president. The candidate that receives the most votes becomes President. However, Thomas Jefferson and his running mate, Aaron Burr, tied the vote. In the case of a tie, the election goes to the House of Representatives.

CONGRESS: We've cast 35 different ballots and we also keep getting a tie! Finally, on our 36th attempt Jefferson received one more vote than Burr, and he is elected president, with Burr as the Vice President. The incumbent, John Adams, has lost.

Next, we'll pass the 12th Amendment to the constitution to fix this problem so it doesn't happen again. From now on, when Electors cast their votes for President and Vice-President, they'll do so for a single ticket. Presidential candidates must run as a slate with a Vice-President.

SCENE 3
John Adams, John Marshall, and William Marbury have a conversation.
John Adams: Well shoot. I thought we had him. I have only a few weeks before Jefferson becomes president, so I better make the most of them. I'm going to fill all those judicial vacancies that Congress created when it passed the Judiciary Act of 1789.

Narrator: But sir, if you pass those now, won't they be overturned by Jefferson?

John Adams: I'll sign them on midnight the day before Jefferson's inauguration if I have to.

Narrator: Okay, who are you going to appoint?

John Adams: Well, let's see. We're going to need a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

[to John Marshall] John, you're my Secretary of State and you've been great. How about it?

John Marshall: I'd be pleased to, John. It will be my honor to serve as Chief on the highest court.

John Adams: Great. Great. In addition, how about if we appoint ole' Will Marbury to be Justice of the Peace for the District of Columbia.

[to William Marbury] How about it, Will? Sounds like a cushy job, doesn't it?

William Marbury: That sounds great. What does a Justice of the Peace do, anyway?

John Adams: They keep peace, Will. Can you do that?

William Marbury: Sure I can. Sure I can.

John Marshall: [To John Adams] Mr. President, if you make these appointments at the 11th hour, how are we going to make sure the appointees take their new posts? I mean, what's to stop Thomas Jefferson from ignoring your appointments?

John Adams: Well, John, that's going to be up to you, old friend. Right now, you're the Secretary of State, right?

John Marshall: Yes, I am.

John Adams: Well, that means that it's your responsibility to deliver these commissions to my appointees. Do you think you can get a memo to yourself about making you Chief Justice of the Supreme Court? [Smiling]

John Marshall: I can do so, in a timely and efficient manner, sir.

John Adams: Good. Good. But there are a lot of these to get out. Do your best to get all these commissions to my judicial appointees *before* Jefferson is inaugurated. Who knows what those Democratic-Republicans have in store for us. Oh, and while you're at it, take all the letter "F's" off their keyboards so they can never properly write their President's name.

John Marshall: Sure. But…uh…what's a keyboard?

John Adams: never mind. Just make haste! Remember, if you don't get all those commissions delivered, then it will be up to whoever Jefferson appoints to Secretary of State to deliver them. We cannot trust that the appointments will happen under such circumstances.

John Marshall: I shall do my best.

SCENE 4
Thomas Jefferson and James Madison have a conversation.
Narrator: Meanwhile, on the other side of the political spectrum, there is a celebratory mood.

James Madison: Congratulations, Mr. President!

Thomas Jefferson: Why thank you, James. I'm pleased to have finally succeeded in my pursuit of this high office. While I have your attention, there's something important I'd like to ask you.

James Madison: Of course, sir. How can I be of service?

Thomas Jefferson: I'd like to ask you to serve as my Secretary of State.

James Madison: I'd be honored, sir.

SCENE 5
Narrator: After the inauguration, with Jefferson in the newly built White House and Madison serving as Secretary of State, James Madison makes a surprising discovery. He rushes to tell Jefferson about it.

James Madison: Good day, Mr. President.

Thomas Jefferson: Good day, Mr. Secretary. How can I help you?

James Madison: Mr. President, there is something you should know. On his way out of office, President Adams made several last minute judicial appointments.

Thomas Jefferson: Well, that's not too surprising. There were a number of vacancies in the judicial branch. I have no doubt that Adams sought to fill those before he left office.

James Madison: Indeed, sir. The Judiciary Act also says that it is the responsibility of the Secretary of State to deliver the commissions to the President's appointees.

Thomas Jefferson: Is that so?

James Madison: Yes, sir. However, John Marshal, my predecessor, was not able to deliver all of those commissions prior to your inauguration.

Thomas Jefferson: I see.

James Madison: Mr. President, I have no intention of delivering Mr. Adams' commissions.

Thomas Jefferson: No, of course not. Why should you? The posts remain vacant, officially, and I shall make my own appointments.

James Madison: Yes, sir. I quite agree.

SCENE 6
William Marbury and John Adams have a conversation.

William Marbury: John, I'm quite displeased!

John Adams: Well I can see that, Will. Try to calm down.

William Marbury: I know it was difficult for John Marshall to deliver all of those last minute commissions in a timely manner, but I'm quite annoyed that *I* was the one left out! He seemed to have no trouble making sure he took his post as Chief Justice!

John Adams: Well, let's not assume the worst, Will. It wasn't too hard for him to deliver a commission to himself. I quite regret that he didn't get yours to you in time.

William Marbury: James Madison has absolutely no intention in delivering that commission to me. But I feel we should compel him to. I have a legal right to my new job!

John Adams: Yes, I believe you do. I think we could prove it, too.

William Marbury: Yes, I think we can.

John Adams: In fact, The Judiciary Act gives us the appropriate tools. I recall that the Supreme Court has the power to issue a *writ of mandamus*. Using this writ, we can ask to Court to compel James Madison to deliver your commission.

William Marbury: Yes, that's a brilliant strategy. It's Congress that has given the Supreme Court this power, in the Judiciary Act. This separation of powers thing is working in our favor here. Congress gives the Court a power to compel the Executive to do its job.

John Adams: What we need to do, is to bring a law suit again James Madison. In the suit, you should sue him for not delivering your commission. Request that the Court issue a *writ of mandamus* to compel him to finally give you your rightful job.

SCENE 7
At the Supreme Court. Chief Justice John Marshall speaks to James Madison and William Marbury.

Narrator: Before going to deliver his decision to Marbury and Madison, Chief Justice John Marshall does some deep thinking, out loud.

JOHN MARSHALL: This is a difficult situation for me. On the one hand, Congress has given the Court the power to issue a *writ of mandamus*. If I consider the Judiciary Act to be constitutional, then the issuing of this *writ* must also be constitutional.

However, if I declare these constitutional and force Madison to deliver the commission, what would happen if Jefferson and Madison ignore the order?

Could this cause a constitutional crisis? Or could it perhaps undermine the authority of the Court and show that the Executive branch is more powerful than the Judicial branch?

On the other hand, if I do not force Madison to deliver the commission, I risk a political crisis by jeopardizing the long standing relationship of trust I've built with John Adams.

I think I know what I'm going to do.

Narrator: John Marshall goes to speak with Marbury and Madison.

John Marshall: Gentlemen. There are two separate legal questions at hand in this case.

First, does Marbury have a right to his commission or did it expire since it was undelivered when the new president took office?

And second, does the Supreme Court have the ability to order the president and secretary of state to deliver a commission using the *writ of mandamus*?

On the first question, there's no doubt that Marbury has a right to the commission. The appointment was legal and sound. Mr. Marbury, you absolutely have a right to your appointment as Justice of the Peace.

William Marbury: All right! I knew we would win this thing!

John Marshall: The second question, though, is a little more complicated. Congress gave the Judiciary the power to issue a *writ of mandamus* in the Judiciary Act of 1789; however, this stands in conflict with the Constitution. Article 3 of the Constitution does not list petitions for *writs of mandamus* as a part of the Court's power.

A law passed by Congress, and signed by the President, cannot supersede the Constitution. Since these two stand in conflict with one another, the constitution must prevail. Unless Congress wants to amend the Constitution, Congress does not have the power to define the Court's original jurisdiction by law.

Therefore, I must declare that the section of the Judiciary Act of 1789, in which Congress gave the Court the power to issue *writs of mandamus*, is <u>unconstitutional</u>. I am not declaring the whole Act to be unconstitutional, just this one provision that is inconsistent with the Constitution.

William Marbury: Oh no.

James Madison: I see where you're going with this.

John Marshall: The court does not have the power to compel anyone, through a *writ of mandamus*, to deliver a commission. I'm sorry Will. Even though you

have a legal right to your job, it is not within my power to compel Mr. Madison to give it to you.

William Marbury: But wait, John. You're the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court! You mean to tell me there is something over which you do not have power? Come on!

John Marshall: Indeed, Will. I have no more power than the Constitution gives me. Congress was wrong to write a law that gives the Court a power that the constitution did not intend.

James Madison: Ahh. Yes. You're very clever, Mr. Marshall.

John Marshall: Why thank you, Mr. Madison. What is your meaning?

James Madison: You want me to believe that you are somehow restricting your powers? [*With skepticism or sarcasm:*] Your hands are tied, are they? Congress was wrong to try to give you more power, was it? You'd like me to think that you're being magnanimous, humble even. Wouldn't you? I can see right through your hubris, Mr. Chief Justice.

John Marshall: And how is that?

James Madison: Sure. You've restricted the Court's powers. Your decision in this case gives Congress a minor reprimand for trying to give the Court a power that was not in the Constitution. But it's a slap on the wrist.

John Marshall: How can you be so sure?

James Madison: Because what you've really done here is *interpret the constitution*.

John Marshall: [Naively:] Oh, have I?

James Madison: You have. You may be limiting the Supreme Court's power in the short run. Sure. With this decision you do not have the power to issue *writs of mandamus*. But what you really have in this decision is a MUCH bigger power.

John Marshall: And what is that?

James Madison: Don't be so coy. You've established the power of Judicial review.

John Marshall: I suppose I have, haven't I?

James Madison: By offering us an interpretation of the constitution, the very act of declaring a section of the Judiciary Act of 1789 unconstitutional, sets a legal precedent that the Supreme Court has the power to A.) interpret the constitution and B.) declare entire laws, or sections of laws, unconstitutional.

John Marshall: What makes you think that the Court will use this power again?

James Madison: I have a hunch. Oh, and I'd like to point out, that the power of Judicial Review is *also NOT* in the constitution. You just created it. Simply by doing it.

John Marshall: And what are you going to do about it?

James Madison: Absolutely nothing. I got what I wanted out of this. I do not have to issue any of those darn commissions that Adams made on his way out the door.

William Marbury: I'd like to be mad about not getting my commission, but your ruling says that I have a right to it, so I don't have a legal leg to stand on. It's hard to argue with your ruling.

John Marshall: Indeed!

- END -

Students show appreciation for the types of activities that I use:

"The in-class activities were helpful and a great way to boost our grade.
Professor Victor was enthusiastic and passionate- great professor!"
-GOV 103, fall 2015

Feedback

Providing students with constructive feedback is an important part of the pedagogical process. It's also important to help students learn how to receive feedback, and how to give it. When my students submit writing assignments, I provide in-line comments on their work. Figure 28 shows a somewhat representative example of this. I tend to use comment tools in software, such as those available in Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat, Blackboard. I aim to keep my comments positive and constructive, so that students have some idea how they might respond or improve, if they were to rewrite the material. My habit is to provide some comments and corrections throughout a piece, and then to provide a longer comment at the end. The summary comment usually starts with something specific and positive about the paper. I do this because it is very important for a reader to be receptive to comments. Starting with something positive puts them, hopefully, in a frame of mind that allows them to be open

to critique because I've already told them something that I like about what they've done. I try to make comments specific so that students understand exactly what they need to do to improve.
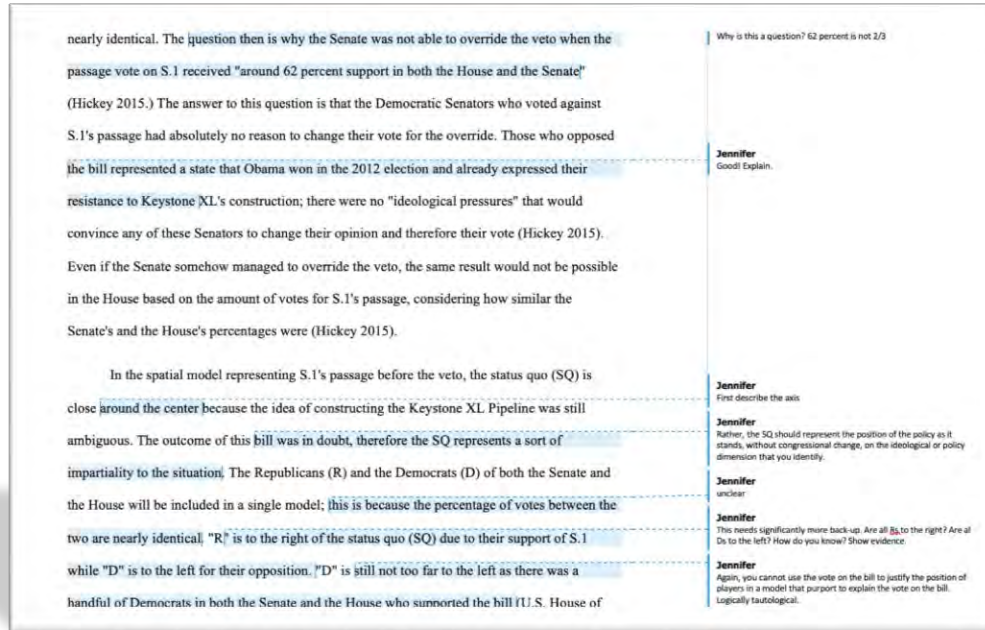

Figure 28 Sample Instructor Feedback to Student on Writing Assignment

Students show appreciation for the feedback I provide in their comments on teaching evaluations:

> "Dr. Victor went to great lengths to make everything clear and understandable. Her comments on our writings were also invaluable for furthering my writing skills"
> –GOV 510, fall 2014

> "This professor really helped improve the overall quality of my graduate writing."
> –GOV 510, fall 2014

> "The specific feedback provided on each assignment was very helpful. This professor really helped improve the overall quality of my graduate writing."
> –GOV 510, fall 2015

I regularly provide verbal feedback to students in class and in office hours. As I try to teach in a Socratic, or at least a sort of call-and-response, type of way I constantly try to engage students in the classroom—regardless of the size of the class. Students who feel like they are delivering the material with me are more likely to retain information. My goal is not to tell them the information, but to ask questions in a directed way that leads them down the line of logic I want them to see. I sometimes use slides (e.g., Power Point) and often use the white board to enhance the interactivity, and to help summarize main points so they don't get lost in a discussion. During a class discussion, I provide constant feedback to the students who participate. When a student offers a contribution, I never dismiss it, always have a verbal affirmation of what they've said, and acknowledge their point. When the student is incorrect, I use gentle tones to correct them. For example, if I ask the class what the two forms of due process are in the US Constitution and a student responds that they are "procedural and content" (the correct answer would be "procedural and substantive"), I might say, "Johnny is really close. He's half right. Who can help him out?" In this way, I praise Johnny for his contribution and the part of his response that was correct, I gently indicate that it's not entirely correct, and I invite another student to be a part of the contribution. I have found that this type of response does not inhibit further responses from students like Johnny, and perhaps reduces the fear-factor of other students who might worry about providing an incorrect response. They can observe that it's okay to give an incorrect response. Learning is often about constant affirmation.

In my statistics classes, especially those where I've taught programming like R, students often need lots of encouragement and handholding. Many would give up on the first week, noting that they're not programmers, they didn't get into political science to do math, and they have no desire to learn it. I recognize these attitudes and can often sense the trepidation among the students, a majority of whom may hold this attitude. I therefore spend considerable time in this class playing cheerleader and trying to boost the confidence of students who are there to try. I frequently extoll the benefits and high payoff of developing programming **skills** and use lots of examples to show them how they might use the **skills** as they develop them. I will frequently do "live programming" sessions in class, so that students can see all the mistakes

that I make along the way. They need to know that it's okay to get stuck and frustrated—it's part of the learning process, and I'm right there with them.

Many of my pedagogical strategies, I'm just now realizing as I articulate all this, revolve around developing a sense of community and common purpose in the classroom. Helping students to bond with one another, and with me, in a pedagogical environment can help create trust and courage that will advance students' learning. The more they feel like we are in a room together to achieve something together, students will gain a sense of empowerment and participation in their education. They will, I hope, approach it as an active thing that they do with others, which I see as an essential part of learning. There is no better feeling in the classroom than one where the students feel as much like a researcher as I do. As stated in the goals of most of my syllabi, I want students to develop a sense of **curiosity** about politics and government, and their role in our world. Being curious requires a certain foundational level of **knowledge** and a sense of courage, because it has to be okay to fail. Creating a classroom environment in which it is okay to fail is key.

On the first day of GOV 300 last semester, I said the following two counter-intuitive and surprising things on the first day of class. They show how I incorporate feedback into learning. They were:

- "I want you to fail."
- "Do not read the textbook."

I told the students I wanted them to fail because learning to program in R is all about trying. If you're failing, then it means you're trying. If you never fail, it's either because you are not human or it's because you stopped trying. I told students that if they came to my office for help, I might ask them how many times they failed at the task they were stuck on, and then give effusive praise for the extent of their failures. Failing is a part of learning and I needed my students to know that my classroom is a safe place to fail, as long as they keep trying.

I also told them not to read the textbook because, again, learning is not passive, it's active. The textbook for that class includes snippets and examples of R programming incorporated into the substance of the text. My instructions were, "*Do no read the textbook; do the textbook.*" I wanted them to have the computer open while going through the text, and try

to replicate each thing that the author does. By "doing the textbook" and treating it as a tutorial rather than reading text, I encouraged the students to maintain a sense of active learning.

In addition, I find that giving counterintuitive advice makes it more memorable. In the same way that I use puns, music, humor, and silly personal anecdotes to punctuate my lectures, providing counterintuitive advice is more like to stick with the students and help them not just in my class, but in all their learning pursuits.

Identification and Measurement of Student Learning

The typical way an instructor learns how well her students have learned material is through assessments (e.g., exams, papers, quizzes), and I am no different. I certainly use these tools for the students' benefit and for my own. However, if I *really* wanted to know what students learned in a class or course, I would approach it like a good scientist and use an experiment. The most ethical way to do this would be to give students a pre-test, teach them the material, then give them a post test. While this approach would not have a control group (I suppose I could give the pre-test also to some students *not* in my class to accomplish that), I could compare the assessment at time *t* and at time *t+1*, and infer that difference were due to "learning." But I don't do this. Why? There are three reasons I have not tried to directly measure learning through a controlled experiment, using my teaching as a treatment: it's not about me, it's counterproductive, and it's likely to be biased.

First, I don't pre-test, teach, and post-test because doing so would not particularly serve students. If I did such a thing, it would be almost entirely for my own benefit. There may be an argument to made about how improving one's teaching strategies in response to learning about how students are learning is a way to improve the educational experience of *future* students, but for me, it feels too self-serving to use my students' classroom time that way.

Second, one of my main goals at the beginning of a class is to set a tone of collectivity, **curiosity**, and self-confidence. I want students to want to be there and to be as excited as I am about going down a road of exploration together. Giving them a quiz on the first day that proves to them how little they know about the topic would be not just counterproductive, but also mean. I'm not there to tear students down or prove to them that I know more than they do. I'm there to spark ideas and encourage them to run with it. The last thing I want to do is to deflate their confidence on the first day.

Finally, traditional assessments like exams are almost always biased. As much as I may try to make the fairest, most balanced assessments I can, I am aware that I am a white, middle class, cis-gendered, heterosexual, female, and that these personal characteristics get reflected in the things I write. It would be reasonable to think that students who don't share my personal

characteristics or background might not always understand my examples. Even when I attempt to have complete awareness to my identity and the ways that it might affect my teaching, I know that it's impossible for me to know all the ways this might enter the classroom, particularly an assessment. Standardized exams, like the SAT, have been shown to have biases towards whites, for example, and while I aim to create the most accessible material for all students, I know that I am what I am, and it will come through. I therefore, try to create situations where students feel welcome, safe, heard, and that they can relate to the material presented to them. Learning cannot happen without this. I fear that using pre- and post-tests to evaluate learning, might get in the way of these goals.

How do I know they learned?

It sounds simple, but the primary way I know whether or not my students are learning is to ask them. When my classroom has a sense of trust and honesty, students will trust that I am asking them because I want to know, not because I want to judge them, and they will provide honest answers. The best technique I have for doing this is one that I saw demonstrated in an elementary school once. I was in a classroom of third-graders as an observer and the teacher was doing a lesson on division. At one point, the teacher paused the chalkboard lesson, looked at the students and said, "Raise your hand if you understand this." I thought it was brilliant. It simultaneous accomplished several things:

- It gave the students who understood the lesson a chance to indicate their confidence creating a positive sense of pride.
- It allowed the teacher to provide praise to students who learned.
- It allowed the teacher to identify the students whose hand were not raised, so the instructional attention could be moved to those who didn't grasp the concept yet.
- For the students who did not understand the lesson, they did not have to say so, or do anything to communicate that they needed help.
- It created a sense of community and common experience for the students by providing an opportunity to recognize that they all had just collectively participated in the same

experience. The common experience contributes to learning by engendering trust, which can promote bravery, which is the essential space for learning because you have to brave enough to try.

I have incorporated this strategy into my classroom regularly. I never ask students who *do not* get something to raise their hands (which might be the natural way to do it), rather I ask those who do get it to do so. If all hands go up, we move on. If not all the hands go up I take different tacks, depending on what the lesson is and how class time is structured. My favorite response to seeing not every hand raised is to turn the students into teachers. I can follow it with, "If you're sitting next to someone whose hand is not raised, turn and explain it to them." By asking the students to become teachers I help the students who already think they understand the lesson by forcing them to articulate it, which reinforces it and aids retention. For the students who still need help, they gain the benefit of hearing someone other than me explain it in their own words, which is sometimes just the trick to unlocking their understanding.

The following are direct quotes from students who left commentary on teaching Mason teaching evaluations:

> "Overall, the superb teaching of Professor Victor helped me learn the content. It's safe to say that she has exceeded expectations and has done a masterful job teaching."
> – GOV 103, Fall 2015

> "I learned a lot about the American Government I didn't previously know. Intellectually stimulating and challenging."
> –GOV 103, fall 2015

> "Doing 'What's Happening in Politics' actually helped several students retain the information taught in class. It also lets the class apply the concepts we learned to real life events! Your PowerPoints were very straightforward and doing the in-class activities were a huge help for the exams! Overall, you were an amazing professor and I'm glad I chose this class!"
> –GOV 103, fall 2015

"The Professor is extremely respectful and respected and also very interactive which helped me learn."
–GOV 103, fall 2015

"I understand Politics on a whole new level."
–GOV 103, fall 2015

"Her vast knowledge of government and politics helped tremendously, talking about current events in politics was very helpful."
–GOV103, fall 2015

"Professor Victor was incredible and her realistic approach and enthusiasm for both stats and R really motivated me to learn the material and apply it to my career goals. I wish my teachers and professors in high school and early college who taught stats taught it like Professor Victor. She made otherwise difficult concepts extremely easy to understand."
–GOV 300, spring 2018

"I loved how this course emphasized both learning the course material and things outside of the class that may not seem directly linked to network politics. Professor Victor took this outside material and used it to make typically complex network concepts more accessible and easier to learn."
–GOV 319 spring 2017

"Professor Victor is very attentive to students' collective needs and earns the respect of her students."
–GOV 319, spring 2017

"Writing the research paper really helped me understand how a proper paper should be written."
–GOV 490, spring 2017

"The Professor was very helpful and explained tough concepts very well. One of the best graduate level professors I have had...I feel like I learned a lot and grew intellectually as a critical thinker after taking this course with her."

–GOV 500, spring 2016

"I really enjoyed the reaction papers and I personally learned a lot by writing the research design paper…This class is the best class I took all semester and Professor Victor is an asset to George Mason and to students."
–GOV 510, spring 2015

"I struggled with digesting the material at first, but the consistent approach helped me get it eventually. I am glad I took this class as my first Pol. Sci course"
–GOV 510, fall 2015

High expectations, low rigidity

Communication with students is the key to gaining a sense how much they are learning. To foster and encourage communication, my approach is to maintain a sense of high expectations, but low rigidity. I keep my expectations high regarding how much time investment I expect students to make and how far I am willing to push them through the course of a semester. On the first day of class when I set the tone, I make it clear that my classes are challenging, but that I don't set it out that way as a means of control, or torture, or to intimidate them into dropping the course; rather, my intention is to share with them my enthusiasm and **curiosity** about the topic and to engender a similar attitude in them. However, when expectations are high, sometimes students cannot meet them. They may face challenges in their life that make it impossible to put in the required time to study and prepare outside of class. They may carry too many credits. They may have family commitments. They often have jobs and other obligations outside of school. I am sensitive to these and expect students to come and talk with me when they can't meet the expectations that I've laid out. Those who do, find that I tend to be exceedingly sympathetic. I'm sympathetic to the time commitments that coursework requires. I'm sympathetic to the variety of stresses that students are exposed to, and I'm sensitive to where they are in their human development as young adults who sometimes experience other life changes, transitions, or challenges that make it difficult to

succeed in school. When I learn about their challenges, I show incredible flexibility. I work with students on adjusting due dates, taking incompletes, taking a make-up exam, redoing an assignment, or any other creative solutions the student and I can develop in an attempt to make sure that the course is a successful learning experience for the student. This combination of high expectations and low rigidity would well to encourage students to communicate with me so that I can make appropriate adjustments for the learning needs.

Sometimes when students are worried about their grade in my course, they will come talk with me about it. I never make promises to students about their grades, but I engage in active listening to make it clear to them that I hear their concerns. I often discuss study strategies, and I also review their grades with them. I typically will tell them that when I calculate final course grades, I look at the whole trajectory of a student's performance. When a student's final grade is borderline, if the student showed remarkable improvement over the course of the semester, I will bump their grade to the higher level. A student whose performance declines over the semester, may not get that benefit of the doubt. In this way I show flexibility, sympathy, and provide some incentive for students to make adjustments that will improve their performance. My examining the trajectory of a student's scores over the course of a semester I can observe, to some extent, the learning that they experience. In addition, when a student bombs one assignment, and one low score is weighing down the course grade, I will sometimes work with the student to devalue the score, if it is truly an outlier. If a student was having a bad day during an exam, or was experiencing some external stress unrelated to the class, I will take this into account and provide a course score that reflects the totality of the student's experience. Treating students like responsible adults is key to eliciting their best efforts and cooperation.

As a final example of high expectations and little rigidity to foster communication and evaluate learning I bring up the example of bargaining with students. Particularly in classes that have many assignments to turn in, with many due dates, I will listen to students about their concerns. I have been known to allow students to engage in collective bargaining, of sorts. Sometimes students will halfheartedly, or jokingly, ask for an extension in a due date or a change in an assignment. Rather than treat these as non-serious, I will often use it as an

> *I find that if my principles and guidelines are clear, they can ask for whatever they want, and sometimes I'll be in a position to agree and sometimes I will not. It's not much different than taking my kids with me to Trader Joe's.*

opportunity to address the whole class about their feelings regarding due dates and assignments. Sometimes it is the case that I can adjust an assignment or a due date in a way that profoundly helps the students, and has a negligible impact on my workflow. In such cases, it's much better to show flexibility and give the students what they want. Showing a willingness to bargain, negotiate, and be flexible is a part of establishing healthy relationships between instructors and students, in my view. While it can open the door to students taking advantage of an instructor, I find that if my principles and guidelines are clear, they can ask for whatever they want, and sometimes I'll be in a position to agree and sometimes I will not. It's not much different than taking my kids with me to Trader Joe's.

Off-roading in the classroom

Identifying and measuring student learning requires attentiveness to their needs and thinking broadly about course goals. In a course on American politics, I have a rigid and detailed syllabus, but it's become increasingly common for me to need to veer off course in order to address some current event, student need, or relevant tertiary question raised by a student. Having some flexibility in the classroom and with daily curriculum is critical for ensuring that course content remains relevant to students and keeps them engaged.

In my view, taking a course off-course shows responsiveness to my goals of **knowledge** and **curiosity** because I do this in response to some immediate need or current event that cannot be anticipated. Allowing for this type of responsiveness demonstrates a commitment to student learning, and shows how I respond to their requests for more information on a topic. This creates a sense that the students and I are deployed on our learning adventure together, and also provides me the chance to demonstrate the teacher-scholar commitment in two possible ways. First, when responding to current events I often need to draw on theories, evidence, or findings that were not part of the original curriculum and this shows students how I am constantly thinking about how to use evidence from social science to understand the world. Second, sometimes when new findings have just been published, or I am aware that they are about to me, I can use an off-roading experience to help bring that cutting edge research into the classroom. Below are three such examples: the election of 2016, giving personal finance advice, and offering an extra-curricular programming workshop.

Example 1: Election 2106

When Donald J. Trump was elected president on November 8, 2016, many were shocked and rattled. Reporting suggests that even Donald Trump's team did not expect to win. Forecasts suggested he had a 20-30% chance of winning, yet he won. He had never held any elected office prior to being elected president. In many ways he was, and is, an unusual American president. Many people were baffled by the election outcome in 2016, and I wanted to step in to help fill in what gaps I could. First, I sat down and read analytical accounts of the election and thought about my own understanding of political theory, American politics, parties, campaigns, polling, and forecasting. I hastily put together a lecture called "Election 2016: What Happened?" and began tweeting it to the world (Figure 29). I had a planned lecture to my Introduction to American Politics class on Thursday, November 10, two days after the election, and I threw out the syllabus for the day and lectured about the election and its outcome. I answered student question, and invited the entire Mason community to join us for what I referred to a group "political therapy."
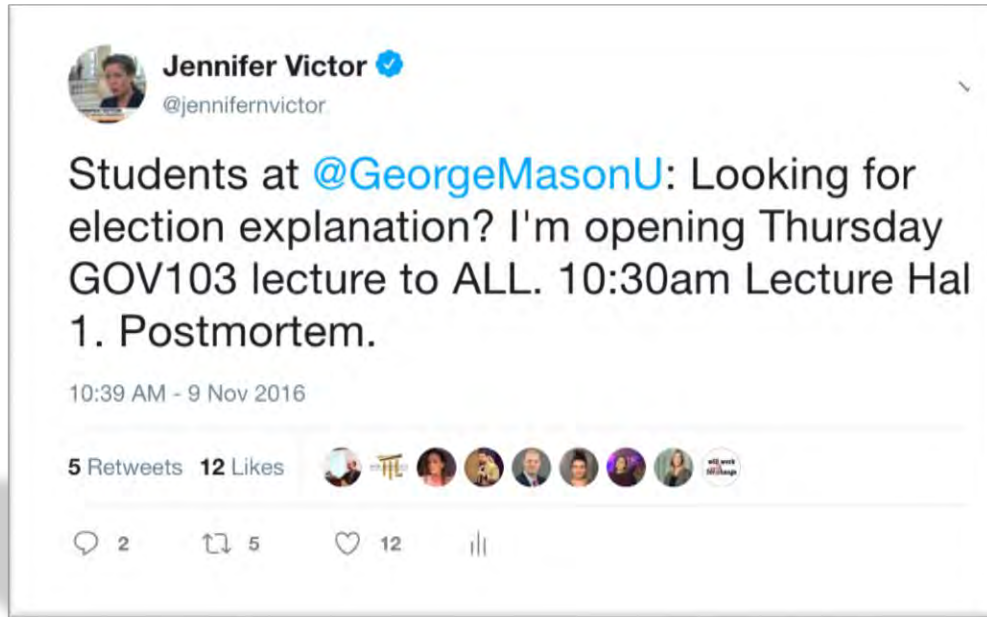
Figure 29 Tweet from Nov. 9, 2016 inviting Mason community into my class to dissect election results

Before long, word was getting around. The Mason publicity and news services department caught wind of what I was doing, opening my classroom, inviting everyone who wanted to attend a seat to learn about what political science could tell us about why the 2016 election outcome was so unexpected. Figure 30 shows a sample of the news item posted at gmu.edu about this event.
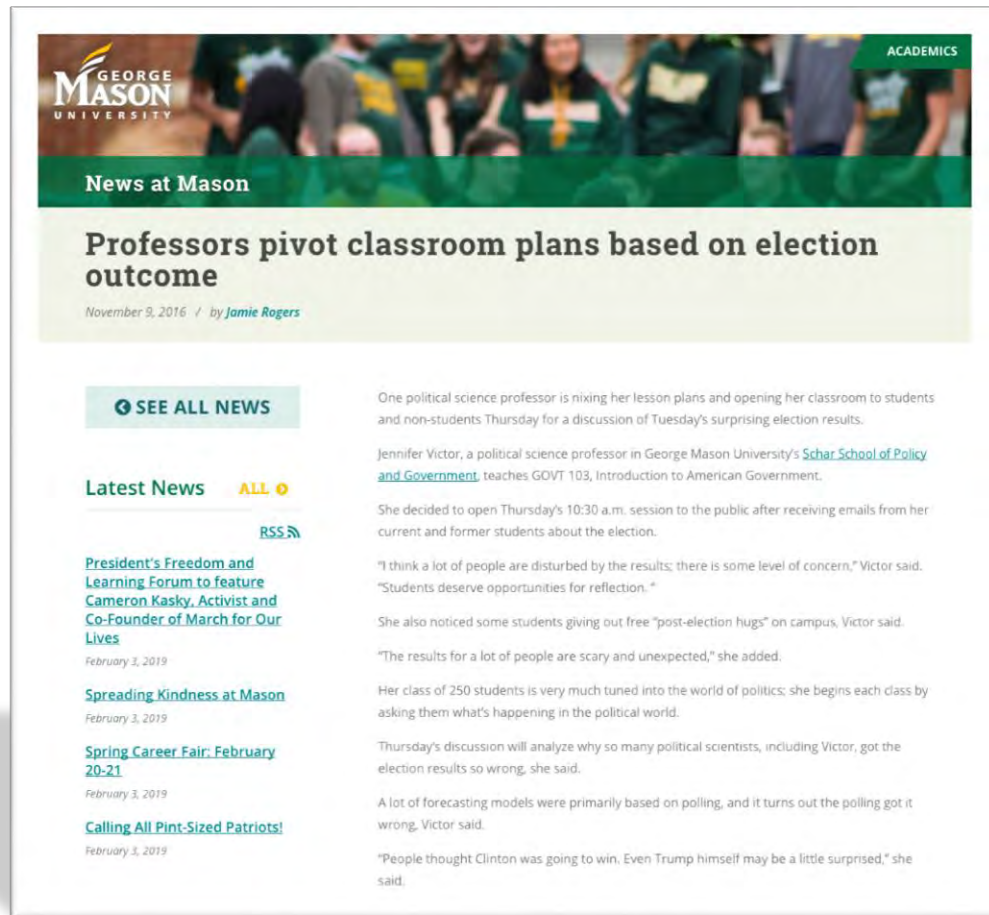
Figure 30 Mason news services publicly sharing open lecture on election outcomes

The lecture was attended by about 300 people, about 60-75% of those were the registered students in my class, the others were roommates, former students, and interested others who were looking for answers. A former student, Nathan Pittman (a GMU student body president) tweeted this picture of the lecture (Figure 31).
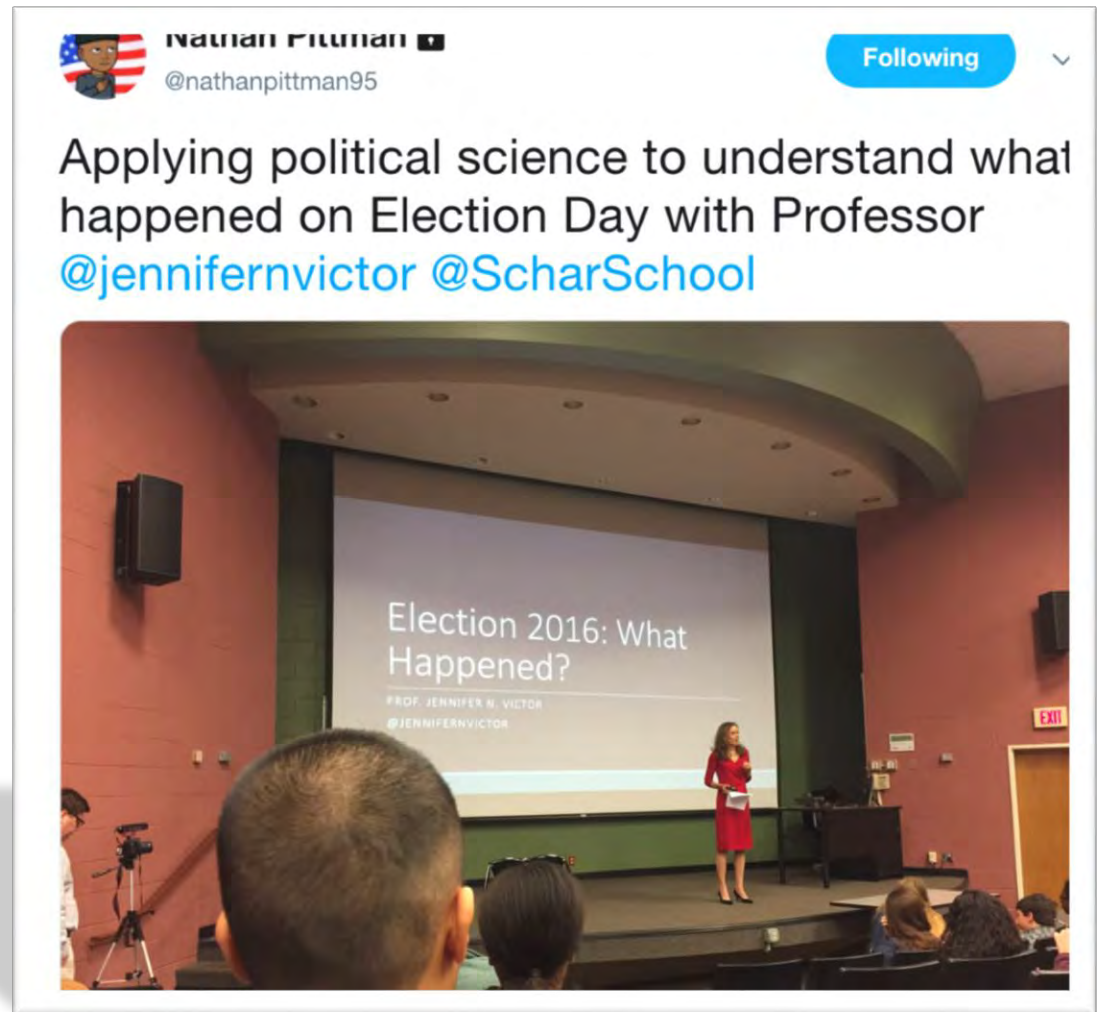
Figure 31 Tweet capturing Election 2016 postmortem lecture

The election lecture was very well received and I had the opportunity to give it to a few other audiences in the months that followed. I received no student complaints about this diversion from the syllabus; on the contrary, students seemed to genuinely appreciate my efforts to lean on empirical and theoretical underpinnings from a scientific literature to help explain a puzzling phenomenon.
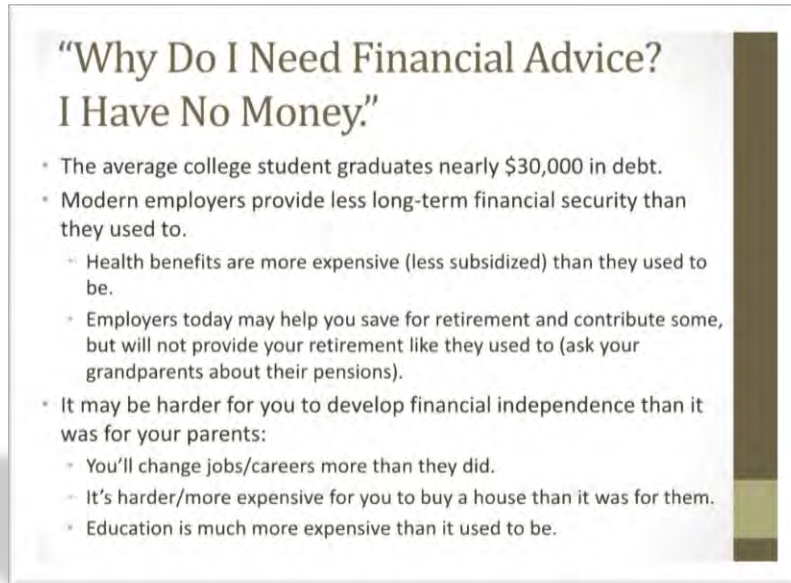
Example 2: Finance Tips

Teaching about politics and social science research methods can often lead a classroom discussion to veer to side topics. I generally maintain a sense of self-awareness about this, permit it where it's useful, and reign things back in when the tangent has gone on too long or

distracts from the main messages of the day. However, sometimes students ask questions that help me to see a real gap in their **knowledge** on a topic that I see as very important, but is not directly relevant to class. And sometimes I will digress. For example, when teaching students the basics of monetary and fiscal policy making in the united States, it's not uncommon to learn that students lack very basic understanding of personal finance. In addition, I'm acutely aware that most of my students are taking on huge amounts of financial debt to be in my classroom and to pursue their degrees. I therefore have a 10-15 minute lecture (I keep the slides posted on my website) that summarizes three main personal finance goals that will help students to make sound financial decisions. The lecture is about 10 slides, and I provide some examples below (Figure 32, Figure 33, Figure 34)

Figure 32 Sample Personal Finance Sidebar Lecture

Figure 33 Sample Personal Finance Sidebar Lecture--motivation

Figure 34 Sample Personal Finance Sidebar Lecture--three tips

Again, these brief lecture tangents have been well-received by students. I don't do this by habit and often when this happens it's more impromptu, but this particular topic has been so relevant for students that I simply take advantage of the captive audience to convey something I think they really need to know.

Example 3: Programming Workshops

When I teach a graduate level course in a substantive topic, like my course on Legislative Behavior and the US Congress (GOV 604), I often run into the challenge of having students with very different levels of **skills** and backgrounds. The course will include a few PhD students and some Master's students. Some students will have had some training in statistics, and others have perhaps had none. In a graduate course, it's particularly important for student to develop writing products that are appropriate for their level. For PhD students, that means develop a complete research paper that could be delivered at an academic conference or submitted to a journal. For Master's students, the bar might be just a bit below this mark. Still I expect all student to develop an original theory on a research question and test the theory in some way. Some students have a hard time accomplishing this because they have not had enough statistics training. Several times while teaching this course, I have offered to give students workshops in using STATA or R to help them learn to manage and analyze data. These **skills** are vital for graduate students. I see it as part of their training. It also serves me well because if they have more **skills** of this type their work product will improve, and then there might be more skilled graduate research assistants around. I will run a voluntary, three-session workshop for graduate students to learn the basics of programming in STATA or R. We'll arrange a time outside of our scheduled class meeting, everyone will bring their laptops, and I'll review the basic principles of working with the software, managing data, and organizing a project. Doing so strongly and positively affects the research products that students produce for the course and they have responded positively to the workshops. Below, Figure 35 shows the value and benefit that students felt they received from a voluntary workshop of this type that I gave in 2014.
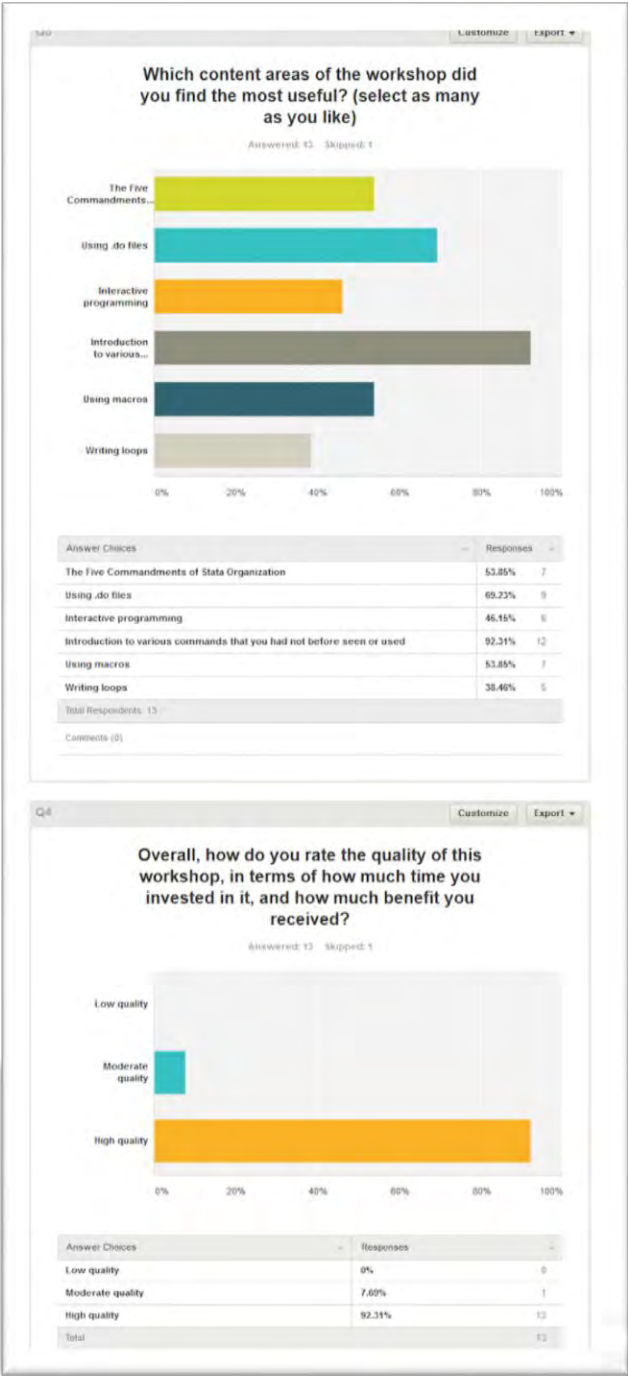
Figure 35 Stata Workshop Student Evaluations.a

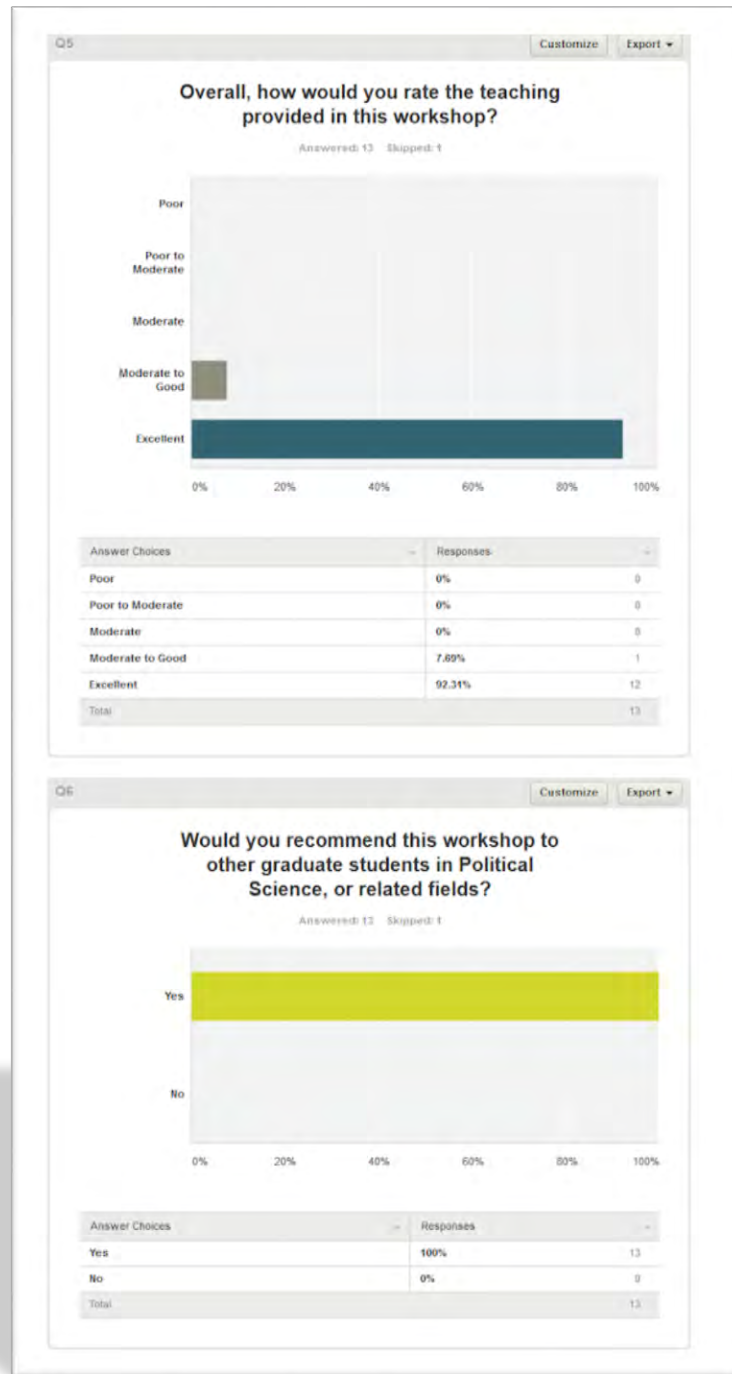Figure 36 shows how students evaluated the instruction in the workshop.

Q5

Customize | Export ▾

Overall, how would you rate the teaching provided in this workshop?

Answered: 13   Skipped: 1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Poor	0%	0
Poor to Moderate	0%	0
Moderate	0%	0
Moderate to Good	7.69%	1
Excellent	92.31%	12
Total		13

Q6

Customize | Export ▾

Would you recommend this workshop to other graduate students in Political Science, or related fields?

Answered: 13   Skipped: 1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	100%	13
No	0%	0
Total		13

*Figure 36 Stata Workshop Student Evaluations.b*

In general, I've had a positive experience with taking my students off-roading in the classroom. The tangent topics turn out not really to be tangents at all, but critical to delivering a meaningful and useful educational experience.

Students, Students Everywhere: Public Scholarship

An essential part of following the teacher-scholar model that guides my professional life is thinking broadly about defining my students. My students are not just tuition-paying undergraduate and graduate students at Mason, although these are certainly my primary students; rather, I think of my students as anyone in the world who wants to better understand the puzzles of American politics. In this way, the general public is my student, and their choice about whether what I have to offer is valuable, meaningful, helpful, or worth tuning in for is entirely up to them. In the 21st century, it's become increasing clear to me that many people are puzzled about American politics, and many people hold beliefs about how it works that are directly contradicted by evidence in the social scientific literature. I see it as part of my mission as a teacher-scholar, to engage in public scholarship that delivers messages to the general public in a way that advances their understanding of the ways in which humans can, and cannot, self-govern. I do this through political blogging, public lectures, twitter, and talking with reporters.

Blogging

In 2012, I was at an American politics and political networks conference in Boulder, Colorado with several colleagues, who are also professional friends of mine. We had a conversation about starting a blog about political parties, broadly defined. That spring, we started *The Mischiefs of Faction*, an independent blog on political parties in the United States and aimed to apply theories and evidence from political science to current events and to deliver it in an accessible format intended for the general public. Figure 37 shows the original masthead of the blogging cite. Along with three colleagues at three separate universities, I was among the founding members of this website. Our initial purpose is displayed in our inaugural post shown in Figure 38.

Figure 37 Public Scholarship: Mischiefs of Faction
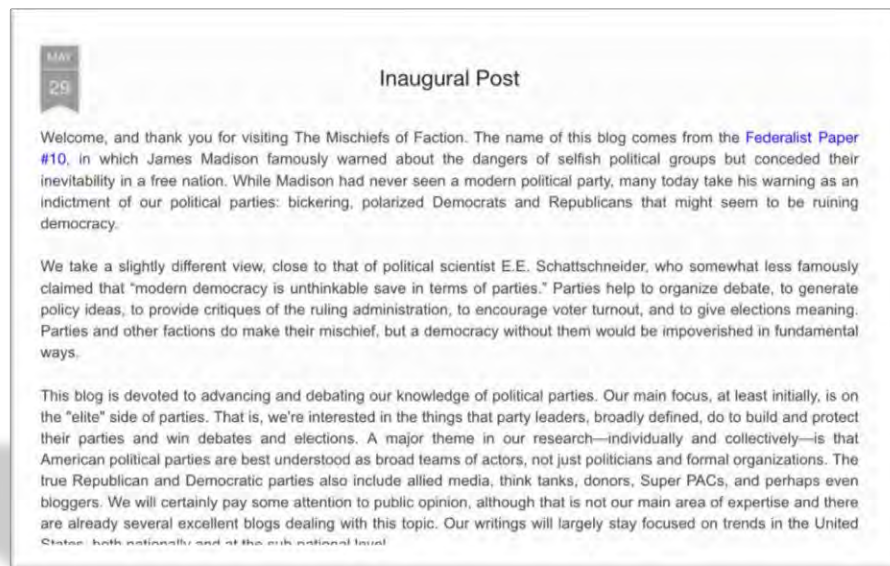
Figure 38 Public Scholarship: Mischiefs of Faction Inaugural Post

After about two years, we expanded our staff of regular writers to eight. The eight of us posted semi-regularly and we each had specific areas of expertise that we primarily covered. My main area was in legislative politics and campaign finance. Then, after about three years in production, Vox Media offered to host our politics blog on their website (Figure 39). The Vox linkage does not come with any financial benefits and the copyediting they provide is negligible, but as a media website that includes regular news, other blogs, podcasts, and more, their reach was much greater than we could get on our own (Figure 40). It's been a productive relationship.

Figure 39 Public Scholarship: Mischiefs of Faction moves to Vox Media
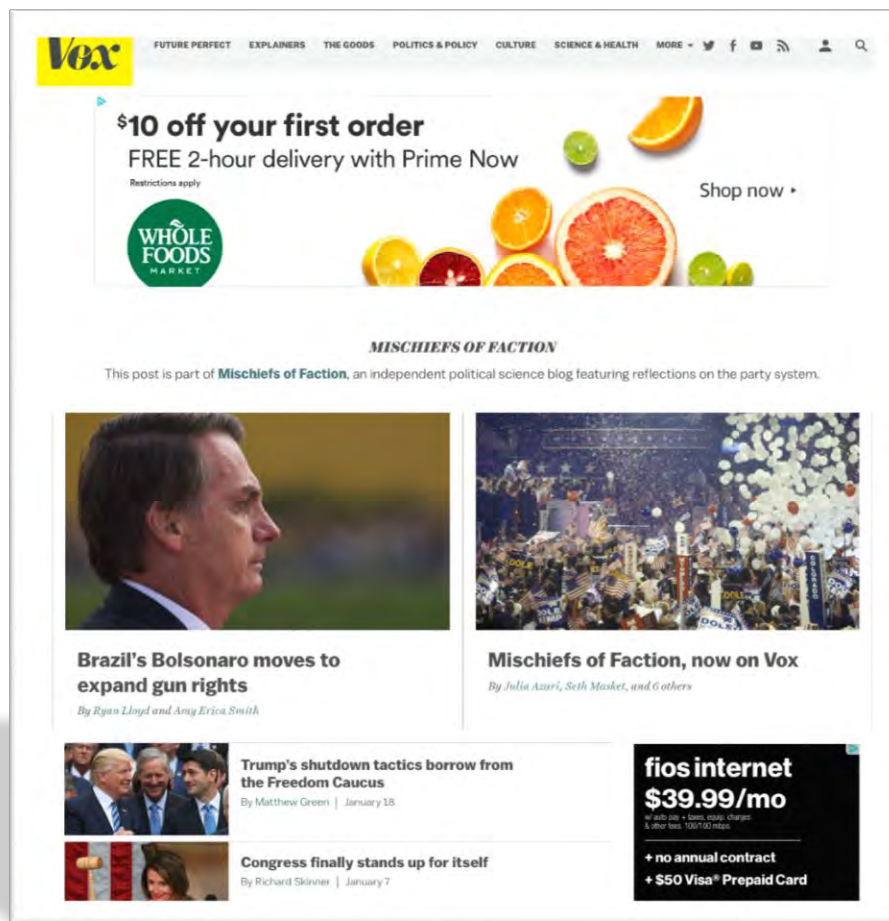

Figure 40 Public Scholarship: Mischiefs of Faction on Vox

I write posts for *Mischiefs* whenever I like. Sometimes, I go months between posts, but I aim to post about once a month. I like to blog when I'm inspired by something and I typically receive positive feedback for my posts. My experience with *Mischiefs* has led to other blogging experiences, mostly by invitation. I've blogged for the *New York Times*, Medium, the London School of Economics Policy Blog, the Conversation, and others. A sample of my blog posts for various outlets are listed in my teaching vita. Figure 41 shows a screenshot of a blog sample from the *New York Times*, where I was invited to provide a contribution about campaign finance in 2016. Figure 42 and Figure 43 show examples of invited blog posts at *Medium* and *The Conversation*, respectively. This *Medium* post includes an audio version.
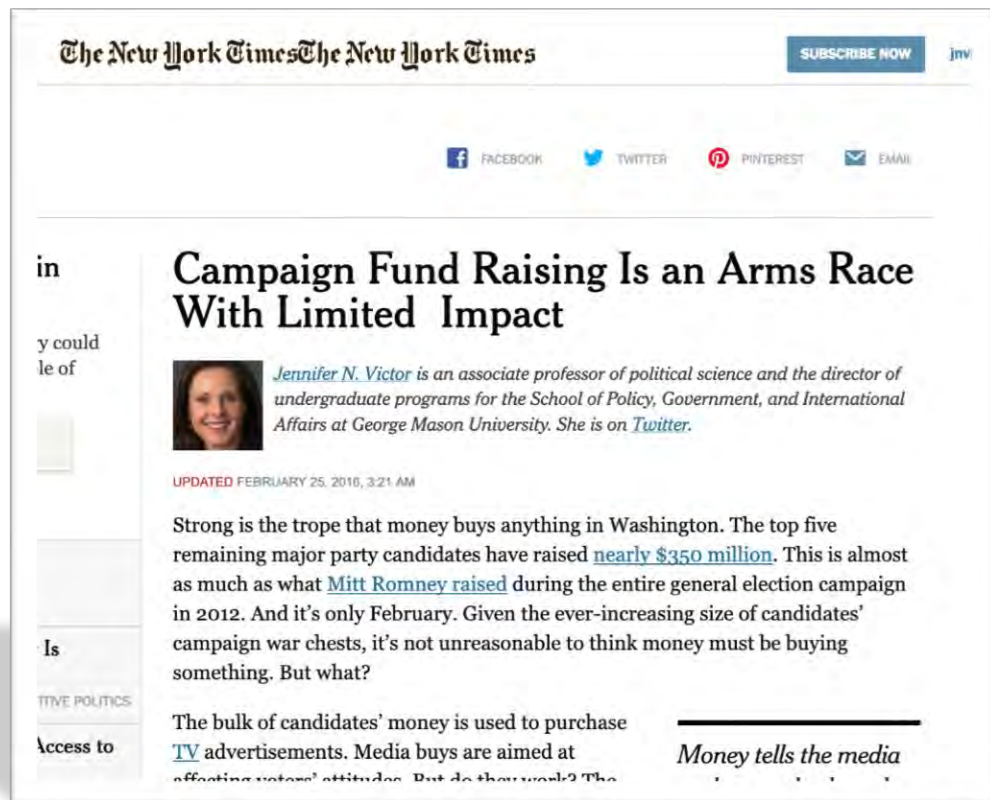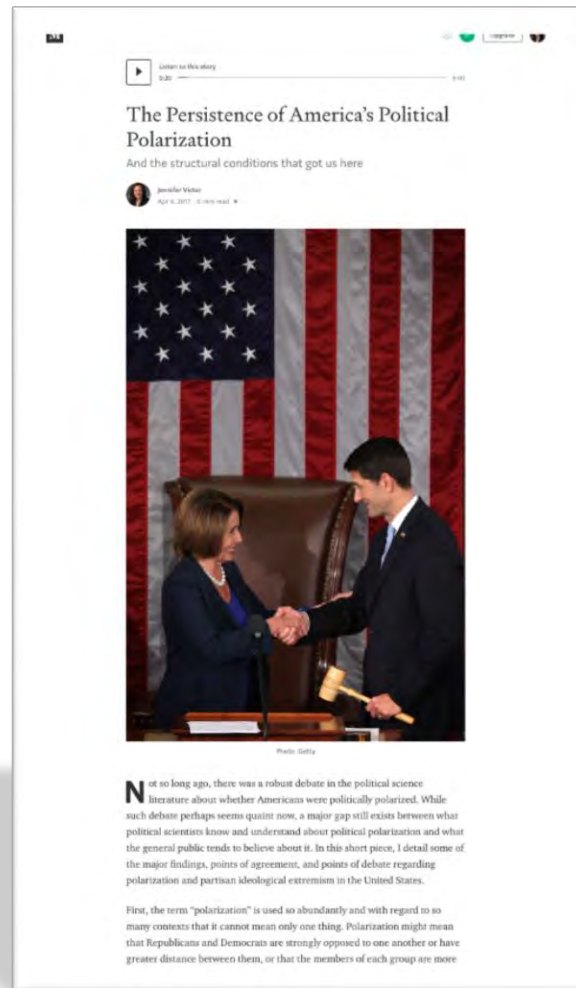

Figure 41 New York Times blog sample

Figure 42 Medium blog sample

These blog posts are always about political topics, but they are never partisan and rarely could they be described as advocacy. They tackle topics of interest having to do with congress, parties, campaigns, and more. I blog what I know, and when I write a blog post I often imagine myself standing in front of a classroom explaining something to my students. Blogging is public scholarship; public scholarship is teaching. Bringing academic closer to American citizens and applying its lessons to better understand our world is a critical part of what the academy is.
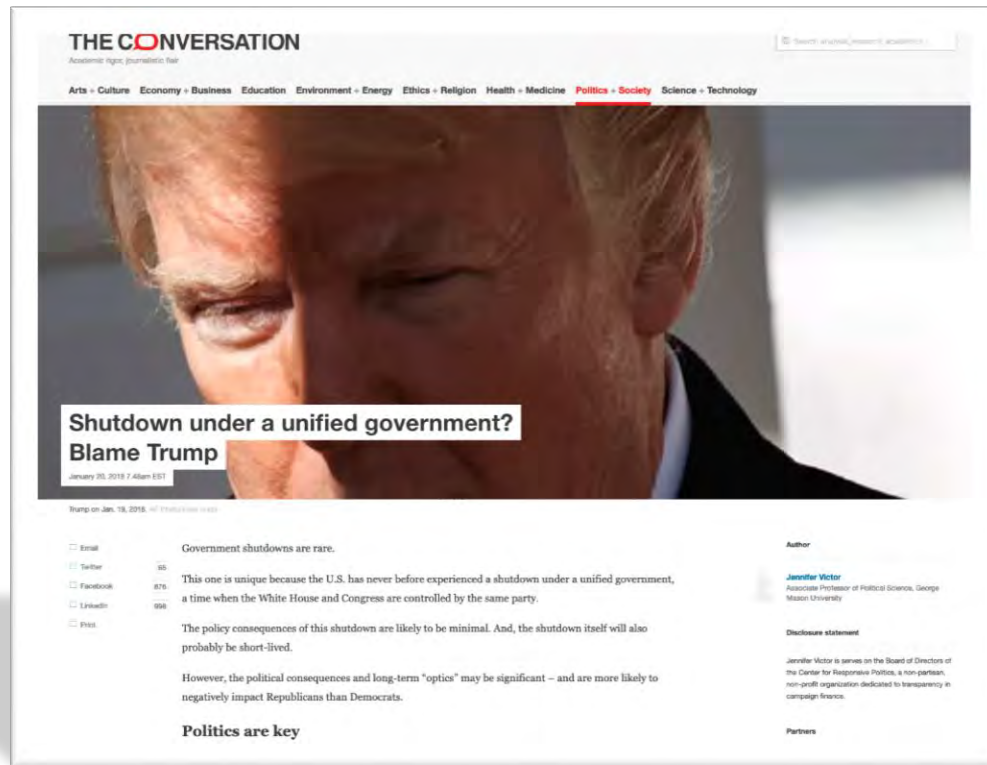
Figure 43 The Conversation blog sample

Public Events

In addition to blogging, I engage in public scholarship through delivering public lectures. These are lectures that are designed for a non-academic audience and meant to be informative or to bring a scholarly perspective to some question of the day. I've given lectures at the Library of Congress, American University, the Bipartisan Policy Center, to groups of high school students, public officials, local community clubs, and others. A sample of these are also listed on my teaching vita. I genuinely enjoy these lectures and enjoy engaging with non-academics and non-students to help bring insight to modern politics. Figure 44 shows an example of me serving on a panel about the 116th Congress at the Bipartisan Policy Center, in downtown DC, in November 2018. I served on the panel with other academic and public figures with expertise in Congress. I often receive compliments about my remarks after events of this type. I feel like I have a knack for explaining puzzling things about politics in a way that is non-technical and accessible, but that does not dumb-down the science behind what we know about how politics works.
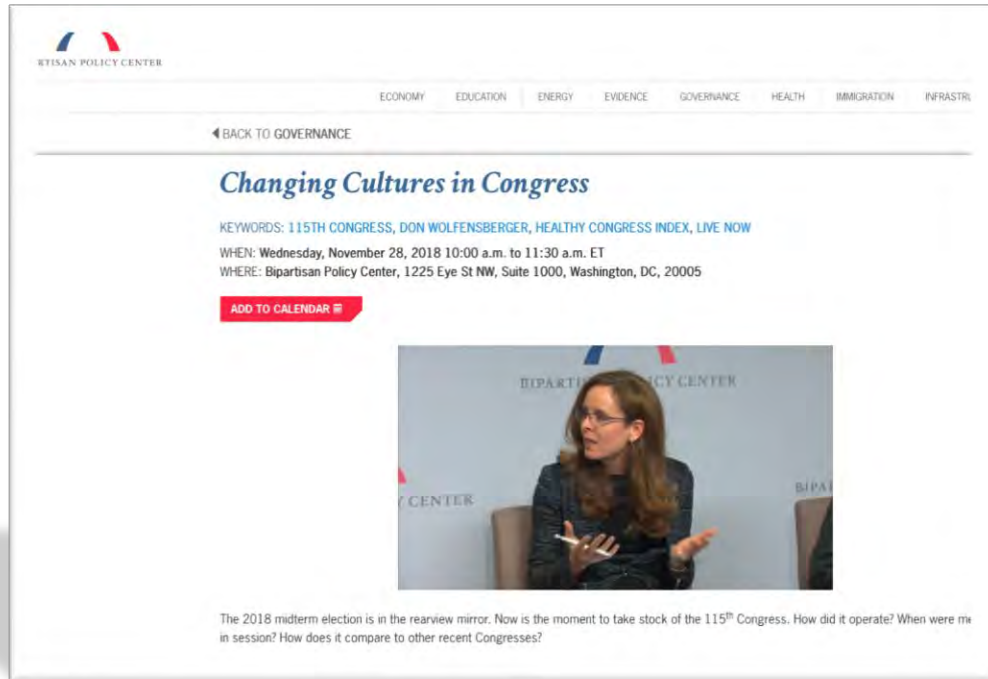
Figure 44 Public Scholarship: Panel Presentation at Bipartisan Policy Center

In April 2018 I spoke on a panel about gerrymandering, alongside former Governor Terry McAuliffe, at an event hosted by the Schar School, as seen in Figure 45.

Figure 45 Gerrymandering panel, April 2018

Governor McAuliffe sent me the following note shortly after the panel, on which my comments were well received (Figure 46).

Figure 46 *Letter from Governor McAuliffe recognizing my contributions to our joint event*

Figure 47 *Library of Congress panel, May 2018*

Figure 47 shows a tweet from the John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress, promoting a panel on which I served at a public event regarding the future of political parties in May 2018.

Twitter

Shortly after I started blogging in 2012, I joined Twitter so I could promote blog posts from *Mischiefs*. Since then, I have become a fairly regular part of the academic twitterverse. I treat my twitter feed like I treat my classroom. I shy away from strictly opinionated or partisan statements, and aim to primary offer insights and interpretations of current events using the lens of political science. But it's Twitter, so there's a fair amount of silliness that goes on, which is of course part of its appeal. Since I joined, my Twitter following has blossomed to more than 11,500 followers, and I earned a "verified" blue check mark, which is Twitter's mechanism for

communicating to others that you're a real person (not a bot), with real credentials. My verified status on Twitter is akin to being certified as a sort of leader or, in my mind, public teacher. Having earned the coveted little blue verified check mark is evidence that some population of twitter users or managers see my contributions as meaningful and contributing to a public service. Figure 48 shows a screenshot of my Twitter profile.
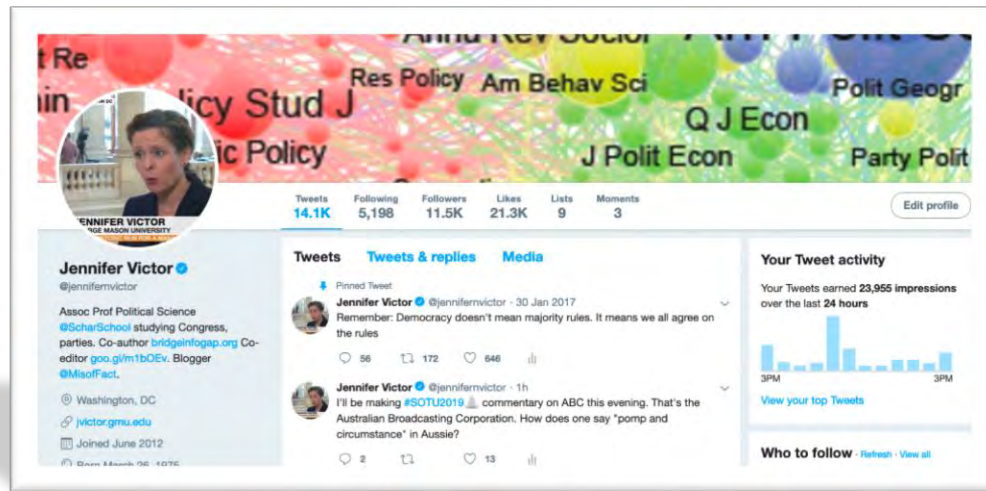

Figure 48 Twitter profile

While Twitter, and social media in general, has a significant downside because it helps perpetuate anti-social behavior, rudeness, and the general raw underbelly of humanities worst side, it also has some upsides. I am among a good-sized population of academics who use twitter to provide evidence to counteract misperceptions, share novel insights about the world that are based on our understanding of our academic disciplines, and bring some legitimacy to how people view and understand politics that is outside of the standard partisan lenses so common today. Of course, journalists often do this too, and I interact with journalists a lot (described below), but I genuinely enjoy the practice of curating and writing my own thoughts and developing them in a way that makes an understanding of politics more accessible for all readers.
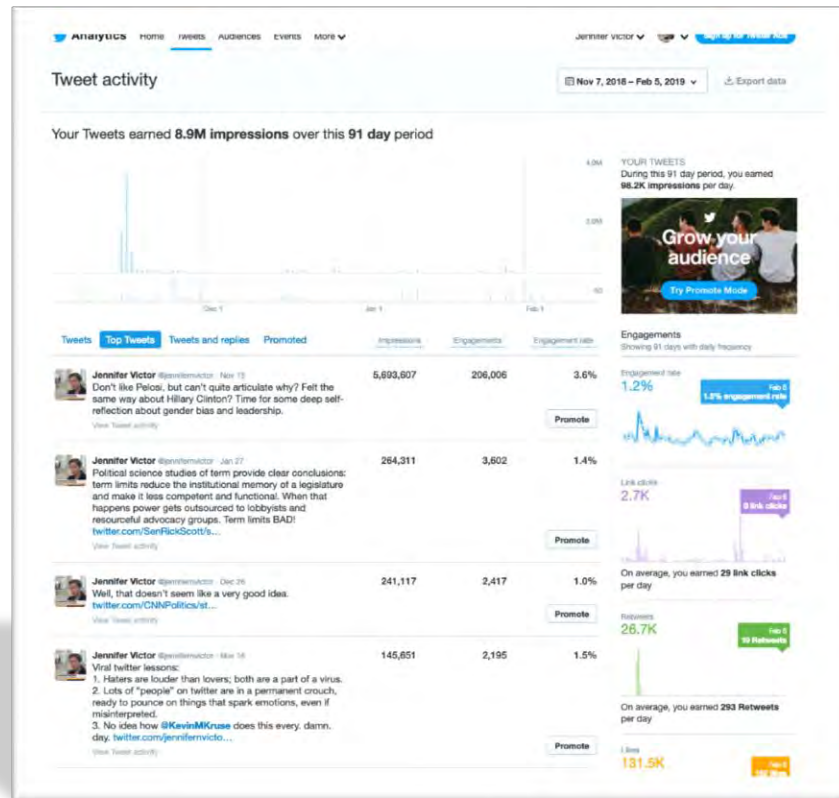
Figure 49 Top tweets

Figure 49 shows an example of some top tweets that I made in the fall of 2018. I had a viral tweet experience after a tweet that read by more than 5 million twitter users and "liked" more than 107,000 times. The tweet touched a nerve in a few important ways that exemplify how I try to use Twitter and how my use of Twitter is consistent with my teacher-scholar objectives. I posted the tweet around the time Nancy Pelosi was being considered for House Speaker. The tweet posed a question to people who might dislike Hillary Clinton and Nancy Pelosi, which rankled people on both the political left and right. Conservatives were very happy to explain to me all the ways in which they know why they don't like those two public figures, and many liberals wanted to explain why they don't like them because they aren't liberal enough. The tweet also asked people to be self-reflective about possible sexist attitudes they may have about women in leadership positions, and not everyone takes kindly to be self-reflective about their own biases. I received both hate and support for this tweet. It was an interesting experience, and one that is certainly out of the norm (for comparison, in the last 28 days my tweets have been read by about 1 million people, rather than 7 million during

November 2018, according to twitter analytics). In my view, Twitter is an opportunity to make the world my classroom. I tweet very much like I teach: with humor, personality, and research-backed evidence that helps us understand the world.

Journalistic Source

A final way that I engaged in public scholarship is through frequent interactions with professional journalists. I frequently give interviews to print journalists writing stories on various topics in American politics, but typically I serve as a source of expertise for those writing on topics related to Congress, campaign finance, or political parties.

I have also appeared on radio and television news programs including National Public Radio, ABC local news distributed nationally to hundreds of affiliates, and a variety of international news programs. I've done several bits for Al Jazeera Arabic which broadcasts primarily in the Middle East, and one for Al Jazeera English, also an international broadcast. I've appeared as a political commentator for news programs in India, Turkey, Australia, and on BBC for in the United Kingdom. Figure 50 and Figure 51 show screen captures of two such recent examples.

Figure 50 Screen-capture from Al Jazeera English interview, January 2019, Russel Senate Office Building rotunda, Washington, DC

Figure 51 Screen-capture Al Jazeera Arabic television interview, 2016

All of these are efforts at being a teacher-scholar. My goal through all these efforts at public scholarship is to use science-backed information to help explain political phenomena with easily accessible language. The more I talk with others about these, more I understand them better myself. The questions that are raised are often challenging in ways that are helpful for pushing the boundaries of our evidence and theoretical explanations for what happens in politics. In this way, public scholarship helps to advance my research and tone my teaching muscles.

Teacher-Scholar Practice: Undergraduate Research Assistants Program

In 2015 I became Undergraduate Program Director for the Schar School of Policy and Government. My interest in serving Mason's highly politically engaged undergraduate student population coincided with the school's need for fresh leadership in our programs. As program director I made a number of fundamental changes to curriculum in our degree programs, resulting in greater flexibility for our degree-seeking students, and our enrollments were strong during my tenure. I also oversaw the general assessment of our two undergraduate degree programs in 2017-2018. But the primary accomplishment I want to describe here is the program I began called URAP—Undergraduate Research Assistants Program.

Now in its fourth cohort-year, I started the URAP to serve two important purposes that put the undergraduate programs at Schar more in-line with my teacher-scholar ideals. First, the program provides a needed source of labor for faculty who often need help advancing their
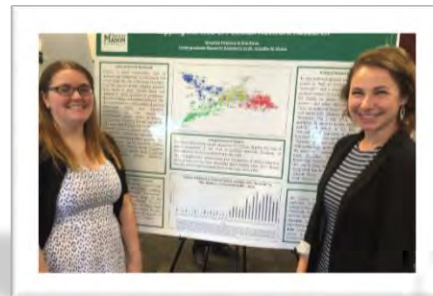
research agendas. Second, it is designed to give undergraduate students experience with being a research apprentice to faculty. This type of hands-on experience is often invaluable to students, who spend most of their college careers working exclusively on their own work products. Being involved with a project that is led by a more advanced researchers is valuable for students who want to better understand what it means to be a social scientist or who seek to hone their research **skills**. It's truly mutually beneficial and directly in-line with the teacher-scholar model.

"Being an RA has been one of the highlights of my time at Mason. Whether it was revising research notes, being introduced to new data-processing programs, or coding both qualitative and quantitative variables, this opportunity gave me the chance to work closely with a Mason professor in discovering what it entails to be a political scientist".

Nathan Falk Schar School of Policy and Government, GVIP '15

The program works like this. Each fall faculty submit projects for which they would like to have assistants. They complete an on-line form linked through the program website (Figure 52) in which they describe the project and tasks that students would perform. Students are then invited to apply to up to three projects and faculty engage in a selection process. The program was not intended to be competitive. I initially envisioned that faculty and students would engage in an organic matching process; however, over the years we've seen many more students express interest in the program than we've had available faculty mentors to host them. Several faculty often take on multiple students. For example, I usually will take-on an average of 10 URAP students each year. URAP students can participate in the program for course credit (1, 2, or 3 units), as a volunteer, or they can opt to receive Federal Work Study funds for their participation, if they are eligible. The students are selected at the end of every fall semester and complete the work in the spring semester.

Figure 52 URAP website at Schar

At the end of the spring semester each year, Schar School hosts an Undergraduate Research Fair. Each student, or tea of students, presents a research poster that describes the project they worked on, and what they learned through the experience. The fair is an energetic and fun event. Students beam with pride as they present their projects and display their academic prowess. Figure 53 through Figure 58 show examples of previous URAP fairs, which are always open to the entire Mason community.

Figure 54 URAP Fair 2015-b

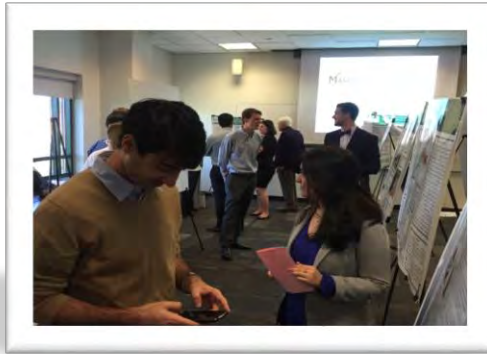*Figure 53 URAP fair 2015, Prof. Victor with students*
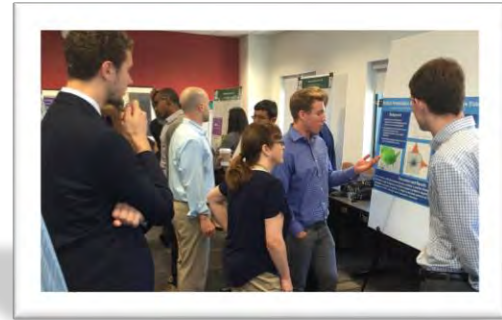
Figure 55 URAP Fair 2015-c

Figure 56 URAP Fair 2015-d
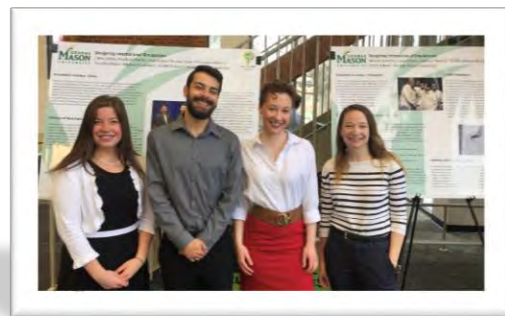

Figure 57 URAP Fair 2018-a

Figure 58 URAP Fair 2018-b

It fills me with joy that URAP is living beyond my tenure as undergraduate program director. While I stepped down from the role last year, my successor has enthusiastic continued the program and Schar is currently hosting its largest class of URAP students yet.

As shown in the graph below (Figure 59), the URAP program has an enthusiastic following and has been growing. Faculty who participate in the program report high satisfaction with their research assistants. Students get involved in everything from data collection, database management, library research, conference planning, simulation development, archival record discovery, manuscript preparation, and more. Every subfield of political science and policy is represented in the available projects. Students also report a high level of satisfaction from their participation in the program because they appreciate the opportunity to engage with faculty on projects that often eventually make their way into the body of academic literature.
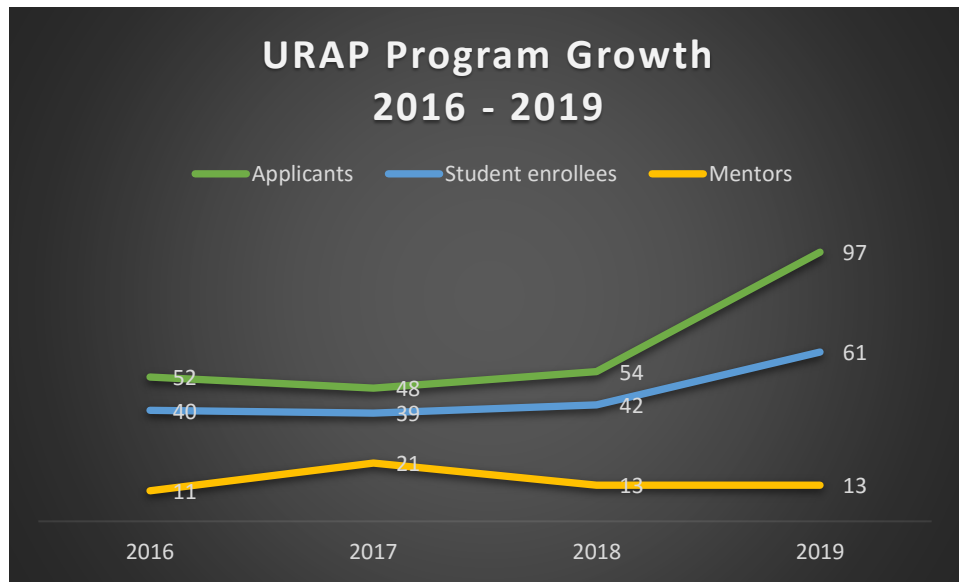
Figure 59 URAP Program Growth, 2016 - 2019

If URAP did not exist, I would feel compelled to invent it again. I genuinely rely on the stimulation, assistance, and motivation that I receive by mentoring students in this program. They contribute to my research productivity, they invigorate ideas, and it gives me great to joy to see the pride and excitement that nearly all of them take in the products and lessons they take from this program.

Teaching Impact

Table 1 shows a summary of the course evaluations I have received from all the courses I have taught at Mason in the past four years. The list includes 8 unique courses for a total of 14 total classes.[2] The color shades in the table separate courses from one another and show the course title, number of students enrolled, average course rating and average teaching rating.

Table 1 Summary Teaching Evaluations, Spring 2014 - Spring 2018

Term	Course number	Course Title	N	Average Course Rating	Average Teaching Rating
Fall 2014	GOV 103	Intro American Govt	174	4.45	4.69
Fall 2015	GOV 103	Intro American Govt	235	4.5	4.79
Fall 2016	GOV 103	Intro American Govt	251	4.58	4.79
Fall 2017	GOV 103	Intro American Govt	195	4.63	4.74
Spr 2018	GOV 300	Research Method/Analysis	49	3.59	4.36
Spr 2014	GOV 307	Legislative Behavior	25	4.65	4.82
Fall 2015	GOV 307	Legislative Behavior	33	4.59	4.85
Fall 2016	GOV 307	Legislative Behavior	37	4.54	4.75
Spr 2017	GOV 319	Political Networks	29	4.22	4.78
Fall 2017	GOV 490	Partisan Polarization in Am Politics	25	4.86	4.95
Spr 2016	GOV 500	Scientific Method/Research Design	19	4.25	4.5
Fall 2014	GOV 510	Amer Government/Politics	15	4.42	4.5
Spr 2015	GOV 510	Amer Government/Politics	12	4.58	4.67
Spr 2014	GOV 604	Legislative Behavior	11	4.89	4.89

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[2] My regular teaching load is 2-2, however, during much of this time period I served as Undergraduate Program Director for the Schar School, an administrative position that came with a 2-1 teaching load.

I report Table 1 in the interest of complete disclosure and to meet the requirements of the evaluation criteria of this portfolio; however, as I tell my students, it is best to tell a story with pictures instead of words; graphs are better than tables. To that end, Figure 60 shows a visualization of the teaching evaluations over time for Introduction of American politics, a class I've taught several times and a Mason Core course. The graph compares my mean student evaluation of teaching against the department mean. In Figure 61 I show the same thing for my undergraduate legislative behavior course. These are two courses that I've taught several times.
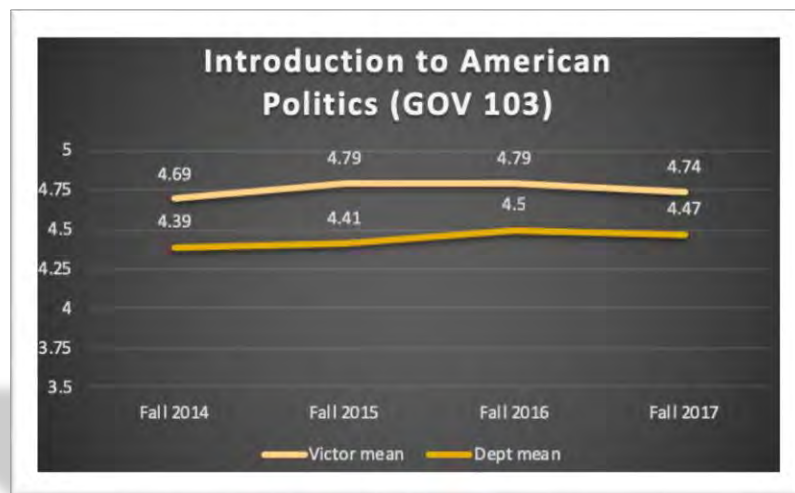

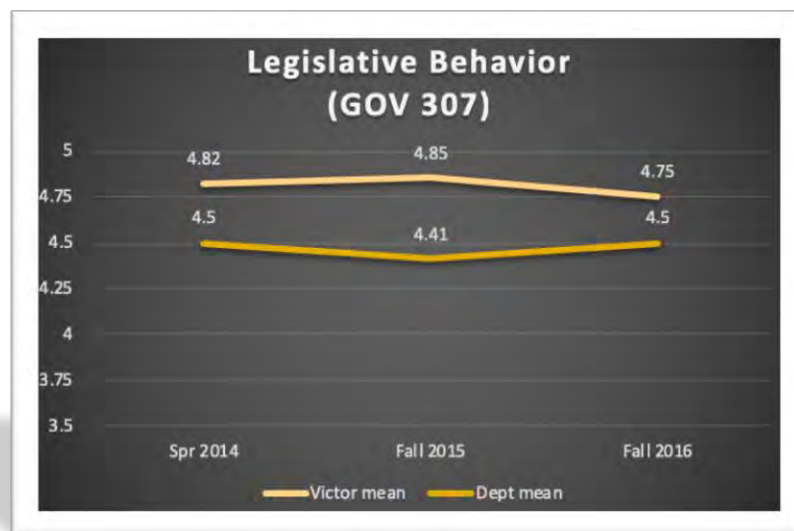*Figure 60 Teaching Evaluation Summary, GOV 103*

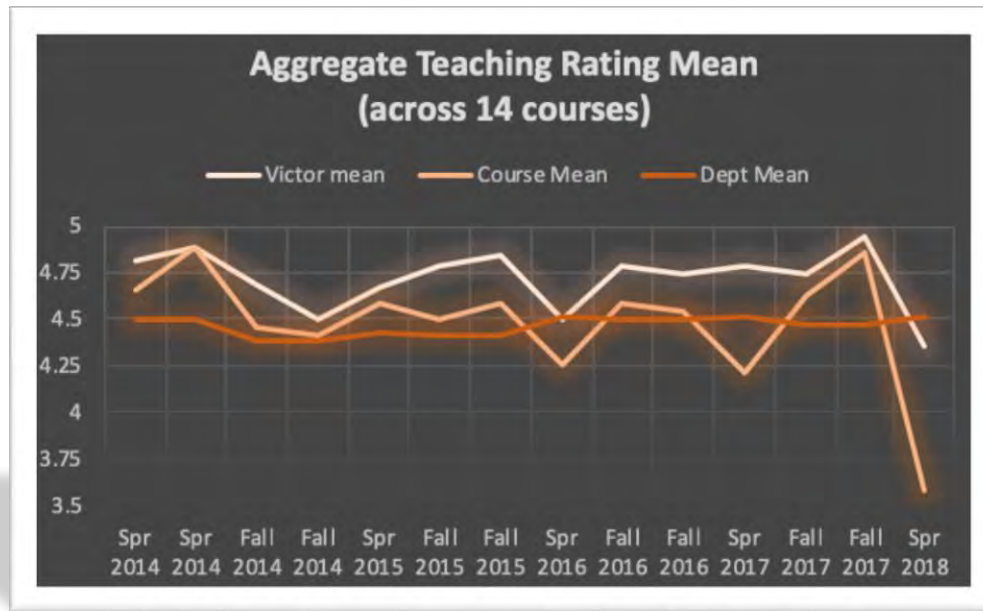*Figure 61 Teaching Evaluation Summary, GOV 307*

Figure 62 Aggregate Teaching Evaluation Mean, 2014 - 2018

Figure 62 displays the aggregate mean student evaluation of teaching versus the student mean rating of the course across all 14 courses that I taught in the past four years. It also shows the department mean evaluation of instructors. The dip that is apparent in spring 2018 is my first offering of GOV 300, the research methods course. Many students dread taking GOV 300 and the data show, as a course they don't care for it much. My teaching evaluations were lower than the department mean in that course, but for a methods class, I feel good about the marks.

There are a few immediate take-aways from this summary of data. First, typically when I repeat a course, my evaluations go up over time. This is most apparent in Figure 60 and Table 1. This shows evidence of improvement over time. Repeating a course is beneficial for several reasons, but notably because it gives me the chance to improve, revise, and hone the material. **[Support for criterion #1]**

Second, the data in Table 1 and Figure 62 show that for every course I've taught, students rate the teaching higher than the course. I'm not entirely sure what this means, but it seems to convey a certain satisfaction with the delivery of material, even when the material itself wasn't their favorite. **[Support for criterion #2]**

Third, Table 1 shows the depth and breadth of the courses I've taught. I teach the gateway Mason Core course for majors and non-majors in Introduction to American Politics, as well as PhD-level courses in American politics. I teach courses that are primarily substantive in nature (e.g., Introduction to American Politics—GOV 103 and 510; Interest Group Politics—GOV 318) as well as courses that are primarily methodological in nature (e.g., Research Methods—GOV 300 and GOV 500). I've also taught courses that are mix of substantive and methods courses (e.g., Legislative Behavior—GOV 307, GOV 604; Political Networks—GOV 319/400). Teaching a mix of substantive and methods courses is, for me, key to the teacher-scholar model because research methods are an essential component of research and learning these methods through applications and examples is the best way for students to learn the **skills** and produce their own research. Some faculty might shy away from teaching methods classes, or intro classes, or graduate classes, but I truly enjoy all of these. My preference is to keep my **skills** sharp by continuing to teach courses at all level and across my research subfields. I'm grateful that Mason has afforded me the ability to do that.

The following excerpts from comments left on teaching evaluations show appreciation for general teaching impact:

> *"I'm so sad that I'll never be able to take another one of your courses. I have learned so, so much in your courses and will be forever grateful for you."*
> *–GOV 490, spring 2017*

> *"She was very informative and teaches the class extremely well."*
> *–GOV 103 , fall 2015*

> *"Jennifer Victor is my favorite teacher in the whole government department because I love her teaching style and the way she runs her classes and lectures. She also makes it beyond easy to visit her office hours and get help if you need it."*
> *–GOV 307, fall 2016*

> *"Teaching spatial modeling and how Congressmen vote was very unique and excellent approach to incorporate modern political science teaching to the*

class. This enabled us to learn about legislative behavior in a much more effective way than learning about boring procedures."
–GOV 307, fall 2015

"Best teacher of my college career…Jennifer Victor is the best!"
–GOV 490, spring 2017

"Professor Victor was the best professor I've had so far at Mason."
–GOV 307, fall 2017

"Jennifer Victor is the best (and my favorite) teacher in the Department. She has equal teaching skills to her scholarly skills which is not true of many of our professors. Always willing to help. Very comprehensive teaching style."
–GOV 490, fall2017

"The best lecturer in Mason. She explains very nicely. I love current event discussion we have in class."
–GOV 103, fall 2017

"Out of all the classes I have taken so far at Mason this has been my absolute favorite. Professor Victor is by far one of the best professors at this school and made the course so enjoyable. The atmosphere is amazing and she does a great job of answering all questions without intimidating anyone. I wish Professor Victor taught more classes because I would take them in a heartbeat! So sad this class is ending ☹"
–GOV 103, fall 2017

"The lecture styled lessons really work for this kind of class and she makes the course fun."
–GOV 103, fall 2017

"Loved this professor!!! I never had this high level of interest in government before. Victor made it so interesting and I love how she asked 'What's Happening in Politics' at the start of every class. 5/5 to her!"
–GOV 103, fall 2016

"Great professor!! Made GOVT 103 super easy since I'm from out of this
country. I would take any class she would teach!!"
–GOV 103, fall 2015

"LOVED this class! Made me decide to switch to government and
international politics major. Thank you!!!"
–GOV 103, fall 2016

"Professor Victor couldn't do anything better if she tried. This class was by
far one of the most enjoyable educational opportunities of my semester."
–GOV 103, fall 2016

"The interactivity in class, along with the professor's willingness t o explain
complicated topics made this one of my favorite courses at Mason."
–GOV 307, fall 2016

On successfully helping students to overcome their fear of math;
"It was so effective that now I am going to take more math classes which I
used to avoid."
–GOV 300, spring 2018

**Students repeatedly taking my courses and seeking me out as an instructor as evidence of
teaching effectiveness:**
"This is my third class with Professor Victor and she is an amazing
professor. My time at Mason has been great and her classes play a
huge role in that"
–GOV 490, spring 2017

"Best teacher of my college career. She is the best!"
–GOV 490, spring 2017

Testimonials

This section contains semi-solicited testimonials from students and colleagues. I solicited these by making a generic invitation to my twitter followers to send testimonials if they wanted to contribute. Several former students and colleagues reached out to me via email to submit the following testimonials.

▪▪

To whom it may concern:

Dr. Jennifer Victor is arguably the best professor I've encountered throughout my entire education and is a credit to George Mason University. She has consistently gone above and beyond what could be reasonably expected of any professor to provide her students a rich, well-rounded educational experience. I remember one time she actually scheduled a conference call for our class to speak with the author of a text we were reading. She spent years as Director of Undergraduate Programs at the Schar School. She makes a concerted effort to engage her students across multiple platforms, posting educational resources on Blackboard, creating study groups on Facebook, and answering students' questions on Twitter. She is passionate about the field and that passion is contagious. Her Introduction to American Politics (GOVT 103) lecture is one of the reasons I became passionate about political science and ultimately chose to purse a graduate degree and career in the field. I know of dozens of students who go out of their way to take any course Dr. Victor is teaching every semester. Her lectures are structured, well-thought out, and incredibly engaging. The assignments she creates do not just build on students' knowledge, but also develop their skills in writing, research, and statistical analysis. For instance, rather than just telling her students to write a research paper, she creates staggered deadlines for each section of the research paper (e.g. research question, hypothesis, literature review, etc.) and uses a portion of her class time to teach the students what each section should include and accomplish. The result is that by the end of the course, the students have not only produced an excellent research paper on their research question, but have also learned the process of writing an academic research paper and how to apply that structure to any research paper in future courses. At every step of my education at George Mason University, whenever I asked her for help, she went out of her way to advise me and provide what help she could. ██. She has strict standards and expectations for her students. She sets the bar high and then guides and encourages her students to reach that bar. She is an excellent role model, a brilliant academic, and among the greatest professors at GMU.

Sincerely,

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To Whom It May Concern:

Whether it was receiving financial advice as a freshman, or life advice as a senior, I always thoroughly enjoyed learning from Professor Victor. She is an expert on the institutions of the American government and knew exactly how to provide her students with an engaging and downright fun class. She has a vast network of individuals who are also experts on the federal government and are more than willing to interact with her students through whatever means necessary. In my Senior Seminar class, she dialed in an author and fellow expert to converse with students but had a few technical difficulties reaching him. Since we couldn't connect his Skype onto the computer screen, we all huddled around her cellphone on the ground for 75 minutes and loved every minute of it. We knew she would go the extra mile to ensure that we learned something valuable and had fun while doing it.

Another way she made her classes engaging was by beginning each one with a discussion led by the students on the state of affairs of the nation on that given day. We may have gone on a few tangents (one of the best aspects of her classes), but we always knew that Professor Victor was enjoying the discussion at least as much as we were. Although students were charged with leading the discussion, she was always able to successfully facilitate it, ensuring that opinions from both sides of the spectrum were heard and adding in sarcastic remarks all the while. Her public speaking and facilitation skills made me think I was having a discussion with friends and forget that I was in school.

Having taken my first American Government introductory course with Professor Victor all the way to my Senior Seminar, I always found it amazing that she was able to teach so many aspects of the American government while consistently tying them back into the theme of the role of American institutions. They all seamlessly flowed into one another while topics remained distinct and unique to their respective courses and made each one worth taking. She made me excited to go to class and hungry to learn for four years, something for which I will always be grateful.

▪▪

Date: January 8, 2019 at 2:25 PM
To: jvictor3@gmu.edu

Professor Victor,

First off, I'd like to thank you for an insightful semester. I feel as if I've learned more about politics within the last few months than I have my entire life.

With that being said, I think it is important to point out that when a professor, like yourself, uses a simple and effective method of understanding politics (for you, it was the four principles), it genuinely helps those beginning their ventures into the political world to comprehend the actual motives behind the flashiness in modern day politics. Thankfully, throughout the semester you brought these principles up consistently, and I truly believe that I have a better grasp on the things that are happening in D.C. and across the country.

Best,

• •

Subject: Testimonial for Portfolio
Date: January 11, 2019 at 2:11 PM
To: Jennifer Victor jvictor3@gmu.edu

Professor Victor,

[REDACTED]

Dr. Victor was by far the most influential professor in my undergraduate career, and I consider myself very lucky to have learned from someone with such extensive and impressive credentials. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] t on to work as a congressional staffer for four years and currently work for [REDACTED] have directly utilized the skills that Professor Victor taught me about legislative behavior and lobbying dynamics almost every day of my career. Her classes were relevant and realistic, and I found her essay assignments particularly helpful. In those assignments, Dr. Victor challenged us to think creatively about real-world legislative scenarios and set high standards for grammar and mechanics.

What I appreciate most about Dr. Victor is how passionate she is about the material she teaches and how committed she is to engaging her students. [REDACTED] d went above and beyond to help me understand how to correctly incorporate data into my project. Dr. Victor was willing to take the extra time out of her busy schedule to voluntarily advise me, which shows how committed she is to her students' success.

I highly recommend Dr. Victor as an instructor.

[REDACTED]

• •

[REDACTED] ment

[REDACTED]

January 21, 2019

To whom it may concern,

[REDACTED]

In the classroom, Dr. Victor emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and reasoning. For example, at the start of every SNA class, students were asked to identify the day's top headlines. As each student summarized the news, Dr. Victor asked the class to rethink and analyze the news

through a network lens. She then asked students to consider what network properties or features they could use when researching the story. In addition to facilitating deep thinking, Dr. Victor works tirelessly to ensure that her courses engage a diverse student population and accommodate various learning styles. She routinely and seamlessly shifts between lectures, group exercises, and class discussions.

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Over my academic career, I have taken classes with numerous professors, and while at GMU I have had the opportunity to serve as a teaching assistant for several great professors. Even in distinguished company, Dr. Victor stands out as a special professor. In addition to stimulating intellectual curiosity and imparting expert knowledge, Dr. Victor genuinely cares about her students' well-being and future success.

I can attest that the Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, and the political science community benefit from Dr. Victor's academic stewardship and research acumen.

Sincerely,

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• •

January 25, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

███
█████████████████████████████ I enthusiastically support her nomination for the Teaching Excellence Awards. ███
██ Dr. Victor is a gifted teacher who is clearly dedicated to her craft, and the most talented and knowledgeable professor I have ever had the privilege to learn from.

██. Dr. Victor used two creative strategies for student engagement. She played popular music through the lecture hall sound system prior to class, raising student interest and orienting their attention to the lecture hall. She tried to learn the first names of as many students as possible, and knew dozens by the end of the semester.

Dr. Victor is an adept user of technology for teaching. Her Blackboard site went far beyond the basics to include textbook supplements like flash cards and chapter summaries, practice exercises, exam study guides, a hypothetical grade calculator, and an exhaustive list of links to student resources and support services. Daily quizzes were taken through Blackboard, as well. The daily quizzes were a smart technique to keep students accountable and on track by encouraging class attendance and reading of the textbook. Dr. Victor is very responsive by e-mail, which ought to be a given, but sadly some professors

still aren't. And then there's her Twitter feed! She follows notable political scientists and interesting figures, and her retweets are an education unto themselves. Add Dr. Victor's considerable wit and insight, and Twitter is now something I read every day.

Dr. Victor is at ease on the lecture hall stage, comfortably in motion, addressing various members of her audience. Her lecture notes are on the iPad Pro she holds in one hand. Lecture slides are full of original content that goes beyond the textbook, especially graphs and charts that channel her inner data scientist. These were often quite illuminating, especially when she discussed the 2016 and 2018 elections.

The best part of GOVT 103 was the discussion of current events at the beginning of each class. Dr. Victor asked students what was happening in the news, and then extemporaneously discussed current events through the lens of political science. It was amazing to watch her thoroughly dissect topics, yet do so in a way that was accessible to students in a 100 level course. This was my first political science course, so it was a delicious buffet. She gracefully deflected students who got too partisan, tried to discuss conspiracy theories, or used questionable news sources. She endeavored to call on as many different students as possible to avoid having discussions monopolized by the same students every class meeting.

Not all students arrive in GOVT 103 with the right level of preparation. Dr. Victor dedicated part of the first lecture to note taking, reading, time management etc. She periodically revisited topics like forming study groups, demonstrating her interest in ensuring the success of her students.
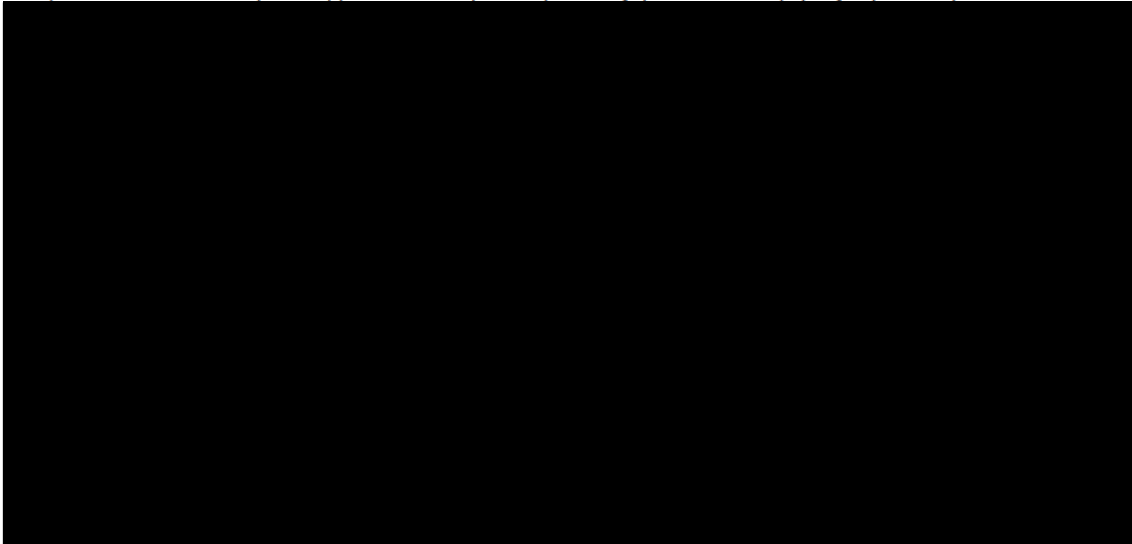
Since taking GOVT 103 with Dr. Victor, I consume the news differently. I understand better how Congress and the presidency work, and feel much more informed about the nature of current events. I share her interest in data science and plan to take GOVT 300 with her, and anything else she teaches. I know that I will see the world through new eyes as a result.

Sincerely,

To Whom It May Concern:

By any rubric, Professor Victor's classes rank high in my graduate education. The assigned readers were intense -- so much so that I sometimes wondered, "what's the point of reading all of this?" By the end of the semester, I had my answer. Combined with and guided by Professor Victor's careful and reassuring Socratic teaching style, we explored a terrain of concepts and literature that endowed me with a mental map that has proven durable. In short, she helped me learn and learn well. While I could no longer tell you what we learned during a particular week, I often recognize that I'm still following paths traced in her seminars.

This would be a sufficient endorsement of any educator. But, a particular incident stands out in my mind to this day. As part of our course work, students had to select a week to act as the discussion leader. The reading assignments were from the syllabus and known in advance. The leader's responsibility was to know the material thoroughly enough to facilitate good conversation (with occasional course corrections from Professor Victor). It was useful. For the first time, I could actively verify the cliche: if you want to understand something, teach it!

But, for one particular student, the experience was initially disheartening. Unlike myself, this student planned ahead and picked a week with a topic she had a passionate interest in -- one that matched her lived experiences and identity. Unfortunately, her classmates' relatively homogeneous biographies did not afford much overlap with her's. As a result, what she found salient and what we did deviated -- substantially. It frustrated her in a way I can only appreciate now, although she didn't show it during class.

Afterwards, the class had dwindled down to her, myself, a friend who was my ride, and Professor Victor, who was busy packing up. My friend asked her how she thought it went. She tried to explain but quickly found herself extremely upset. I was unsure how to respond. My friend was little help, either. But, by

then, Professor Victor had noticed what was happening and got involved. After listening to and empathizing with the student's (understandable!) complaints, Professor Victor asked if she wanted additional time during the next session to revisit the topics she felt the class brushed off. It had nothing to do with her grade. Instead, it was an opportunity to engage with her peers on something that was important to her. She agreed, with both trepidation and renewed enthusiasm. I don't know if it was useful for her (although I believe it was). But, I do know that the subsequent session granted me a new and enduring perspective, if only by alerting me to a personal blind spot. This would not have happened had Professor Victor not stepped in and done something for her distressed student. Where my friend and I were largely paralyzed, she was not. And, at a minimum, my education improved as a consequence.

Mentoring

Mentoring students takes time, sensitivity, commitment, and professionalism. I take pleasure in helping undergraduate and graduate students get to know academia as a field and to help train them to enter academic and non-academic careers. My approach to mentoring is to be straightforward in my advice, honest in my assessments, encouraging and helpful in my commentary, and not be obstructionist. I enjoy working with students individually or in small groups, and appreciate the opportunity to share my experiences and lessons-learned. I've chaired four dissertation committees, and the two students who have completed their degrees both won tenure-track positions upon graduation. I have served on more than a dozen other dissertation committees, providing advice and support to students who seek my expertise or perspective. I've worked with dozens more masters and undergraduate students writing theses or research projects that have served as pinnacle parts of their academic careers. Below is a smattering of unsolicited notes I've received from these students over recent years.

Unsolicited note from a student in the URAP program in 2017.

> "I wanted to thank you again for all the incredible opportunities you have provided us with this semester. It has been an absolute pleasure to become a part of your research and experience the scientific process first-hand in political science! As a student, it has truly helped develop a drive for independent work and furthered my passion for learning outside the classroom. I hope you have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you around campus in the fall!"

On the importance of being a role model for women in technical fields:

Hello Professor Victor,

Now that final grades are submitted, I feel comfortable sending you this without sounding like I'm fishing for an A. Thank you so much for all your hard work this semester. I appreciated your constant availability and motivation more than you know. I learned a lot and I really hope I can be more proficient in R.

I also wanted to thank both you and Erica for being awesome role models. In a field generally dominated by men, even in terms of GOVT professors at Mason, it was refreshing to see two incredibly smart and successful women leading this class. It was a rare dynamic to witness and I absolutely loved it.

Thank you again and I really look forward to the possibility of taking another undergrad course with you.

Regards,

Dr. Victor,

I wanted to reach out and sincerely thank you for everything you have done for me — and all your students. Your passion for politics and love of teaching shines through in each of your lectures. Thank you for taking the time to discuss and engage all of my questions and offer advice on future studies. All your work is truly appreciated and you helped make my undergraduate experience at Mason incredible.

Sincerely,

Dr. Victor,

Thank you so much for your guidance and help through my time at Mason. I have truly enjoyed every opportunity I have had to learn from you and am so grateful to you for making my time at Mason so great. You are truly inspiring and I look to channel your determination every day while in grad school!

Dear Prof. Victor,

Next year I'll be transferring to William and Mary, so I wanted to have the chance to tell you how much I enjoyed your class. As a government major, I'd like to think that I know a bit about the three branches of government – but after this class, I realize there's a lot more to it than that. I also feel like I have a more accurate understanding of the impact that I, an individual, can have. I'm just one person, sure, but if I can only solve that dang collective action problem, I could make a difference!

I would also like to apologize for not always being able to give my full best. My reasons for transferring intensified as the end of the year approached and there were times I was unable to give this class the effort it deserved.

If you'd like to keep in touch, my permanent email is

Dear Prof. Victor,

Thank you for all of your support this semester! Taking your class was a pleasure, and I look forward to hopefully taking another class in the future. I hope you have a happy holidays!

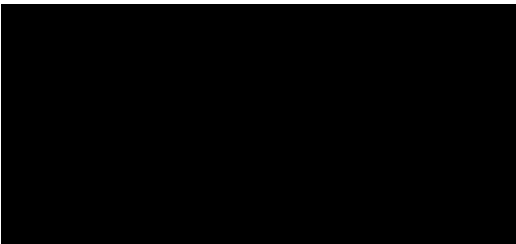A lasting impact:

**Jennifer N Victor**

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

Dr. Victor,

I doubt you will remember me, but I was a student of yours at the University of Pittsburgh about three years ago. I took your Interest Group Politics class and it changed the course of my life. I wasn't sure what exactly I wanted to do at that time, but taking your class clarified for me what direction my life would take, and more importantly you set time aside for me to have a personal conversation about "seeing the path" to working on the Hill and eventually landing a job with an interest group. I have just started a job as a Staff Assistant in the office of the Congressman from my home district have no doubt that I would have taken another route with my professional life had I not taken your class. I also distinctly remember thinking all interest groups were nefarious the first couple weeks of class. I even asked after the first class why there wasn't a clear day of discussion on this issue on the syllabus. You showed me the complexity of these issues and changed my thinking on them. I also remember enjoying the sort of "news clips" section of the day in which we spoke about current political events re: interest groups.

If you're interested, I'd love to grab a coffee sometime if you can make it work between your busy work schedule and family.

Again, thank you for helping me sort out what I wanted to do with my life.
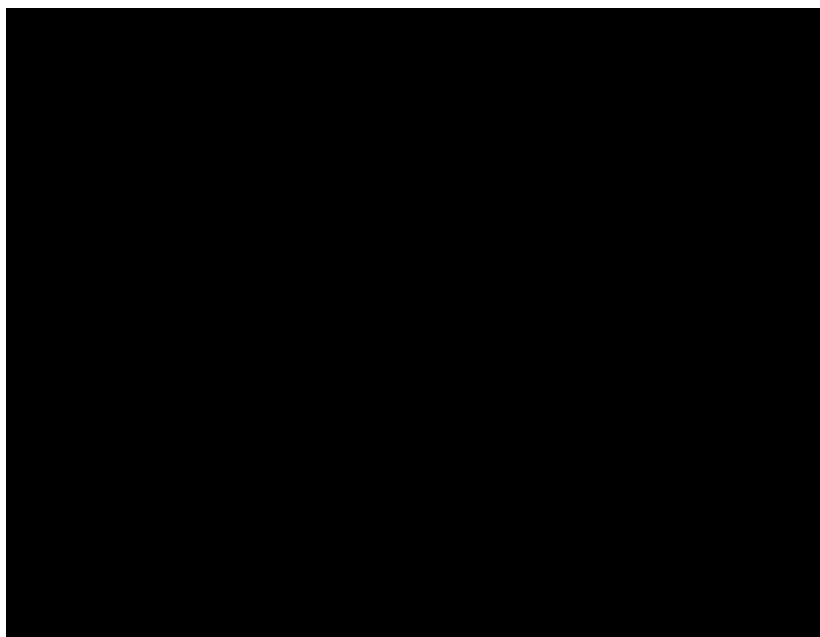
Closing statement

Academic life can feel like a treadmill—a never-ending, constant challenge that can be both punishing and rewarding. A famous person once said that if you "Do something you love, and you'll never work a day in your life." I won't go so far as to say that I think being a teacher and scholar isn't work, but it is work that I enjoy. It's rewarding and fulfilling, even if it leads to frequent sleep deprivation. The things in life worth doing are nearly always challenging in some way. It's the challenge that helps generate the sense of reward. Being a scholar and a teacher are interdependent parts of my professional identity that are inseparable and truly beneficial to one another.

I came to Mason in 2012 from a faculty position at the University of Pittsburgh. Upon my arrival, I had the immediate impression that Mason took teaching a bit more seriously than Pitt did, and at first—I'll be honest—that worried me some. Some institutions that value teaching do so at the cost of demanding and support for research. However, I quickly found that Mason promoted an environment that strongly values teaching and research, and I think that is why I have fit so well here. Mason gets me. I find the professional, scholarly, and pedagogical environment at Mason to be wholly consistent with my teacher-scholar ideal; moreover, I've advanced my own **knowledge**, **skills**, and **curiosities** in the last several years so I'm confident that I'm modeling what I aim to convey to my students.

No one of us is all things at all times. To be fair, I'm not publishing when I'm prepping lectures (or giving them), and I'm not teaching when I'm in my office writing articles and books; however, the roles feed one another and I appreciate being at an institution that recognizes the dependencies of these roles. From the library staff, to Dean's and Provost's office support, to computing resources, and database subscriptions, Mason helps me be a better teacher and a better scholar in many ways.

I'm honored to be a finalist for this prestigious award and I appreciate the opportunity to share my experiences, insights, and challenges with the selection committee.