

This document summarizes the student evaluations I received as an instructor (Table 1) and teaching assistant (TA, Table 2). At the end of each term, students evaluated my teaching effectiveness by answering a series of questions and rating my teaching skills. I converted ratings to a ten-point scale for comparability and ease of interpretation. I report the ratio of completed evaluations to enrolled students in the last column because not every student completed the course evaluations.

INSTRUCTOR

Student evaluations for Princeton’s “The Politics of Public Policy” do not reflect my individual assessments because they were collected for the teaching team as a whole. As an instructor at UCLA, I developed and taught five courses. The evaluations for four of these courses are summarized in Table 1. Student evaluations for the fifth course, “Mathematical Methods for Political Science,” were not collected.

Table 1: Overall Instructor Rating by Course Based on Student Evaluations

Course	Term	Mean	Median	Responses
The Politics of Public Policy	Fall 2019	7.08	NA	65/70
Research Development	Fall 2018-Spring 2019	9.08	9.4	32/84
World Politics	Summer 2017	8.89	10	18/37
International Politics of Human Rights	Spring 2017	9.17	10	12/15
Teaching Political Science	Fall 2015	10	10	8/10

“The Politics of Public Policy” is the flagship course of Princeton’s Master in Public Affairs. The course provides first-year master’s students with the foundational skills to analyze how political considerations affect policy choices and to communicate persuasively with public, elite or decision-making audiences. This course requires that students complete weekly policy memos on substantive topics in American, Comparative, and International Politics, so the course is taught by a team of instructors. The course concludes with an extended group simulation where students get the chance to practice what they have learned.

When I taught at the UC Center for American Politics and Public Policy, I guided students through the process of conducting original research. My research development seminar was part of a program that brought students to Washington, DC, for one quarter to complete internships and develop a research paper related to their work experience. This writing-intensive class enrolled students from different social science majors, including political science, economics, sociology, history, and communication studies. I provided individualized instruction and consultation in an interdisciplinary setting, teaching students how to frame a research question, develop a theory and a feasible research strategy, gather data, and write a 30-page paper.

At UCLA, I taught two international relations courses as the sole instructor. The first class, “International Politics of Human Rights,” was an undergraduate seminar for juniors and seniors that drew heavily on my dissertation research and relied on student participation. For example, each student served as discussion leader and peer-reviewed another student’s work. Students developed their writing skills by developing a short report on a human rights crisis into a 15-page paper that applied the theories and skills learned in class. In 2017, I taught the introductory international relations course for undergraduates. While this course was not structured as a seminar, I also relied on active student engagement to maximize student learning.

As an instructor at UCLA I also developed courses on pedagogy and mathematics. I was selected by the Department of Political Science to develop and teach a two-week course, “Mathematical Methods for Political Science,” that served as a math refresher for incoming Ph.D. students. The topics covered included probability theory, calculus, and matrix algebra. I taught this course for three consecutive summers. In addition, I was selected as the Department’s Teaching Consultant for the 2015-2016 academic year. In this capacity, I built on material that I had developed for UCLA’s Office of Instructional Development to develop a ten-week course for new TAs, “Teaching Political Science,” which covered pedagogical topics such as active learning techniques and classroom management.

As further evidence of my teaching effectiveness, I have collated a sample of unedited comments that I received in the open-response section of the student evaluations. My complete course evaluations are available upon request.

“Andrea was excellent as a preceptor. She was always super prepared and thoughtful, prompted us with engaging questions, and offered helpful critiques and feedback on the memos etc. She was also super friendly and warm. Nothing but good things to say about her.”

The Politics of Public Policy, Fall 2019

“Andrea Vilan is a fantastic professor. She was supportive to students during class and outside of lecture, always available to help. She provided insightful feedback and is truly brilliant. She made me think about gaps in my research and theory that I never would have considered on my own.”

Research Design Seminar, Spring 2019

“Andrea is a terrific instructor and knows exactly what she is hoping to relay and does it with great ease. Her expertise on the topic of human rights is connected to her passion for it which makes her a very reachable person in regards to asking questions. I enjoyed going to office hours this quarter just learning more about the topics we would discuss in class, which she would go into detail during office hours. In addition, as someone interested in going into human rights advocacy or research in the future, her input and advice has been incredibly helpful in my forming of my future career.”

International Politics of Human Rights, Spring 2017

TEACHING ASSISTANT

As a TA at UCLA, I taught a wide variety of courses, including introductory classes in international relations; upper-division courses in international law, international organizations, and international relations theory; and methods courses at the graduate and undergraduate level, including the second course of the statistical sequence in the Ph.D. program and undergraduate courses in game theory (“Politics & Strategy”) and statistics. For each course, I developed original material for discussion sections, which enrolled 60 students on average. I taught a different course each quarter to maximize my training across different topics and classroom settings. Table 2 summarizes the overall ratings I received across sections as a TA. For reference, in 2016 the average rating for TAs in the Department of Political Science was 8.48.

Table 2: Overall TA Rating by Course Based on Student Evaluations

Course	Term	Mean	Median	Responses
Globalization: Governance & Conflict	Winter 2017	9.15	10	39/59
International Organizations	Spring 2015	9.48	10	19/60
Foreign Policy Decision-Making	Winter 2015	9.41	10	21/54
International Law	Fall 2014	9.86	10	24/57
Introduction to Data Analysis	Spring 2014	9.66	10	19/43
Statistical Methods II (graduate)	Winter 2014	9.87	10	8/15
World Politics	Fall 2013	9.3	8.89	26/59
Politics & Strategy	Spring 2013	9.36	10	17/54
International Relations Theory	Winter 2013	9.09	10	27/56
World Politics	Fall 2012	9.55	10	18/60

My consistently high evaluations across a diverse range of subject matters and levels is evidence of my strength and versatility as an instructor. To provide another perspective on my teaching performance, I reproduce some unedited student comments below.

“Andrea is a great TA! She’s very concerned with student learning, and she routinely asks for feedback and adjusts her teaching style to students needs. The way she structured section was a perfect supplement to the course - just the right amount of reviewing the lecture materials combined with expansion of ideas. Her biggest strength was making terms and material from the lectures more accessible to each student (explaining terms more in depth than the professor could). She did a great job of connecting the concepts to real world examples based on her own research and personal experiences, thus improving the learning experience and making it more unique. She’s engaging and extremely knowledgeable. Makes a good point of not banking i.e. asks questions and facilitates actual discussion. No major weaknesses.”

Globalization, International Development Studies, Winter 2017

“For this course, the TA helped me a great deal in understanding the mathematical concepts and homework. She works very hard and extremely helpful for all students.”

Statistical Methods II, graduate class, Winter 2014

“Andrea is always well prepared, very knowledgeable, and eloquent in her ability to explain concepts to us during discussion. She is very good at helping us extract the main ideas and concepts from readings and further connect them to other concepts in lecture and other works. She is very easy to talk to and approachable. One of the best TAs I’ve had at UCLA.”

Foreign-Policy Decision-Making, Winter 2015

“Andrea was not only extremely knowledgeable of the class material, but also was very skilled in explaining concepts that most students struggled to understand in lecture. She was very approachable and helpful. She made all the difference in my success in this course.”

Introduction to Data Analysis, Spring 2014

“Andrea is such a wonderful TA. She gave a guest lecture which I enjoyed very much. I loved her discussion sections as they were very helpful in reviewing and condensing difficult subjects. Depending on the day, she will either make a chart for us to fill in to help organize information, have us read supplementary readings in groups and summarize them for the class, or have a very inclusive discussion. I rally [sic] enjoyed this discussion, and I always felt welcome to participate!”

Globalization, International Development Studies, Winter 2017

“Andrea has been extremely helpful this quarter. Always concerned about the students’ understanding, she is patient and willing to explain a concept multiple times, trying to approach it from a new perspective each time to help the student grasp an idea. She is always very helpful in office hours, and is even willing to stay past the scheduled office hours time to continue helping students if they still have questions. She responds to emails in a timely manner, and is really thorough in her answers to questions. It is clear she really cares about student learning. The best TA I’ve had at UCLA thus far.”

Politics & Strategy, Spring 2013