Pedagogical Deficiencies in Political Science Doctoral Programs: Current Practices or Lack Thereof

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Over a decade has passed since Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero (2010) published their work on the pedagogical training opportunities afforded to PhD students in political science. Despite its age, the work remains influential and cited by scholars who continue to be concerned with the state of teaching-training in the discipline. In their work, Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero survey all PhD granting political science departments and find that pedagogical training for doctoral students of political science is scant. While the article is seminal and nearly canonical, its age is beginning to show.

In this paper, I revisit the piece and investigate what, if anything, has changed in training the next generation of political scientists with respect to their teaching. After conducting semi-structured interviews with faculty in 65 PhD-granting departments, little progress has been made in training political science PhD students in how to teach. As such, graduate students are not adequately prepared for careers in higher education. I conclude by echoing scholars who call for increased attention on pedagogical training, and for a benefit structure that rewards teaching.

Keywords: pedagogy; teaching training; political science pedagogy

Introduction

Political scientists, including former American Political Science Association (APSA) presidents Rogers Smith and John Ishiyama, recently stressed the need for the field to refocus on its teaching. Smith, in his 2019 APSA Presidential Address, stated that 'many in the public value our teaching more than our research' and called for a renewed focus 'on improving teaching to enhance student learning, which by some measures is declining' (2020, 14). Ishiyama echoed Smith in stating 'the teaching of political science is more important now than ever before' (2022, 3). Extant studies on the pedagogical preparation of political science doctoral students have concluded that little-

to-no teaching training is required and thus, despite demands for an increased focus on high-quality teaching, it is not clear that PhD-granting departments are heeding the call (Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero 2010; Gaff et al. 2003).

Ishiyama, Tom Miles, and Christine Balarezo (2010) published a seminal article on the pedagogical training opportunities afforded to students pursuing political science PhDs. They discovered that departments wherein full-time faculty had the greatest levels of research productivity were least likely to offer a graduate course on teaching, and public universities were more likely to offer graduate courses on teaching than private universities. In all, 41 out of 122 (33.6%) departments Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero studied offered a graduate-level course on teaching political science, and only 28 (23%) mandated the course for doctoral students (2010, p. 517). Paul Diehl noted that this dearth of training has continued as 'Many doctoral candidates have limited background in teaching … Doctoral students might also receive little or no training in teaching or exposure to the scholarship of teaching and learning' (2021, 4).

Despite its age, Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero's article remains influential and is cited by scholars who are concerned about the state of teaching-training in the discipline (Frueh and Diehl 2021; Gatt et al. 2021; Trowbridge and Woodward 2021; Becker and Zvobgo 2019). While the research is nearly canonical, elements are outdated. First, the conclusions were based on a ranking of institutions composed by Simon Hix, whose Hix Index was completed in 2004, and no longer contains temporally reliable information. Second, Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero praised two programs as models for 'Integrating Teacher Training Into the Graduate Program' (2010, 520), one of which, Miami University (Ohio), no longer has a doctoral program. While I argue that there are methodological concerns in the work as well, the age of the article and the

ongoing demand for pedagogical seriousness provide cause for an updated investigation into the presence of pedagogical training for political science doctoral students.

The Importance of Teaching in Political Science

The National Center for Education Statistics listed 3,982 degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States operating during the 2019-2020 academic year (Moody 2021). The Carnegie Classification of Institutions lists 146 R1, 'Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity' institutions, comprising 3.66% of institutions of higher education in the United States. These institutions' respective reward structures (e.g., tenure and promotion) emphasize research compared to teaching and other faculty responsibilities including service, and professional development. The Carnegie Classification also includes 133 R2, 'Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity' institutions, and 187 institutions considered D/PU, 'Doctoral/Professional Universities.' These institutions likewise place significant weight on faculty research, in line with R1 institutions, but additionally emphasize non-research activities including teaching. A generous inclusion of all three categories leads to a conclusion that 11.7% (466/3,982) of institutions of higher educational are classified in the Carnegie system as research institutions (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education Standard Listings). Over 88% of American colleges and universities are not classified as research institutions, and place a more significant importance on teaching, and other non-research activities.

Since non-research focused institutions comprise a majority of higher education institutions, it follows that 'the vast majority of jobs for faculty members go to those whose main job will be to teach' (Manzo and Mitchell 2018). Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero explain that a small percentage of faculty positions in political science, between 26% and 35%, are in 'doctoral-granting departments' leaving between

approximately two-thirds, and three-quarters of faculty positions in non-research focused departments. Furthermore, numerous research-based institutions employ some combination of contingent faculty, and tenure-track-equivalent teaching faculty, all of whom serve primarily (if not exclusively) teaching roles. More recently, 'One major study found that among aspiring political scientists in graduate programs, most *want* to on to be higher education faculty (72%) and only a quarter will go on to work to a Research-1 (R1) Ph.D. grating institution' (Trowbridge and Woodward, 2020, 3). The majority of political science graduate students pursuing academic employment will be employed in institutions 'where teaching and professional and community service roles are of equal or greater importance than research and publication' (Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero, 2010, 516). Thus, 'the modal job in political science is one with higher teaching and service expectations and lower research expectations than those faced by faculty at PhD-granting institutions' (Becker and Zvobgo 2020, 59).

The Council of Graduate Schools and the Association of American Colleges and Universities created a guide entitled 'Preparing Future Faculty in the Humanities and Social Sciences' (Gaff et al. 2003) and this paper reiterates a point of emphasis expressed in its introduction:

> Although a significant fraction of graduate students have teaching assignments sometime during their doctoral program, too often these are not structured experiences that prepare graduates to deal with the assessment and different types of student learning, the pedagogy of the discipline, curricular innovations, the impact of technology on education, or the variety of teaching styles that may be helpful with students from different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds. (2003, 3).

Teaching training for graduate students of political science has historically been lacking, despite the fact that most academic political scientists will be employed in institutions where teaching is an occupational priority. This paper asks the question of

whether this historical circumstance has improved, or whether it has remained a non-priority for many PhD-granting departments.

The Study

Data Collection Challenges

I intended on updating the information Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero investigated, but practical challenges made this task impossible. I likewise searched graduate handbooks and supplemented the data with departmental website information to discover the pedagogical training required of doctoral students. Unfortunately, many departments lack clarity with respect to what is offered to, let alone required of doctoral students.

Some departments list pedagogical training requirements in their graduate handbooks or websites. For example, Northern Illinois University lists 'POLS 692 – Teaching of Political Science' as a one-credit course 'required of all doctoral students' in their Department of Political Science Graduate Studies Handbook. Perusing these sources of information is valuable but many departments do not make details about pedagogical training requirements immediately available, while other departments are vague about teaching training. The Ohio State University, for example, states on their website's Program Timeline that in year three, 'in order to prepare students for teaching, there is a teaching workshop offered in both the summer and the first semester of the third year.' It is not clear what this workshop contains, nor if it is required as the website only mentions that the workshop is offered.

This lack of clarity was somewhat common among departments and forced me to change my approach. Instead of relying upon department websites and handbooks, I conducted semi-structured interviews with faculty members in PhD-granting political science departments. I contacted faculty members from 114 out of the 120 departments

listed in the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of political science programs.[1] I initially conducted interviews with the intention of answering the question as to why some departments have required pedagogical training courses, while others do not. However, as concerns regarding departmental clarification arose, I shifted the purpose of the interviews to clarifying each department's requirements. Through my interviews, I found that the range of training requirements varied more than Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero had detailed, as pedagogical training is not dichotomous, but instead includes four possibilities, and variations within each of the categories.

Interview Process and Data Classification

I conducted interviews with faculty members representing 65 universities which grant PhDs in political science. I de-identified individual names and institutional information to ensure high levels of transparency, and to ascertain the most accurate and honest information possible.[2] While the interviews represent a convenience sample of respondents, it is sufficiently large as the sample includes 57% of programs considered for the study, and 54.17% of all PhD-granting departments listed in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. When dividing the programs into quintiles based said rankings, interviews include 13/23 schools in the first quintile, 13/23 in the second, 12/23 in the third, 15/23 in the fourth, and 12/22 in the fifth. I interviewed faculty from 52.78% of private institutions, and faculty from 59% of public institutions. Of my interviewees,

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[1] I excluded six departments for various reasons, the details of which could threaten the anonymity of respondents.

[2] Pseudonyms were chosen at random, were selected for their brevity, and may or may not align with the gender identity and expression of the interviewee.

73.85% are current or recent department chairs, directors of graduate study (DGS) or hold equivalent administrative titles.[3]

I grouped interviewee responses to the question of whether their doctoral students are required to undertake pedagogical training into one of four typologies. First, doctoral students must complete a course on pedagogy and/or teaching training. Second, doctoral students must complete a professionalization course that covers a range of topics including, but not limited to, pedagogy. Third, doctoral students must complete a non-course requirement that addresses pedagogy which can include workshops, orientations, or other similar trainings. These non-course requirements amount to less than a full course and do not appear on student transcripts. Lastly, doctoral students are not required to complete any pedagogical training.

My understanding of what qualifies as pedagogical training differs from that of Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero as they only included data on pedagogical coursework within political science departments. They explain that 'We coded any instance in which there was some indication of a formalized practice in a classroom setting of teacher training, such as a formal class, seminar, or guided practicum' (Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero, 2010, 517). This aligns with their justification of their data collection method as they state, 'These practices were taken as indications of a *departmental* commitment to teacher training, given that they require some investment of resources (e.g., salary, instructional time, classroom space, class room, seminar materials)' (Ibid). There are at least two reasons to question this approach.

First, my interviews uncovered that pedagogical training requirements are not dichotomous. Solely including departmental courses may overlook non-course trainings

[3] See Table 1.

received from external sources including teaching centers, or courses external to the department, but which are nonetheless required of political science doctoral students. While Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero considered why political science departments have pedagogical coursework, by not considering external training, they may have overlooked one explanation; while departments may value pedagogical training, required training may be externally provided. Thus, there is reason to include circumstances wherein a full course on pedagogy is required of political science students but is taught outside of the department, and there are meaningful differences between pedagogical courses, pedagogical training as part of a general, professionalization course within political science, and required pedagogical workshops or seminars. Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero overlook these differences which indicate varied levels of required trainings across universities.

Second, and somewhat conversely, although Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero note that the mere existence of a pedagogy course indicates a departmental commitment to teaching training, this is overstated. I found that some courses may be infrequently offered, or may be described as addressing teaching training, but may not do so in any meaningful way. Three interviewees mentioned that a course within their catalog described as teaching pedagogical content was rarely, if ever, offered[4] (and not required), while a fourth interviewee, Susan, explained that a class in her department with 'teaching political science' in the title was 'not what I'd call a pedagogy course.' By combining all courses which claim to address teaching within political science

[4] One interviewee said 'I didn't even know we had' the teaching course listed in the catalog. He continued, 'the fact that I didn't know we had it doesn't mean, definitively, that it hasn't been done in years, but I'd be really surprised.'

departments, Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero conflate courses wherein the entirety of a semester is dedicated to teaching training with comprehensive professionalization courses that merely touch upon teaching as one of many potential topics. Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero may also have classified departments as having courses devoted to pedagogy since they are 'on the books' while, in reality, these courses may not be taught with any frequency, or cover pedagogical content. This undermines their claim that the mere presence of a teaching course on a department's website or handbook indicates a commitment to teaching training. Without a more thorough qualitative investigation into the nature of the courses, one may mischaracterize courses as being pedagogically focused, due only to a course title or description, whereas the course may contain superfluous or irrelevant content. In all, the homogenization of pedagogical training overlooks important differences in comprehensiveness and excludes required training outside of departmental coursework.

Lastly, while Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero note differences between required pedagogical training, and optional pedagogical training, I am largely uninterested in the latter. Interviewees brought optional training opportunities to my attention but could not verify at what rates their doctoral students participate in said trainings. Optional pedagogical trainings can be important supplements to required trainings, but since I lacked any means of collecting accurate data on how many doctoral students partake in these optional trainings, they are of no significance to learning about the trainings required of doctoral students.[5] Conversely, students may acquire some pedagogical knowledge from a required seminar or workshop even if those trainings are limited in scope, and time. Certainly, students will gain no information if a full course – which is

[5] More detail on optional trainings will be addressed in the Discussion section.

'on the books' – is not offered. I considered training to be required if it is (a) required of all doctoral students or (b) it is required of all doctoral students who are teaching assistants (TAs) and/or engage in independent teaching experiences *and* that group is a majority of the department's doctoral students.

Interview Results

Based on interviewee responses to the question of what, if any, pedagogical training is required of their department's doctoral students, I placed each department into one of the four aforementioned typologies. Only 13 of the 65 (20%) schools require doctoral students to complete a course on pedagogy. These courses range from zero-credit, pass/fail courses, to semester-long courses for a full credit load (e.g., 3 or 4 credits depending on institutional norms), though the modal course was one-credit. Two of the courses are not taught within political science departments but are run either at the college or graduate school level, and do not specifically cater to political scientists but to larger audiences of graduate students.[6]

In 7 of 65 cases (10.77%), interviewees explained that pedagogical training is included as one component of a required comprehensive professionalization course. These courses cover a range of topics including, but not limited to teaching strategies, research fundamentals, academic conferences, academic publishing, creating curriculum vitas, the academic job market, and professional norms. Pedagogy does not comprise a majority of any professionalization course but was mentioned as one component in all seven cases. The degree to which pedagogy is covered in these courses is inconsistent even within a department, as the course's content alters as faculty instructors rotate.

[6] Again, these two courses would not have counted in Ishiyama, Miles, and Balazero's study.

For 22 of the 65 institutions (33.85%), students were required to participate in some training session(s) that were not for course credit, and which varied in length from multi-day sessions within the department, to brief orientations run by the university or graduate school. The content covered in the requirements varies as some non-course requirements were reasonably comprehensive, while others lacked considerable discourse on pedagogy. Unfortunately, in many cases, interviewees could not provide details of what was covered in sessions not held within their respective departments.

The last category, wherein absolutely no pedagogical training is required of doctoral students includes 23 out of the 65 institutions (35.38%). Responses to the lack of pedagogical training ranged from highly concerned, to reflective, to dismissive. Justifications for the lack of pedagogical training likewise ranged from administrative difficulties to a lack of funding, to inadequate faculty resources and disparate student needs, to faculty apathy and hostility towards training requirements. While it is clear that having no required coursework on pedagogy is universal in this typology, the reasonings behind the decisions are vast.

Discussion: Pedagogical Deficiencies and the Lack of Practice and Preparation

Outsourcing Teaching Training: A Laissez-faire Approach with Questionable Results

Political science departments are outsourcing pedagogical training in two respects. First, departments often rely upon campus teaching centers, which provide optional training that must be sought out by students. Second, departments refer to school-level or university-level orientations and workshops as the main source of training. In both cases, political science departments are absolving themselves of the responsibility of pedagogical training.

Numerous interviewees across typologies mentioned their respective campus teaching centers as locations wherein graduate students could receive pedagogical training. As per each university's website, all 65 universities in this study currently have teaching centers which support and advance university teaching. Several interviewees additionally stated that their teaching center has a program wherein graduate students can earn certificates in teaching. While the growth of teaching centers, and the programs they offer is praiseworthy, many political science departments have outsourced pedagogical training to those centers, without requiring students to participate in any required trainings. Due to this outsourcing, and *laissez-faire* approach to teaching training, political science departments are unaware of what, if any, training their students obtain. Where estimates have been made, the number or percentage of students pursuing voluntary training is frighteningly low.

Many interviewees noted that their students do not need required, formalized pedagogical training, since alternative sources of training are available. Jack stated that his department's lack of required pedagogical training is acceptable, since graduate students who wish to pursue jobs in teaching-focused schools can seek out their own training within the university, and complete the certificate in college teaching. Susan similarly stated, with confidence, that students wishing to pursue teaching-focused careers would participate in voluntary teaching training run by the teaching center where 'most of our pedagogical training occurs.' Lara, likewise, said that 'anyone who is interested in pedagogy' can find and obtain training on campus. Mike was similarly dismissive as he stated that 'the students who have an interest in [a teaching position] have resources available to them.' While many interviewees were satisfied with their hands-off approach, department-level data for graduate students pursuing optional training is lacking.

Though numerous interviewees mentioned their respective institutions' teaching centers, and certificates in teaching, none could report, with any confidence, what percentage of students participate in the trainings. The *laissez-faire* approach to teaching training is failing since, in all but one case, interviewees estimated that a small percentage of students complete voluntary training, despite many noting that their departments 'push' or 'recommend' said training. Sharon said the 'university does offer various types of optional, additional training' but continued by saying 'I don't think many of our students have taken advantage of that.' That few students complete optional training was a recurrent trend.

Max said that students are 'supposed to go through some training' at the teaching center before teaching in the department for the first time. However, training is not required as he noted 'we just strongly suggest they do something like that.' As such, he said he could not tell me 'what proportion actually do it.' Jack noted that only a smaller subset of students obtains the university teaching certificate, and when an optional pedagogy course was offered within the department, around one-third of eligible students completed the course. Frank said that 20-25% of students pursue a formal credential in teaching from his institution, Ethan estimated '5 or 10%' obtain a certificate, while Sid said 'I don't know that *any* of my own students' have pursued the institution's teaching certificate. Tina said she did not 'know what fraction' of graduate students pursue a teaching certificate, and when I asked Gabe if he could approximate a percentage of students who obtain the certificate, he said 'no, but it's low.' Pat praised the university's teaching center as 'number of our students' obtain a teaching certificate and 'many of our students have found this to be very valuable.' However, Pat could only estimate that between one-fifth and one-quarter of students pursue the certification. Harry said that his university's teaching center 'has a certificate and a lot of our students

do that pedagogy certificate, and I think that is helpful for students on the market.' He estimated that two-to-three students complete the certificate per year. Emma noted that, based on her experience as a graduate student advisor, maybe two of her last ten advisees have pursued the university's teaching certificate and she estimated, overall, 'it's a small minority.' Leah, who said that there is 'a lot of quite good support for teaching at the university' could not estimate what percentage of students pursue these opportunities. Mary similarly said that the teaching center 'offers an optional day-long workshop' which is 'recommended but not required' but since the department does not maintain data on attendance, 'we don't have a good sense of how many' students complete the workshop. None of these statements are unusual, as only one interviewee, Tracy, claimed that a large percentage of graduate students (about 80%) complete optional pedagogical coursework. In all other cases where optional training was mentioned, rough estimates were provided at best, and no other interviewee believed that a majority of students pursue optional training.

While interviewees pushed the narrative that students who wished to pursue training would do so, a lack of formal incentives may be contributing to low rates of completing optional training. Dom said that in his institution, it is 'not so much an issue of there not being the resources; its more that people don't necessarily know about all of them, or they don't necessarily go out of their way to access them because they're not a requirement.' Doug similarly said that few students complete the teaching certification program since there is, officially, within the department and university, 'no incentive' to do so. He noted that many "students come in and think 'I'm going to get a job at a R1'" which leads to a hyper-fixation on research output, rather than teaching excellence that is often echoed by his peers' advice to graduate students. Andy similarly noted the perverse incentives which may drive students away from optional training. He said,

'most of our students want to get jobs at R1 … they internalized the incentive structure at research universities' and do not believe that teaching is helpful in their pursuit of academic employment. In his institution, even the 'university TA training is voluntary' and he said that 'some of our students have done it, but most have not.'

These statements are emblematic of the failure of the *laissez-faire* approach to teaching training as Layla noted the distance between what is available, and what students pursue. One the one hand, students 'have a pretty robust support structure for teaching at the university level' while on the other hand 'maybe a quarter' of students are 'pretty good at taking advantage of' these opportunities. Emily was blunt in saying that there 'lots of thing that are options, or available' and while some students will take advantage of these opportunities, 'most won't.' While all academics will teach throughout their careers, without proper incentives, a large majority will never receive structured pedagogical training before entering a classroom.

A second form of outsourcing training is through non-course requirements implemented at the university or college level.[7] Most of the requirements are brief and amount to one day of training and information dissemination. Some of the requirements did span a few days, but only consisted of a few hours of training per day. Based on the training descriptions and interviews, in only one case was the training solely pedagogical in nature, yet most trainings included legal information such as on Title IX and sexual harassment, and other quasi-related information such as the responsibilities of a TA and mentor.

[7] Only two interviewees said that a non-course requirement was implemented by the department, while all others indicated that these are college (e.g., graduate college, college of liberal arts, etc.) or university requirements.

Non-course requirements such as workshops and orientations are often the only pedagogical training required of doctoral students, and several interviewees admitted to knowing little, if anything, about the required training. For example, Alex said, without much confidence, 'I think, technically, the university requires a training session.' In three cases, interviewees were unaware of required trainings. Jim, Mary, and Emma respectively sent me follow up emails after independently looking into whether their institutions had training requirements. Initially, the interviewees said that there was no requirement, but upon review, all sent corrections. Mary, in the interview, acknowledged 'the fact that I'm ignorant of it is partly the answer you need.'

Several interviewees who knew of required trainings did not know what they included. Brett said that the graduate college has a required TA orientation but 'I don't know exactly what it covers.' When I asked Layla if she knew what was covered in the university-required orientation she said had 'not a lot' of knowledge and when I asked Jeff, he similarly responded 'I don't, no.' Others who attempted to provide additional information gave vague answers. When faculty were more aware of what was covered in external requirements, the responses were not promising.

Non-course requirements often include some degree of discourse and information on pedagogy, but much time is spent on formal or legal procedures. While these are important, the transmission of this information alongside pedagogical information means that less time is devoted to teaching training. Brett, who did not know much about the orientation, said they believed it covered 'mostly a set of policies and things like that.' Layla similarly noted that the orientation included a 'variety of different things; not just teaching.' Diana described the required training as 'more HR' than pedagogically substantive. Emily described the required orientation as including 'inspirational talk about teaching' but said 'much of it' addresses state-mandated rules,

issues of privacy, plagiarism, and not pedagogy. James said that orientation deals with 'more legal, and stuff, than how to [teach]' as he noted sexual harassment policies, and how to report student concerns as examples of what is covered. Lisa gave examples of what might be covered in the orientation including how to write meaningful test questions and hold effective office hours, but she concluded, 'I don't really know what they do.' Despite Lisa's admitted ignorance, she also expressed a commonality among many respondents in saying 'our grad college takes care of all of that in terms of the basic prep for teaching.' Lisa's quote exemplifies the central problem with outsourcing teaching training, and a *laissez-faire* mindset and approach; departments are not sure what, if any, teaching training their doctoral students obtain outside of the department, and yet many acknowledge that there is no other required formalized training. Instead, numerous departments rely upon a more traditional approach to experiential training via TAships.

The Traditional Model Persists: TAships as 'Training'

Nearly all interviewees in departments where (at least most) students serve as TAs described the TA experience as a form of teaching training. Trish said that 'white the training is great,' the faculty member students TA for is more important since a 'good mentor does a lot more to help with student training than these classes.' Some interviewees echoed Trish's sentiments, yet others noted that students inevitably receive inconsistent quality and amounts of teaching training via TAships.

James said that the faculty member a student works for as a TA 'is expected to teach you to do the things they want you to do' and thus the TA experience involves both 'leadership and mentorship.' Bob similarly said, 'when you're employing grad students as a TA, you're responsible for mentoring their teaching.' Pat said that their

TAship model involves significant mentorship, as they explained 'the idea is that when you're doing these TAships, you're not just simply checking a box … they're designed to where they build on themselves to ultimately give students a good grounding in pedagogy.' Pat explained that faculty understand that their role is to use the TA experience 'as a way to introduce the students' to teaching. John said that their students' 'responsibilities go well beyond a TA' and that it is a 'one-on-one' experience where a professor serves as a mentor. This was repeated by Sharon who called their preparation 'kind of like a TA role but on steroids' with preparation described as a 'one-on-one kind of experience.' Despite these intentions, individual experiences inevitably vary.

In some cases, interviewees were critical of the TAship model with respect to how seriously students will be mentored. Gabe noted that while all doctoral students are classified as TAs, some are used as research assistants (RAs) and thus do not receive the pedagogical mentorship the model is intended on producing. Chuck similarly noted that faculty employ students 'for maybe 10 or 20 hours a week, and we get to choose whether we use them for TAs or RAs.' Doug said when it comes to TA mentorship 'we don't standardize' the experience and thus 'some of them do guest lecturing' while in other cases 'you may have them grade papers.' Obviously, this inconsistency produces inconsistent degrees of teaching preparation among students. This point was repeated by Diana who said with respect to TAships, they are a form of 'informal mentoring' and there is 'such variation' with respect to 'whether faculty really mentor their TAs or not.' While Ethan said professors are '*supposed* to go and give [TAs] feedback,' individual professors may be more or less willing or capable of providing meaningful feedback on teaching. Perhaps most bluntly, one interviewee said about the TAship model, 'I know that's not the greatest method because some professors are really terrible teachers.'

TAships as the primary form of teaching training may be insufficient as student experiences inevitably vary. Coursework – rooted in academic research on best practices – will be standardized. Mitch explained that among doctoral students 'almost all of them TA, and they often start their first year, so they are gradually educated in learning how to teach by talking with older graduate students who had been [a] TA before them.' This approach is problematic for at least two reasons. First, Mitch makes several assumptions about his TAs, including that they are strong teachers who can also teach the art of teaching to less experienced graduate students. This assumption is coupled with the unqualified belief that graduate students are both seeking pedagogical advice from advanced students, and that advanced students are voluntarily providing this advice and wisdom. Second, the idea that graduate students will gain pedagogical knowledge by 'sit[ting] in on the professors' lectures' and being 'exposed to teaching' is presumptuous. Anyone pursuing a doctoral degree has already been 'exposed to teaching' for the overwhelming majority of their lives. There is no reason to suspect that pedagogical practices will, as though by osmosis, be transmitted to graduate students in this process. Unfortunately, this TAship model is the traditional means of purportedly transmitting pedagogical information to graduate students.

There is another problem with the TAship model since graduate students – who are most likely to be employed in non-research focused institutions – are learning from faculty exclusively employed in the R1 and R2 institutions where PhDs are granted. The 'mentorship' provided by faculty to TAs may not necessarily include the advice that will benefit future teachers, as faculty members in R1 and R2 institutions may have vastly different experiences than those of their doctoral students. Rogers Smith, in his aforementioned ASPA presidential address, expressed sympathy for departments and institutions seeking higher rankings. Yet he lamented that 'institutions pursuing high

rankings, particularly those that are already wealthy and prestigious, often place only minor emphasis on teaching' (Smith 2020, 14). Professors at R1 and R2 institutions may have perverse incentives with regard to their teaching; they are disincentivized from spending much time or energy on teaching since it is not emphasized in their career advancement. However, given the ratio of jobs in teaching-focused institutions, teaching may be central in the employment of, and career advancement of their graduate students. Thus, learning about teaching from professors who are, themselves, discouraged from spending time thinking about and perfecting their teaching, may be counterproductive for doctoral students. Kurt noted that the perception in departments and institutions like his is that 'if you are spending more time on your teaching, then you're not spending enough time' conducting research. Lisa stated, 'as faculty we all went to R1s, got jobs in R1s … we never had to sell our teaching … no one ever cared' and this approach may leave doctoral students without the knowledge or skills to improve upon their teaching, let alone the capacity to market their teaching skills and experiences.

Inconsistencies across TA supervision is one reason to consider a formal pedagogy course, but some interviewees insisted that experience, and not formal education, was the best form of training. Ana said, 'you can't teach somebody how to teach … you can only learn by doing … I think it would be valuable if we provided more teaching training but at the same time, I'm of the opinion … that experience is the best guide.' Bob echoed this resistance in saying, "most of it is 'on the job training.' There's a limit to how much preparation you can do by sitting people down and going through possible scenarios." These interviewees, alongside others, stressed the value of teaching experience, rather than classroom training. Yet, other interviewees noted that

their doctoral students, and subsequently, undergraduate students, benefited from pedagogical training requirements.

Benefits of Pedagogical Training

Interviewees in institutions which have required training have seen notable improvements in graduate student teaching performance, and training has been connected to graduate student success on the academic market. Several courses were instituted due to poor graduate student teaching. Stacy explained that there was a faculty-driven push for their pedagogy course because graduate students were receiving poor reviews when teaching undergraduate courses within the department, and this notion was echoed by Lee who said that the course was a 'reaction of ours to the feedback' of undergraduates being taught by graduate students. Similarly, Kurt explained that their institution's course was implemented because the administration spent 'too much time dealing with undergraduates complaining about graduate students teaching … who didn't know what they were doing.' From a less negative perspective, Fran said that in her department the doctoral students are 'teaching our undergraduates … and we want that to be a good experience for our students.' The results of instituting additional, required training have, as per interviewees, largely been positive.

While Barry's department does not have a required pedagogy course, the department requires students to complete a 'one-week short course' consisting of 'several days, of several hours per day.' In the past, Barry noted that graduate students were 'totally overwhelmed, and the quality of the instruction was suffering, and undergraduate satisfaction with the experience had been suffering.' However, the multi-day training has improved both the graduate student experience as an instructor, and the

undergraduate experience being taught by graduate students.[8] Lee noted that evaluations of graduate student instructors improved once their training was implemented, and Ethan stated that the required training course 'had a really positive affect' in terms of getting students 'comfortable in the classroom.' Heather summarized the value of pedagogical training in stating that 'it's obviously helped [graduate students] in terms of being better teachers.'

With respect to academic job placement, Alice said that when it comes to student teaching training and experience 'I think that's our selling point.' By the time her students apply for jobs they have led 'discussions for multiple classes, taught their own independent class[es]' and have prepared teaching portfolios, and practiced teaching demonstrations. Lee said that improved 'student evaluations certainly make a difference' on the job market as 'increasingly even R1 universities' care about teaching, and having a teaching portfolio with 'excellent evaluations' has helped students obtain positions. Ethan similarly said that the training course 'may help them indirectly' as students become more confident in the classroom. Jason also noted that the combination of the department's teaching training and student teaching experience helps students on the market as they apply for more teaching-focused positions. With regards to both improving the quality of teaching, and being marketable, teaching training has produced value for many institutions where it is required.

[8] Barry did note that his department hopes to transform the short course into a full course, required of doctoral students, for course credit. Institutional limitations have made this difficulty thus far.

Conclusion

As noted, around 88% of all institutions of higher education are not research-focused, which means that teaching is given more serious consideration in tenure and promotion. While this fact alone should motivate high-quality pedagogical training for graduate students, the reality is that nearly all faculty – whether in research-focused institutions or not – teach undergraduate students. To suggest that graduate students only need pedagogical training if they are pursuing jobs in teaching-focused institutions is to suggest that faculty in research-focused institutions do not need to provide a high quality of education to their students. Moreover, when pedagogical training is not required nor incentivized, students may not pursue these opportunities. While every university studied has a teaching center wherein pedagogical training is available, departments are not tracking whether students pursue optional training, nor how training is impacting classroom or market successes.

Numerous interviewees described both the experiences of their students, and their own experiences teaching as akin to being 'thrown into the fire.' Lara began our interview by laughing at the question of required teaching training, noting that she jokes with colleagues about how the faculty teach students, but none were trained how to teach. As she stated, 'nobody ever really teaches us how to teach; they throw us in and hope for the best.' Lara's department perpetuates this approach as she stated 'we do not have anything required' and neither does the institution as there is 'no requirement anywhere.' Even their TA orientation – wherein doctoral students learn about teaching using the institution's learning management system (LMS), learn how to design a syllabus, and learn about assessments – is not required. Doctoral students can teach independently, and while 'we attend at least one class session … and give them feedback' this, again, was not required. While there exist 'orientations both in our

department and at the teaching center,' graduate students are merely 'encouraged to attend.' Thankfully, there are others resisting this mentality and approach to pedagogy, even when the battle is contested.

Alex said that while 'We're doing a good job training them for the research part of academic life … we don't offer any kind of useful, formal training in how to teach … and that's just terrible.' Alex is not alone in thinking that the general lack of training is insufficient. Larry said there is 'no standard of political science education' as the 'training is just all over the place.' He said that the discipline 'fails in pedagogy' and that the lack of pedagogical emphasis is a black stain on our discipline.' While Lou noted that perhaps 20% of students complete a teaching certificate, he said that there's 'no systematic' means of signalling the importance of teaching to the larger graduate student body. While he fights to get the message out to students that teaching is of the utmost importance, he said that it is questionable if his colleagues approach it in the same manner. Doug said that he wants more training for his students, as the minimal requirement is 'a point of frustration for me, because I do care about teaching.' Dom said 'we all know that this is something that we don't do as well as we should across the board' but noted that policies have been difficult to change in his institution.

Bob, who was department chair at the time of our interview, told me that there is no required pedagogical training of PhD students in his department, as 'we don't have a deeply institutionalized training program' but said as chair 'that's something I'd like to change.' Although Bob initially resisted the idea of requiring pedagogical training, he reflected upon his own experience, and upon his children's education. He stated,

> High school or elementary school teachers went to years and years of training … and here we are teaching at the college level and you're just sort of figuring it out as you go … and that one week of training as a TA that I had [as a PhD student] is really the only

> formal training … everything else is on the job learning through experience and it seems a bit weird and ironic that we don't do more to educate educators.

Bob expressed that he would be uncomfortable sending his own children to school if the teachers in their primary school settings received as little pedagogical training as he received, and as his graduate students receive.

Social psychologist Nathan C. Hall asked on Twitter, 'If you could go back and tell your younger academic self one thing you've learned about academia, what would you say?' (2018). Simon Hix, who created the Hix Index used by Ishiyama, Miles, and Balarezo, replied, 'You'll end up having a bigger impact on the world through your teaching than your research. Take teaching seriously, and be good to your students. It will pay you back in the end' (2018). My research indicates that graduate students are receiving the opposite signal as research is still the primary focus of graduate departments of political science and teaching is often treated as an obstacle to completing research in an efficient manner.

The notion of 'publish or perish' persists in faculty minds, and a focus on teaching, they fear, will lead students to perishing. Perhaps that is the reason why many interviewees lacked concrete answers to the aforementioned questions on teaching training opportunities, while none struggled to answer what research methods training courses were required in their departments. Only 7 of 65 departments lacked at least one methods course requirement, and thus 89.23% of departments require some research methods coursework. Departments requiring research methods courses required three classes, on average, while no department requires more than one pedagogy course. There is a mismatch in skills training as very few doctoral students are required to complete any pedagogical training, while a wide majority are required to complete

research methods training, despite the modal academic job being one that prioritizes high-quality teaching over research output.

Rogers Smith concluded his aforementioned APSA presidential address by calling for our discipline to institute various changes. Among his proposals, he stated, 'most importantly of all, at all but a tiny handful of higher-education institutions, we need to accept that it has become crucial for political science departments to teach, not necessarily more, but better' (2020, 22). I was privileged to be in the audience when Smith gave his address in Washington, D.C., and I found myself agreeing with him throughout the speech. Only moments after Smith called for a renewed focus on, and prioritization of teaching in political science, he received a raucous standing ovation, marking the end of his tenure as APSA President. Now, a few years removed, I echo Smith in calling for a focus on teaching, and this focus must begin before new political scientists are hooded; it must be emphasized in how we train the next generation of political scientists. A capacity crowd applauded Rogers Smith as he called for improvements in our teaching, but the question remains as to whether we will enact his vision.

The landscape of graduate education is changing as fewer tenure-track jobs exist, and several interviewees said that a record number of students enter their programs intent on finding employment outside of academia. While some might infer that this shift justifies a lack of pedagogical training, it remains useful as, at a minimum, classroom management, public speaking, and the dissemination of complicated information to largely uninformed audiences are common skills utilized across classrooms and industries. Although I sympathize with faculty who may not feel qualified to disseminate best practices in pedagogy to graduate students, without proper incentives to pursue external training, those students are likely to receive none at all.

Before dismissing training as a valuable experience, think back to Bob's reflection and ask yourself if you would be comfortable sending your children to school, knowing that their teachers had received little or no training before entering the classroom.

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Typology	Pseudonym Used for Interviewee	Departmental Position	Institution Location (official U.S. Census Regions and Divisions of the United States)	Public or Private University
Pedagogy Course Required of Doctoral Students	Jean	DGS	Pacific	Public
	Heather	Chair	East South Central	Public
	Fran	Chair	New England	Private
	Stacy	DGS	West North Central	Public
	Todd	Faculty	East North Central	Public
	Lee	DGS	South Atlantic	Public
	Juan	Faculty	Mountain	Public
	Alice	Faculty	West North Central	Public
	John	Faculty	West South Central	Private
	Kurt	Chair	Mid Atlantic	Public
	Trish	Faculty	Pacific	Public
	Doug	DGS	South Atlantic	Public
	Ethan	Faculty	Mountain	Public
Pedagogy Covered as Part of Required Professionalization Course	Jason	Chair	West South Central	Public
	Nick	Chair	South Atlantic	Public
	James	DGS	East North Central	Public
	Harry	DGS	Mid Atlantic	Public
	Rachel	DGS	West South Central	Public
	Ana	DGS	East South Central	Public
	Sean	DGS	South Atlantic	Public
Pedagogy Covered in a Non-Course Requirement (e.g., workshop, orientation, other training, etc.)	Jim	Chair	Mountain	Public
	Fred	DGS	New England	Public
	Jan	DGS	South Atlantic	Public
	Jake	DGS	East North Central	Public
	Mike	DGS	East North Central	Private
	Lisa	Chair	East South Central	Public
	Ken	DGS	West South Central	Public
	Sharon	DGS	South Atlantic	Public
	Alex	DGS	Pacific	Public
	Carl	Faculty	Mountain	Public
	Barry	DGS	Mountain	Public
	Mary	DGS	Pacific	Private
	Linda	DGS	Pacific	Public
	Judy	Chair	West North Central	Public
	Brett	DGS	Mountain	Public
	Emily	Faculty	West South Central	Public
	Jeff	DGS	New England	Private
	Diana	DGS	Pacific	Public
	Layla	DGS	New England	Private
	Steve	Faculty	West North Central	Public
	Cody	Chair	East North Central	Public
	Emma	DGS	New England	Private

No Pedagogical Training Required	Bob	Chair	Mid Atlantic	Public
	Susan	Chair	West South Central	Private
	Liz	DGS	East South Central	Private
	Frank	DGS	New England	Private
	Jack	DGS	South Atlantic	Private
	Katie	DGS	New England	Private
	Mitch	DGS	South Atlantic	Private
	Lara	Chair	East North Central	Public
	Andy	DGS	Mid Atlantic	Private
	Kim	Faculty	Mid Atlantic	Private
	Larry	Faculty	Mid Atlantic	Public
	Nate	DGS	South Atlantic	Public
	Pat	DGS	East North Central	Private
	Chuck	Faculty	West South Central	Public
	Evan	Faculty	Pacific	Public
	Sid	Chair	East North Central	Public
	Dom	Faculty	New England	Private
	Tina	Faculty	East North Central	Private
	Lou	DGS	Mid Atlantic	Private
	Gabe	DGS	East North Central	Public
	Leah	Faculty	New England	Public
	Tracy	Faculty	Pacific	Public
	Max	DGS	Mid Atlantic	Private

Table 1