
PART VI
POLITICAL SCIENCE AS A DISCIPLINE

**The Demands of Political
Science as a Discipline**

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Teaching, in general, is not merely meeting one's class from hour to hour, then delivering the lectures for the day. It requires a greater responsibility than what appear to be those ministerial functions. And it must be taken seriously.

In defining what should be the role of an ordinary teacher of political science in contributing to the development of political science as a discipline, this paper comes up with the recognition of certain demands upon the teacher of this discipline. These demands are: (1) the need to be an effective teacher; (2) the need to reconcile teaching and research to enrich the materials for classroom teaching; (3) the need to publish original researches; and (4) the need to make the course contemporary and relevant.

Recommendations are given on how an ordinary teacher of political science can cope with these demands.

The Need to Be an Effective Teacher

For the discipline of political science to be fully appreciated by the students, it is important that the teacher must be an effective medium.

The following are recommendations on how an ordinary teacher can become an effective medium of the discipline:

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First, an ordinary teacher must acquire self-confidence in the classroom. This can be facilitated by mastery and thorough knowledge of the scope and content of the subject matter to be taught.

Second, the teacher must determine the specific goals, purposes, or objectives of the course. In addition, the course must be related to the needs of contemporary political science.

Third, a particular approach or a convenient method of political analysis must be adopted in studying the course to orient the students to the ways and means of coping with the course and the course objectives.

Fourth, the teacher must have adequate familiarity with the body of literature related to the course. This includes the latest government publications and news reports. The teacher must provide the students with a course outline or syllabus to give them an idea of the coverage of the course and the task to be tackled.

Fifth, the teacher must devise a happy compromise between the rigidity of the course requirements and the students' expectations such as: broader class participation, contemporary and relevant course, satisfaction of political commitment by some, and projection of the original purpose for which the course was made.

Sixth, the teacher must make the lecture lively and interesting. This is to stimulate the interest of the students while at the same time developing in them a critical, perceptive and analytical mind.

Seventh, the teacher must come to class regularly to maintain the interest of the students.

These recommendations can still be improved upon; at best, it is hoped they can contribute to effective teaching.

The Need to Reconcile Teaching and Research

There are three types of research activities that a political science teacher is expected to engage in. First is the preparation of original research in a particular area of specialization. Second is the preparation of secondary research, such as the writing of textbooks and other instructional materials. Third is the survey and investigation of available materials, especially the recent ones, in the different fields of political science.

These research activities are not merely for a teacher's academic and professional growth; these are also for the nourishment and development of the courses being taught.

The Need to Publish Original Research

The old dictum "publish or perish" has been an accepted rule of the game in the academe. The standard of scholarship is to be able to publish one's research and writings.

A handful of recognized political scientists in the Philippines have already devoted much effort to certain researches and publication of their books; and it cannot be said that we are very much wanting in the field of political science publications by our own scholars. Nevertheless, each teacher of the discipline has the duty to contribute to the enrichment of that discipline. Thus, even if faced with difficulties, one must try to conduct research and publish the same.

The funding incentives and opportunities are not limited, according to the Philippine Social Science Research Council. It is therefore up to a would-be scholar to directly participate in research activity.

The Need to Make the Course Contemporary and Relevant

Generally, the available materials on political science are those studies done by foreign researchers authors who use foreign typologies that may not really find relevance in the study of the Philippine case. To make the course relevant, therefore, is to make the study applicable to the present need of the Philippines.

The teacher must guide the students in evaluating the relevance of foreign typologies in the Philippine experience.

In the study of political theories of the past and the present, the teacher must point out the spirit of change by which political and social thinkers conceived those theories. This way, the students will be alerted to watch for useful concepts which they can apply in their own socio-political setting.

In the study of international politics, too, the positions of big powers in the world must be explained in relation to small countries, including the Philippines. And even in the study of Philippine government and politics, the topics of concern must be discussed as truthfully as possible. In this way, the students will learn to evaluate policies and will acquire insights on the real need of Philippine society, for the present and for the future.

What have been mentioned are only a few examples of how a teacher of the discipline of political science can contribute to the

development of the same. A teacher, if resourceful enough, will have few problems in making the discipline or course relevant and contemporary to the needs of the Philippine society. All one needs is a determination to answer the needs of the discipline; and this is what the social responsibility of a teacher should be.