Teaching Statement

Hye Young You*

Teaching Philosophy and Experience

Teaching is not only about delivering knowledge to students, but also about helping students construct knowledge for themselves. Student-centered knowledge construction requires three steps: 1) asking questions, 2) finding and vetting sources to acquire data and information, and 3) deploying strong analytical skills. Whenever I teach, I focus on developing these three core competencies in my students.

First, I encourage students to ask questions prompted by their curiosity, which is the best way to be fully-engaged in learning. For example, as a head teaching fellow for International Political Economy taught by Professor Jeffry Frieden, I observed that many students did not understand important terms such as “currency devaluation” and “sovereign debt crisis” because they thought those concepts were not relevant to their lives. To tackle this misconception and to spark their engagement, I asked the students to read one news article per week and develop discussion questions that connected the current event to the theory they were learning in their class lectures. When students saw how theoretical concepts could influence their own lives, such as when we examined how monetary exchange rates could affect their summer travel costs, the course material was relevant to them and they became more enthusiastic learners.

As a teaching fellow for The Past, Present, and Future of Globalization taught by Professor Dani Rodrik at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, I had no problem getting students interested in the course material. However, unlike the students in International Political Economy, they lacked the necessary background in economics and quantitative methods to formulate sophisticated questions. Although the topics covered in both courses are very similar, their audiences are entirely different. The globalization course was taught to 75 graduate students with a wide range of backgrounds in terms of academic training. To solve this problem, I created illustrations using OmniGraffle software to explain basic concepts in international economics, such as comparative advantages, in an accessible way. In their course evaluations, students commended my efforts to

*Ph.D. Candidate, Political Economy and Government, Harvard University. 1737 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. Web: scholar.harvard.edu/hyou Email: hyou@fas.harvard.edu
tailor the materials to their needs and my willingness to find creative ways to help them. This experience taught me how to adapt my teaching style to a particular group of students to ensure that they could engage with the course materials and ask probing questions about it.

After cultivating a culture of asking questions, I teach my students to find, evaluate, and use various sources of information to answer their queries. In the classroom, I incorporate new technologies to help students understand data generation processes. For example, when I was head teaching fellow for Empirical and Mathematical Reasoning: Analyzing Politics, taught by Professor Kenneth Shepsle, I used a number of innovative learning methods, including designing four experiments and running electoral prediction markets. For two years, I was also a Presidential Instructional Technology Fellow (PITF) at Harvard, where I participated in a project that designed and developed various instructional materials for an active learning-based game theory class. Recognizing the limitations of how game theory is usually taught, our team developed background information, detailed lesson plans, and student instructions for a variety of topics in economics and political science. We also designed cutting-edge custom software, EconVision, which synchronizes with those instructions, allowing students to play games against each other on their computers.

I utilized these materials in Professor Shepsle’s class. During the sections, students participated in the prisoners’ dilemma, a public goods provision, an auction, and a two-dimensional committee voting game through Econvision. I also added a chat function during these experiments so students could experience the ways in which communication affects their behaviors. The result of each experiment was analyzed immediately afterwards using customized R scripts and students were able to compare and discuss the results of their own experiments with theoretical predictions from lectures and course materials. Moreover, I set up prediction markets for the 2012 U.S. presidential election and the Massachusetts Senate race in cooperation with a private company, Inkling. Students participated in both of these and observed the differences between the predictions offered by polls and prediction markets. In each experiment, students learned how data are generated, and in their evaluations they praised the interactive learning process. This was made possible by my commitment to incorporating new technologies and learning methods in the classroom.

Finally, I train my students in skills that allow them to analyze the data sets they have assembled by pursuing answers to their own questions. The ability to connect question, theory, and evidence with a clear, logical argument requires that students develop analytical thinking tools. Developing analytical skills requires solid training in methods. I have teaching experience in both statistical analysis and formal theory. I worked as a teaching fellow for an undergraduate class, Electoral Politics, taught by Professors Stephen Ansolabehere and James Snyder, Jr. at Harvard University in 2010. Weekly review sessions were organized to teach data analysis skills using Stata. Almost every student who took this class came with no prior experience in statistical methods, and my weekly task was to teach them how to collect, clean, and analyze relevant data. I gave them weekly
problem sets with actual U.S. election data and students were required to complete analytical tasks using Stata. It was quite challenging to teach the basic theories of statistics and how to use the software at the same time to students who had no background in the field. However, the challenges of this course taught me how to teach a research design class and an introductory quantitative methods class to undergraduates in an effective way.

In addition, as a teaching fellow, I held a weekly review sessions and graded problem sets for a game theory course for Ph.D. students in Harvard’s Department of Government. I also served as a teaching assistant for Mathematics Camp for Social Science Ph.D. Students at the University of Chicago in 2008.

Teaching Interests

I can teach courses in International Political Economy, American Political Institutions, Business and Government Relations, Non-Market Strategies, Political Economy of Special Interests, and Political Economy of Elections at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. I am also qualified to teach Game Theory and Quantitative Methods at both undergraduate (UG) and graduate (G) levels if desired.

Potential Courses

- International Political Economy (UG/G)
- Comparative Political Economy (UG/G)
- Political Economy of Special Interests (UG/G)
- Non-Market Strategies (UG/G)
- Business and Public Policy (UG/G)
- Electoral Politics (UG/G)
- Game Theory (UG/G)
- Introduction to Quantitative Methods (UG/G)
- Research Design (UG/G)

Summary of Courses Taught


- *Formal Political Theory I* (Harvard, Graduate), Teaching Fellow for Prof. Laurent Bouton, Fall 2011, Evaluation: 4.6/5. A graduate seminar on microeconomic modeling, covering price theory, decision theory, social choice theory, and game theory.

- *Empirical and Mathematical Reasoning: Analyzing Politics* (Harvard, Undergraduate), Teaching

- **The Past, Present, and Future of Globalization** (Harvard, Graduate), Teaching Fellow for Prof. Dani Rodrik, Fall 2012, Evaluation: 4.23/5. A graduate course in the Harvard Kennedy School that analyzes economic globalization in a historical perspective and evaluates the arguments of both its critics and advocates of the globalization.

- **Electoral Politics** (Harvard, Undergraduate), Teaching Fellow for Prof. Stephen Ansolabehere and James Snyder Jr. Fall 2010, Evaluation: 4.29/5. An undergraduate course presenting the basic explanations and models of elections and voting behavior, and asking students to make their best forecast of the election.

- **Mathematics Camp for Social Science Ph.D Students** (University of Chicago, Graduate), Teaching Assistant for Prof. J. Mark Hansen, Fall 2008, Evaluation: N/A. A required graduate course intended for beginning students in both PhD and MA programs, focusing on calculus (differential and integral), matrix algebra, and probability theory.

**Teaching Evaluations**

My teaching evaluations have been positive. Below, I have included a sample of 5 written evaluations from students, and the full evaluations are available at my web page (link).

- “Great at explaining/clarifying and building upon points from the lecture and textbook. Very accessible outside of class, clearly cared about students, and was well informed about the workings of the course itself. This is what all TFs for this course should be like!”

- “I was so incredibly fortunate to have Hye Young as my TF! She’s great. She was always willing to meet with me, her sections were always interesting, and she was always interested in our ideas. She was the type of TF who would ask the students the question and wouldn’t have a specific answer in mind and would let out answers, take the class discussion in interesting directions. She was always prepared and just overall the best TF I’ve had at Harvard thus far.”

- “Hye Young is one of the best section leaders I’ve had at Harvard. The feedback she provides on our papers is extremely thorough. The materials she presents during sections is also very fascinating and she actively encourages input from students.”

- “Hye Young is a great section leader! She had a fantastic grasp of game theory, and I think we all benefited because she would often have a different take about how to think about or solve problems than the professor. It is always good to have different ways of thinking about problems. She was always available when we had questions, and was able to explain difficult concepts in a way that I understand.”
• “She’s very organized and takes a lot of time to make her wonderful power points, which are amazing for reviewing for the midterm and final. She finds interesting and relevant articles from *The New York Times* and *The Economist* to incorporate into section, and it never felt like it was a struggle to find something to talk about in section. She reviewed everything and covered all of our questions (in just an hour, amazingly) and tied all the concepts together. All the feedback she gave made sense and had suggestions; every grade I received was well-deserved and I felt like I knew exactly what I did wrong afterwards, which never usually happens in other classes.”

**Teaching References**

**Kenneth Shepsle**  
George D. Markham Professor of Government  
Department of Government  
Harvard University  
CGIS Knafel Building #312  
1737 Cambridge Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617 - 495 - 4928  
kshepsle@iq.harvard.edu

**Jeffry Frieden**  
Stanfield Professor of International Peace  
Department of Government  
Harvard University  
CGIS Knafel Building #211  
1737 Cambridge Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617 - 496 - 2386  
jfrieden@harvard.edu

**James Snyder, Jr.**  
Professor of Government  
Department of Government  
Harvard University  
CGIS Knafel Building #413  
1737 Cambridge Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617 - 496 - 1089  
jsnyder@gov.harvard.edu

**Dani Rodrik**  
Albert O. Hirschman Professor of Social Science  
Institute for Advanced Study  
School of Social Science  
Princeton University  
Einstein Drive  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
609 - 734 - 8281  
drodrik@ias.edu