Berlin, 8 August 2018

Teaching Philosophy[[1]](#footnote-1)

My teaching philosophy is the result of my experience as a professor, lecturer and student, in mainly Europe (Germany, France, and the Netherlands) and Asia (China, and India). I teach graduate and undergraduate students in Political and Social Sciences, Public Policy, Public Administration and Development Studies as well as professionals who work in international organizations, government agencies, corporations and the non-profit sector. My aim is to equip my students with relevant knowledge, methodological and analytical skills they will need to understand leading theories of international relations and international cooperation, policy-making processes, governance architectures, regulatory frameworks and the role and actions of different stakeholders at international, national and subnational level. With regard to understanding the complexity of multi-level governance, international cooperation and sustainability transitions, I try to make them aware of the advantages of adopting transdisciplinary perspectives.

In my understanding, University level teaching in political and social sciences should be very well aware of current political developments, public debates and academic discourses, open to transdisciplinary perspectives, and be connected to one’s ongoing research activities. As a researcher, my purpose is to push the frontiers of knowledge further, while as a teacher, I want to awaken my students' curiosity and motivation and strengthen their ability of critical analysis by means of a research-based teaching approach. I seek to involve my students in academic debates and expose them to ongoing research projects, conferences and workshops.

Example: During my time as resident professor at the School of Public Administration and Public Policy at Xiamen University, I involved my students in the preparation and conduct of our Sino-German Rio+20 follow-up conference on climate protection at Xiamen University which I co-chaired. Many of my students have been greatly inspired by their close interactions with senior researchers and with experts from government, the private sector, nongovernmental organisations and journalists. Some of them have done internships with organisations of the United Nations and with nongovernmental organisations, in China and abroad.

Trying to be aware of different interests and specific learning preferences and abilities of students, I am often using innovative teaching tools, including simulation games, exposure to projects, guest lectures, discussion with experts, and group work. I have observed that games can stimulate students’ participation and provoke critical thinking. In my courses on international cooperation and sustainable development I usually discuss the potentials and limitations of game theory to explain the multilateral struggle for the protection of the global commons, strategies of different actors and options for personal choices. I refer to the moral hazard problem, the free rider effect, and the rebound effect. I have mostly experienced very good participation of my students when discussing how to best balance individual freedom and common interests in social interaction and policy-making.

In my courses, I usually start with introducing the most relevant terms and concepts and discuss the objectives of the course with my students. I provide them with an overview of various qualitative and quantitative research methods and the specific challenges related to different methodologies.

I collect my students’ feedback and constantly reflect about the methodological mix of my teaching approach. Towards the end of the course, I provide them with an opportunity to critically evaluate the content and the teaching quality of the course and make suggestions.

I pay much attention to a good preparation and clear presentation of the seminar schedule, make use of the advantages of blended learning concepts and care about a good introduction into the concepts and the contents of my courses. I am constantly looking for ways to allow students an insight into research projects and get them in touch with experts in their field of special interest. In most of my courses I have invited practitioners for guest lecture or organised special panel discussions towards the end of the course. I believe that life-long learning occurs when students can connect with the information presented. I strive to create a personal connection with the students in my class by incorporating my research and life experiences into the lectures.

My extensive and diverse experience as a researcher, lecturer and international cooperation consultant and my role as advisor of international organisations and nongovernmental organisations enable me to provide good guidance for choosing internship and career choices for my students. I have participated as a mentor in special career counselling courses and workshops for students aiming to make students aware of special opportunities to deepen their knowledge, such as summer schools, webinars, student conferences and public lectures.

1. Da ich viele Kurse auf Englisch unterrichtete und davon ausgehe, an der Zeppelin Universität einige Lehrveranstaltungen in englischer Sprache anzubieten, ist der Text in englischer Sprache abgefasst. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)