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Subject: Teaching Statement

As an educator and scholar of regime change, political parties, institutions, and civil organisations in diverse and divided societies, I design courses and lectures that help students understand how political systems are constructed, how they evolve, and how identities and inequalities shape democratic practice. My central goal is to equip students with the analytical tools to see how race, religion, ethnicity, gender, class, and legal status influence law and policy, and why these factors matter for political and socio-economic outcomes across regimes.

Teaching Philosophy

I organise my teaching around three linked aims: **knowledge**, **application**, and **inspiration**. I strive to build inclusive and accessible classrooms that support students from diverse backgrounds' learning, creativity, and development. I rely on discussion-based learning, guided reading, and visualisation techniques to break down complex institutional processes into digestible parts. I often begin with individual reflection and small-group activities before moving to full-class synthesis. For example, in a session on the Electoral College in "Introduction to American Politics" at the University of Pennsylvania, students first brainstormed their own criteria of "fairness," which I mapped on the board. Only afterwards did we work through institutional models and historical trade-offs in presidential elections. Returning to their initial map at the end of class helped students see how institutional design shapes behaviour and how their intuitive notions of fairness intersect with power, representation, and federalism.

I encourage students to apply course concepts to real-world cases through experiential and research-based learning. In "Dilemmas of Immigration," students participated in a structured debate on a controversial campus free-speech event, using constitutional logic and class readings to formulate arguments. Their grades were based on written preparation rather than performance in the debate. In "American Democracy and Public Opinion," I guided students through designing and administering their own surveys, an assignment that spanned the entire course and culminated in a research paper.

At the University of Konstanz, within the Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality," I have supervised BA and MA theses and led research-oriented seminars that introduce students to historical and mixed-methods approaches. Here, I draw explicitly on cross-national comparisons and my archival work in Central and Eastern Europe to show how similar institutional tools—such as citizenship laws, registration requirements, or welfare eligibility rules—operate differently across political contexts. Working with students on their own projects, I prioritise teaching them how to formulate researchable questions, choose appropriate methods, and think carefully about ethical and practical constraints, especially when research involves vulnerable or marginalised groups.

I teach students how to ask and answer big questions by breaking down complex political processes that lead to mass atrocities into digestible, definable, and conceptual pieces, so that they can grasp the political causes and consequences of regime change for states and societies. In my undergraduate classes, I teach students how to read academic texts and communicate effectively,

while also introducing them to critical thinking about social problems. This includes instructing them on how to approach social scientific data (primary or secondary; qualitative or quantitative), analyze the data, and develop remedial legal, civil, and institutional solutions.

Teaching Experience and Mentorship

At the University of Pennsylvania, I taught courses on American immigration, American democracy, and Introduction to American Politics (as Head Teaching Assistant). I also contributed to modules in comparative politics (African Politics) and international relations (The European Union). As a comparativist, I am eager to offer a course that examines democracy in the United States from a comparative perspective, helping students understand the U.S. within a broader comparative framework. I am trained as a political scientist, but my scholarship is interdisciplinary. I draw on history, political economy, sociology, and social theory, and I model that interdisciplinarity in my syllabi through mixed readings (academic texts, historical cases, policy briefs, narrative and testimonial sources) and mixed assignments (analytic essays, presentations, policy memos, and community-based work).

Additionally, mentorship is a central part of my teaching identity. I aim to provide structured guidance without stifling intellectual independence and creativity. Working with students on their own projects, I prioritize teaching them how to formulate researchable questions, select appropriate methods, and carefully consider ethical and practical constraints, especially when research involves vulnerable or marginalized groups. At the University of Konstanz, I have supervised BA and MA theses and led research-oriented seminars that introduce students to historical and mixed-methods approaches in the social sciences.

My aim is for students to complete my courses able to do three things well: identify what is happening (conceptual clarity), explain why it is happening (evidence and causal analysis), and envision how it could be changed (institutional and civic remedies). I want students to be able to argue with rigor, listen across difference, and act with humility and responsibility. I have found that students perform best in inclusive, structured classrooms where they feel respected, supported, and able to take creative risks as they build analytical confidence and intellectual curiosity.

Through formal training in the CETLI Teaching Certificate (at the University of Pennsylvania) and continuous reflection on student feedback, I developed an approach, outlined above, that emphasizes active learning and inclusivity in the classroom. Even though most of my students will not go on to be political scientists, it is my goal that they take lessons from my classroom and use them to understand and question the world around them in their future careers, as well as in everyday life.

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