



# Mark Verbitsky, PhD

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## Education

- 2014 PhD in Political Science  
University of Texas at Austin (Political Philosophy, Public Law)
- 2005 Master of Arts in Political Science  
University of Alberta (Political Philosophy)
- 2002 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) with Co-operative Work Experience  
University of Alberta (Theoretical Psychology)

## Employment History

- 2018-- Assistant Professor of Teaching  
Department of Political Science, UC Davis
- 2016-2018 Lecturer  
Department of Political Science, UC Davis
- 2012-2013 Graduate Instructor  
Government Department, UT Austin
- 2006-2012 Teaching Assistant  
Government Department, UT Austin

## Courses Regularly Taught

### Pol 113: American Political Theory

- Focus on core foundational readings in American political development as well as a shifting topic on forgotten voices or failures of America to live up to its ideals.
- Assessments include: scaffolded, group reflection responses to train critical reading + discussion skills; position papers exploring particular topics; individual learning reflection at the end of the course.

### Pol 150: Constitutional Politics

- Constitutional law: Separation of powers focusing on the institutional powers and conflicts between branches and levels of government.
- Assessments include: scaffolded, peer-reviewed case briefs to train critical reading skills; hypothetical case response to apply doctrine to new contexts; research and position paper on upcoming Supreme Court case; individual learning reflection at the end of the course.

**Pol 151: Judicial Politics**

- Constitutional law: First Amendment principles, surveying the development of Free Speech and Religious Liberty jurisprudence.
- Assessments include: scaffolded, peer-reviewed case briefs to train critical reading skills; hypothetical case response to apply doctrine to new contexts; research and position paper on upcoming Supreme Court case; individual learning reflection at the end of the course.

**Pol 152: Politics of Equality**

- Political Theory/Constitutional law: Part history, covering the promise and failure of Reconstruction as well as litigation battles to bring about greater equality (e.g. NAACP, ACLU Women’s Rights Project), part constitutional law, surveying the development of 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment jurisprudence.
- Assessments include: scaffolded, peer-reviewed case briefs to train critical reading skills; hypothetical case response to apply doctrine to new contexts; research and position paper on upcoming Supreme Court case; individual learning reflection at the end of the course.

**Pol 153: Privacy and Criminal Justice**

- Constitutional law: Fourth and Fifth Amendment principles, surveying the development of privacy rights and protection from unreasonable searches, seizures, and questioning. Focus on understanding emerging threats to rights from new technological developments.
- Assessments include: scaffolded, peer-reviewed case briefs to train critical reading skills; “scholar memos,” which are written reports on academic articles; research paper exploring police power and threats from new technologies.

**Pol 192/193: Political Science Internships**

- Supervision for students working as interns in political science related fields (e.g. legislative assistant, public defender’s office).
- Assessments include: individual reflections on goals and outcome of internship program; structured interviews with leaders both inside and outside the internship organization; structured policy oriented research culminating in a policy brief supported by academic research.

**Pol 197T: Tutoring in Political Science**

- Pedagogy mentorship. I recruit students of diverse backgrounds who have been successful in several of my classes. They serve as learning assistants or peer tutors in my 113, 150-153 classes. Duties include: supervising group + peer review activities, holding office hours, preparing and delivering a lecture, individual reflection on what they learned about the material and about education.



**Pedagogical Training/Learning Communities:**

2021

Learning Community: [ACCELERATE Fellows program](#)

- Intensive fellowship designed to support the creation of inclusive and equitable learning environments in technology-rich, hybrid, and online courses.

2019--

Faculty Learning Circle: [Teaching Squared](#)

- Recurring meetings (3/quarter) where faculty work through and discuss a book on teaching practices and pedagogical research.

2018

Learning Community: [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#)

- Bi-weekly meetings over two quarters discussing practices for researching pedagogy
- Final project: Poster presentation at SOTL conference, assessing the effectiveness of a scaffolding exercise in constitutional law classes

2017

Learning Community: [Engaged Learning and Teaching Community](#)

- Bi-weekly meetings over two quarters discussing pedagogical technique
- Final project: Incorporating video technology in the classroom

- 2016-- Regular participant in UC Davis Teaching workshops + events
- Events hosted by Academic Technology Services and the Center for Educational Effectiveness
- 2012 Learning Community: Graduate Teaching Scholars
- Program sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning (UT Austin)
  - Bi-weekly, 2-hour long meetings over the semester on pedagogical technique
- 2009-2010 Graduate Training Workshops: Lecturing Certificate, Discussion Certificate
- Part of the ASPECTS series (Advancing Students Professional Excellence with Certificates in Teaching Series), offered by the University of Texas' Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment (now CTL).
  - Each certificate consisted of: i) participation in five teaching seminars, ii) having a practice lecture assessed by the DIIA, iii) submitting a self-reflection essay on teaching.



## Pedagogy Workshops/Presentations:

- [9/2021](#) Workshop: "From Remote to Live: What Lessons should We Carry Forward?,"
- Guided workshop sharing ideas on the remote-teaching strategies that were genuine improvements in teaching that should be continued for in-person classes.
  - Presented at the 2021 UC Davis Summer Institute on Teaching and Technology hosted by Academic Technology Services.
- [9/2021](#) Workshop: "Checking in on student learning: Lessons from student-led assessment"
- Guided workshop focusing on how to get students involved in the assessment process and the benefits of doing so. Focus on peer-review (assessing others) and learning reflections (assessing one's own learning).
  - Presented at the 2021 UC Davis Symposium on Assessment of Learning hosted by the Center for Educational Effectiveness.
- [9/2020](#) Workshop: "How can we change our assignments to be more equitable and meaningful for students?"
- Guided workshop sharing ideas on how to improve assignments to be more accessible to students (e.g. clearer prompts, rubrics) and meaningful (e.g. authentic writing tasks, learning reflections).
  - Co-Presented with Dan Melzer (UC Davis UWP) at the 2020 UC Davis Symposium on Assessment of Learning hosted by the Center for Educational Effectiveness.
- [7/2020](#) Workshop: "Getting Students to Think Together from Afar"
- Guided workshop sharing ideas on how to structure group activities in order to help students continue being part of a learning community while studying remotely.
  - Presented at the 2020 UC Davis Summer Institute on Teaching and Technology hosted by Academic Technology Services.
- [5/2020](#) Faculty Workshop: "Frequent, Low-Stakes Grading: Assessment for Communication and Confidence"
- Presented ideas on assessment practices in remote-learning classes, leading faculty discussion of a [short post](#) on evidence-based practices in online and remote teaching.
  - Faculty Connect event hosted by the Center for Educational Effectiveness.

[4/2020](#)

Faculty guide: “Modelling Critical Reading Skills.”

- Asynchronous online presentation of some ideas on how to teach students how to be critical readers. Along with occasionally providing annotated readers, I also provide students with a video of me annotating a landmark Supreme Court case. The goal is to help students learn how to read difficult texts by talking through the reading process as well as modelling annotation.
- Discussing Online Learning and Collaborative Education (DOLCE) event hosted by Academic Technology Services

[2/2020](#)

Faculty Workshop: “Freedom of Expression in the Classroom”

- Discussed potential tension between First Amendment law and the UC Davis principles of community. Along with distilling basic legal requirements, I led a workshop on how to guide controversial conversations in an educationally effective way that respects principles of inclusion.
- Part of the Principles of Community Week event co-hosted by the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and the Center for Educational Effectiveness.

[12/2019](#)

Resource Table: Including Undergraduates in Your Instructional Team

- Presented materials and ideas on how to include undergraduate students as peer tutors or learning assistants to improve the educational value of our classes. I co-presented with two other assistant teaching professors in STEM fields, so I focused on how to involve students in humanities and social science classes.
- Workshop presented at the UC Davis 2019 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference.

[9/2019](#)

Micro-talk: “Bringing the World to Your Students with In-Class Web-Interviews”

- Presentation on how I host in-class video interviews with non-academic experts in a field related to course material (e.g. a national ACLU lawyer to discuss First Amendment litigation). Along with presenting a how-to tutorial, I shared student feedback on how this activity helps students see the relevance of the course and it highlights how much they’ve learned since they can talk through issues with an expert.
- Part of a workshop presented at the 2019 UC Davis Summer Institute on Teaching and Technology hosted by Academic Technology Services.

[3/2019](#)

Faculty Workshop: “Week-One Technology Strategies: How best to communicate with your students before you meet them”

- Presentation on how to organize Canvas (LMS) page effectively and how to use online videos to create a welcoming course environment. Facilitated discussion thereafter.
- Faculty Forum event hosted by Academic Technology Services

[12/2018](#)

Poster Presentation: “Students' self-perceived benefits of weekly writing assignments”

- Poster presenting SOTL research on a scaffolded case-brief assignment, explaining how the assignment works (and can be applied in other classes), offering evidence of effectiveness (writing a structured response to a case helps students answer long answer questions in the final regarding that case compared to students who wrote on other cases) as well as a qualitative analysis of student responses to how the assignment helps them learn.
- Poster presented at the 2018 UC Davis Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference

[5/2018](#)

Faculty Workshop: “Facilitating Discussions on Controversial Topics”

- Presented strategies on how to discuss “hot topics” in the classroom and how to turn charged moments into productive learning opportunities. Facilitated discussion and workshop on how to apply these ideas in other classrooms.
- Faculty workshop hosted by the Center for Educational Effectiveness. By request, I repeated the workshop for UC Sacramento Center internship program.

9/2017

Micro-talk: "Using Technology to Make Large Classes Small"

- Presented strategies on how to use Canvas (LMS) tools to increase student interaction inside and outside of the classroom, focusing in particular on peer review activities.
- Part of a workshop presented at the 2017 UC Davis Summer Institute on Teaching and Technology hosted by Academic Technology Services.

2018--

Various informal workshops for graduate students and political science faculty

- Topics include syllabus design, augmenting assignments, video recording tutorials, and strategies for online teaching.



## Pedagogy Related Service:

2020

Faculty Advisory Committee for the Summer Institute on Teaching and Technology, Academic Technology Services

- Meetings to discuss themes of summer workshop series on teaching (focus = remote learning). Review proposals for synchronous workshops and asynchronous tutorials.

2020

*Ad Hoc* Online Instructional Committee, Political Science Department

- Committee organized to provide guidance to political science faculty on how to transition to online teaching. Ongoing meetings to troubleshoot difficulties and crises.

01/2020--

Faculty Advisory Committee for the Academic Assessment Team, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

- Monthly meetings to discuss how to improve academic assessment at UC Davis. Includes strategy meetings for the Student Learning Outcomes Symposium.

09/2019--

Undergraduate Affairs Committee, Political Science Department

- Committee organized to monitor and improve undergraduate education in the political science department. The committee also selects the winners of undergraduate awards and scholarships.

09/2019

Recruitment Advisory Committee for an Assessment Coordinator on the Academic Assessment Team, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

- Several meetings to review and interview candidates for the academic assessment coordinator position (culminated in hiring Ann Glazer).