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### Statement of Teaching Philosophy

When I first learned that Latinx issues were studied in political science, my life changed. It was in my first Latinx politics class where I realized the issues facing my community were worthy of being theorized. There I realized that I wanted to pursue a career in research and teaching where I could introduce students to the particularities of the Latinx experience in the United States and the ways in which we fit into the political world, as well as serve as a role model and mentor underrepresented students like myself at the time. For this reason, I highlight tutoring, special accommodations, and mental health campus resources on my syllabi and emphasize an open-door policy when it comes to students' queries and concerns. Consequently, my philosophy as an instructor is heavily informed by my Latinx and first-generation, low-income identities and my commitment to social justice outside and inside academia. Having experienced marginality in higher education thus foregrounds my personal commitment to diversity and inclusion in the classroom. My primary motivations behind these approaches are the following: that no student feels uninterested in the material, that every student has the tools to be successful writers in social science classes, and that every student remains well-versed with regards to the big picture in the course. These motivations are the groundwork for the following pedagogical approaches I employ in the classroom.

**First, I am committed to cultivating learner enthusiasm and translating that passion into a sense of social justice.** Studies have demonstrated that aiding students to care about the material leads to better learning outcomes in general (Mahler et al. 2018). I achieve this through embodying enthusiastic behavior that helps catch students' attention and helping students connect to the implications and manifestations of the material to/in their personal life and how their personal identities color the way they absorb information. For example, in a class I was a teaching assistant for, Political Change in the Third World, I had the students reflect on how contemporary identities and collective cultures are impacted by colonial legacies dating back 300 years ago. Several students shared their personal experiences growing up in the Global South, which made the rest of their American peers take note of how contemporary and urgent their experiences are.

**A second priority in the classroom includes developing students' analytical skills in an accessible way.** Before students turn in their first analytical assignment, usually an essay where they are asked to articulate and defend their original arguments, I design a lecture on best practices for writing essays. One of the most common challenges students face when introduced to these assignments is constructing an argument. Students often rely on empirical description, so I engage in an interactive lesson wherein I take students' general questions and solicit feedback from their peers. I make this accessible by designing and giving students a sample skeleton format they can take home and reference for writing argumentative, well-organized papers with examples of thesis statements that help students construct arguments. We discuss how to connect theory and evidence by coming up with examples from class

together. I also have a website where students can sign up for office hours in order to ask questions and discuss their paper ideas and outlines with me before deadlines.

**I am also committed to helping students succeed by developing their ability to think holistically.** Courses in political science tend to have a historical bent; as such, students often report feeling overwhelmed by timelines, names, and locations, which often leads them to miss the main analytical takeaways. Having been an undergraduate myself, I do the following to help students maintain the “big picture” while sifting through historical evidence. Before every class, I begin with a PowerPoint slide in which I go over themes from the readings that are typically connected to one another. I ask students to help me “fill in” the blanks. If a course is designed around “parts,” upon completion of each part I go over major themes from that part and connect the takeaways of all the parts to date. During these special classes, I also design a classroom board activity where students work collectively to connect major theories/competing theories. I take a photo of the activity and share it with students via email; I also give students map outlines that they can fill in using class notes, which tend to be extremely helpful to use as references for essay assignments and exams.