

Kathleen E. Bolter

Teaching Portfolio

Teaching Timeline

Global Politics
American Government
Political Theory

By the Numbers

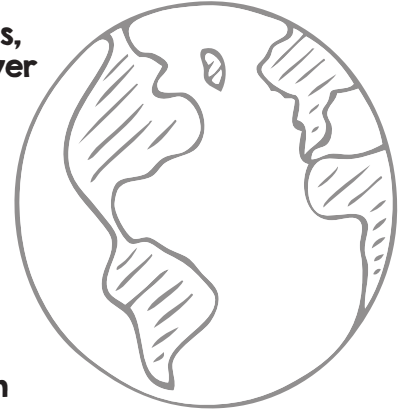
4.31 Average Teaching Effectiveness Score on Student Evaluations (out of 5)

12 Average Number of Activities, Games, and Simulations Conducted in class over the Semester

2018 Year Received Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award

6 Technological mediums used to convey important concepts in class

90% Classes Featuring Small Group & Class Discussion



2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

■ Instructor of Record
▨ Teaching Assistant

Teaching Evaluations: Most Frequently Used Words

Easy Well Real
Clear Discussions
Good Learn Enjoy
Great
Activities Think
Teach Helpful
Understand Material

PSCI 1050 – Critical Thinking (online)

Semesters taught: Summer I 2014, Summer I 2015, Summer II 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018.

Average Student Enrollment: 25

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description: The application of critical thinking to the analysis of politics. The basic components of logical argumentation will be applied to the examination of a variety of political, social, economic and ideological issues. Major topics to be covered include power, authority, political ideology, and the structures and processes of political systems.

Course Delivery: Weekly Discussions. Bi-weekly Quizzes, Critical Analysis Papers.

Average Course Feedback: (Scale 1= Exceptionally Low ... 5=Exceptionally High)

Rate the instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.	4.06
Rate the overall quality of this course.	4.13
How much have you learned in this course?	4.14
Was the grading system for the course explained?	4.62
The instructor seemed well prepared for classes.	4.58
The instructor promoted an atmosphere conducive to work and learning.	4.33
Do you feel course objectives were accomplished?	4.22
The instructor was a good classroom leader.	4.20
Was the instructor able to explain difficult material to your satisfaction?	4.22
How accessible was the instructor for student conferences about the course?	4.39
Did this course improve your understanding of concepts and principles in this field?	4.28
The instructor was receptive to differing viewpoints or opinions.	4.42
Average Rating	4.30

PSCI 2500 – International Relations

Semesters taught: Fall 2015, Summer I 2016

Average Student Enrollment: 27

Credit Hours: 4

Course Description: A study of the nature of the international community and the forces which produce cooperation and conflict. Particular attention is given to analyzing power in terms of its acquisition and uses.

Course Delivery: Participation, Policy Analysis, Presentation, Weekly News Report, Exams

Average Course Feedback: (Scale 1= Exceptionally Low ... 5=Exceptionally High)

Rate the instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.	4.31
Rate the overall quality of this course.	4.46
How much have you learned in this course?	4.33
Was the grading system for the course explained?	4.53
The instructor seemed well prepared for classes.	4.62
The instructor promoted an atmosphere conducive to work and learning.	4.69
Do you feel course objectives were accomplished?	4.62
The instructor was a good classroom leader.	4.38
Was the instructor able to explain difficult material to your satisfaction?	4.38
How accessible was the instructor for student conferences about the course?	4.38
Did this course improve your understanding of concepts and principles in this field?	4.53
The instructor was receptive to differing viewpoints or opinions.	4.77
Average Rating	4.50

GIST 2000 – Global Studies

Semesters taught: Fall 2016, Spring 2017

Average Student Enrollment: 40

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description: Interdisciplinary introduction to global and international studies as an academic field of inquiry, with emphasis on historical development of the global system, global economy and society, environmental conditions and awareness, mass communications, technology and enterprise, response formats for global issues and intellectual and creative life. Explores the relationships between globalizing forces and the countervailing influences of regional and cultural identity.

Course Delivery: Participation, Weekly News Report, Visiting International Peer Program, Critical Analysis Paper, Exams

Average Course Feedback: (Scale 1= Exceptionally Low ... 5=Exceptionally High)

Rate the instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.	4.57
Rate the overall quality of this course.	4.38
How much have you learned in this course?	4.43
Was the grading system for the course explained?	4.43
The instructor seemed well prepared for classes.	4.86
The instructor promoted an atmosphere conducive to work and learning.	4.67
Do you feel course objectives were accomplished?	4.67
The instructor was a good classroom leader.	4.43
Was the instructor able to explain difficult material to your satisfaction?	4.62
How accessible was the instructor for student conferences about the course?	4.46
Average Rating	4.55

Fall 2016 Student Feedback on VIP Program

“Reflecting back on the semester and the Buddy Abroad program, I really enjoyed when all of the international students came to our class. It was interesting to learn about the students that came from different parts of the world. I really did enjoy talking to my peer but it was hard to coordinate our schedules and sometimes I felt like she had no incentive to want to meet me or talk about her country.”

“The most memorable things looking back on the buddy abroad program was that I made a new friend (Takuma) from Japan, and was able to learn more about his country and he got to learn more about the US even though he used to live here when he was younger. I liked that he lived in the building next to mine and every once and a while we will see each other and have a conversation. I really liked being about to talk sports with someone who is from another country because they tend to be more passionate about other sports which makes the conversation more enjoyable.”

“I think that some of the most memorable moments from this program were just getting to talk to people from all over the world and getting to learn more about their cultures. I loved all of the times Mone (my buddy) and I got together for lunch and talked. We always had a great time together and I loved hearing about what life in Japan is like. She taught me so much and I’m happy to say that I have an international friend! I also really enjoyed all of the group meetings during class because then I got to meet people from Australia, Germany, South Korea, Sweden, etc. I met so many new people from so many different places and I loved hearing them talk about what their life is like back home. I also loved to hear all of the different accents!”

“While my partner and I weren’t able to meet as often as I’d have liked, I enjoyed the program overall, especially the trivia night we did as a class”

“I thought that the VIP program was very cool. I appreciated the chance to interact with another student from a different country. It really made me realize that everyone around the world are the same but different too.”

“The VIP program was actually kind of difficult for me to get done because I’m not your typical student that lives on campus or even in Kalamazoo for that matter. Although it was hard I did find a way to make it work for me not by meeting with the person I was assigned to but by find someone that I knew that was from a different country and being to discuss how things used to be for her. From what I gathered that’s what this assignment was really about, learning how things are different and similar in different countries and cultures. So I take back some of the negativity I had towards the VIP program.”

“When I first signed up for Global and International Studies, I never thought that I would be participating in this program or that it even existed. I knew international peers were at Western Michigan University, but I had never met one before.”

“Participating in this program allowed me to interact with so many like-minded and different types of people, and everyone came from across the globe. My most memorable moment was when the American students taught the international peers how to do the "Cupid Shuffle" because everyone was very confused, but everyone was laughing and having a great time.

Another great memory I had was when the visiting international peers were telling everyone what their expectations of the United States were. One student thought that there wouldn't be a lot of rice in the United States, so he ate a large amount of it become coming here. Another student thought that everyone would be fat and unhealthy, and another student was surprised by an old woman eating a large hamburger. Moving forward, the experiences I gained though this program have allowed me to become more globally engaged and intelligent. I have gained so many more perspectives, and I cannot wait to apply the global intelligence skills I learned to future projects.”

“The Buddy abroad program has been one of the most eye opening projects I think I’ve ever experienced. Not only was it eye opening because it involved people who weren’t from my country, but also because I was confronted with a lot of

things that I didn't expect. One of the biggest things I came across were the cultural similarities. Usually, in programs like this one, one might discover the differences in culture and comparatively speaking, use that for their main experience. For me though, that was the biggest surprise, finding out that there are truly more similarities than differences!"

"The most useful part of the Buddy Abroad program for me was improving my communication abilities with my buddy, who was from Japan. He spoke English but was certainly not fluent so it was difficult understanding each other at first, but got easier over time as I learned better ways of communicating."

"It was memorable to get to form a connection with someone from a different country especially because I am going to be studying abroad myself in the fall. Hearing about her experience with studying abroad in the US helped give me an idea of what to expect with studying in a new place."

"I had struggles trying to get in contact with my peer at first. My peer and I could not come up with an efficient way to get in contact with each other. Earlier today filtering through my email that my peer actually responded back to me with a cell phone number, but I did not see it until it was too late. If I could make a few alterations to the program it would be to have more ways to get in contact with the peers, and to have more in class get-togethers because those are fun and useful. I was able to attend the study abroad fair as a replacement for one of the assignments. The study abroad fair really changed my mind on studying in a different country, and I see myself looking into doing it next year."

"Overall, the buddy abroad program is a good idea, theoretically. It seems like it is meant to benefit the VIP more than the US student, but that is fine. I must confess that I was only able to meet with my buddy a few times outside of class, one of them being by accident. My problem was one of scheduling. I take 15 credit hours, work part time, and am involved in several extracurricular activities. It is not that I did not want to meet with my buddy; it's just that I never had the time."

"One thing I can definitely take from the whole experience is the humble knowing that we are all really no different from one another. We just come from different parts of the world, and partake in different habits but usually all for the same reasons. I can definitely see how this program can be a great benefit in the future as it helps patch the differences/misunderstandings that many students would have about some from a country foreign to theirs."

"I think some useful aspects of this program were learning how many similarities and differences there are between cultures. I thought many cultures were much more different than ours, but after talking with Georgia, I realized how much alike Australia and the United States really are. I was also shocked at how many stereotypes of different countries were absolutely false, such as Japan not having as much seafood as I expected."

"My favorite part of the Buddy Abroad program was spending time with my VIP student, Kana. Although we only met a few times, I enjoyed learning about her and her culture. I am glad I was able to be apart of her time here at WMU and I hope I helped her learn more about life in America. The Buddy Abroad was a very effective yet simple way to teach students about interacting with people from different parts of the world. By communicating with our VIP students, we were able to expand our cross-cultural intelligence while learning more about different countries and peoples' way of living."

☐ This semester I was paired up with Kodai from Tokyo Japan. At first I was very surprised how well he spoke english. But when him and I when out to a Chinese restaurant I started to notice how is confidence in the english language is still very limited. I would be same way in any Spanish speaking country. The most memorable time with him was taking out for his first tale gate on homecoming. I remember telling him of american football culture and though it was very interesting that you could drink out in public. I find this experience very helpful and I will continue to keep in touch with Kodai in the near future and maybe even visit him in Japan some day soon."

"The VIP buddy program is something I will remember about my college experience for many years to come. I enjoyed the wrap up event because of all the diversity that was in the room, and how it came together as one. All of the group

events for that matter gave me the same feeling. Not many people get to pair themselves up one on one and get to ask personal questions about other cultures and be able to compare them to what we have here in our own country. One of the most memorable parts of the Buddy Abroad program was doing the trivia night and getting other opinions on how the questions should be answered, as well as watching YouTube videos with my VIP buddy.”

“I think that one of the most memorable events that occurred during the VIP program was the trivia night we had when we all got put onto separate teams and had to play a jeopardy style game about other countries and their culture. It was a lot of fun because often we would ask our peer what they thought the answer was because some questions they were bound to know more than we were. The most useful information I retained from the VIP program was that South Korea has a 2-year service requirement in their military for all their citizens. Before I met Jung, I was unaware of this and it seemed strange because the armed services are strictly volunteer based here in the United States. I would say that I will be more consensus of my environment and what others think and what they have been conditioned to think because of their own cultures. Before I took this class I was unsure of whether I wanted to study abroad while I was here at Western. But now that I have seen and been exposed to all the culture and learned of all the amazing places I can go I am one hundred percent sure that I will be studying abroad while I am here at Western.”

POLS 3030 – Public Administration

Semesters taught: Spring 2018

Average Student Enrollment: 50

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description: American administrative system: emphasis on administrative structures and processes; relationship between elected offices and bureaucracy, notion of civil service, modes of managing administrative system.

Course Delivery: Participation, Weekly News Report, Critical Policy Analysis, Exams

Average Course Feedback: (Scale 1= Exceptionally Low ... 5=Exceptionally High)

The instructor clearly explained the course's objectives and grading policies	4.48
The instructor was well prepared and presented material in an organized manner	4.42
The instructor clearly explained complex material	4.42
The instructor was available and willing to help students and discuss material	4.3
The instructor was prompt in returning assignments and examinations	4.81
The instructor made students feel free to ask questions, disagree, and express their own opinion	4.5
The course did a good job of making me think during the class period	4.24
The course improved my ability to analyze in a way that will be useful in the future	4.24
The instructor's feedback and comments on papers and examinations were helpful	4.3
Examinations and assignments were a fair test of the material covered	4.48
Examinations and assignments were graded fairly	4.55
The workload was reasonable for a course at this level	4.45
The reading assignments added a great deal to what I learned in this course	3.69
I worked very hard in this course	3.82
The course made a valuable contribution to my education	4.18
The instructor is an effective and successful teacher	4.42
Average	4.33

Memorandum

To: Kathleen Bolter, adjunct professor, Political Science
From: Marc Simon, Associate Professor/Acting Chair, Political Science
Subj: Peer teaching evaluation: POLS 3030 Intro to Public Administration
Date: May 14, 2018

On April 16 I observed Kathleen Bolter's POLS 3030 Intro to Public Administration course. This memo serves as an evaluation of Professor Bolter's teaching. My overall assessment is that she is a very effective and innovative teacher, with talents that are far advance given that she is so early in her career.

Setting

This course meets MWF from 12:30-1:20 and has about 60 students, many of whom are Criminal Justice majors, along with a few Political Science majors and students from assorted other fields. It was taught in a rather odd room—HHS 100, which is extremely wide but not deep, so students are spread out. Also there is an issue with the ventilation fan, which creates enough background noise that the acoustics are difficult. On this particular day there were about 50 students in attendance. The room has display screens in various locations, including the front of the room, so all students can see well.

Content

The topic of this particular class was administrative reform and how governments can change and improve over time. Like much of the content in this course the textbook material can be rather dry and hard for students (who have little experience working in large organizations) to understand. Professor Bolter addressed four ways in which government administrations attempt reform: downsizing, re-engineering, continuous improvement, and improving transparency. She addressed these topics in the context of the Pendleton act and the historical context of changes to government, especially at the state and local level.

Before beginning with the content, Professor Bolter spent a few minutes doing a really innovative assignment which requires students to connect the classroom concepts to current events in the news. Each class period a certain percentage of students have to submit a short description of a new item online, along with a description of the primary actors involved, the institutions, and a discussion of why the event or issue is relevant to Public Administration. From the reports submitted (perhaps 10 each class; students have to do about 5 reports over the semester), Professor Bolter chooses 3-4 students (at random) who are required to share their information in a short oral presentation to the class. Students present for only about 2 minutes, and Professor Bolter then asks follow-up questions. In a class of this size, it takes quite a bit of time and effort to organize this, but it is a very effective way of getting the students to apply their knowledge as well as giving them some practice at public speaking. It's also a great way to start class with some informed interaction.

Delivery/Pedagogy

The material on administrative reform was presented by lecture supplemented with a nicely organized, clear powerpoint presentation. I was impressed that most students were taking good notes on this material, and not simply relying on the powerpoint, which had only the basic points listed. Professor Bolter has a confident presence and conveys enthusiasm for the subject matter. She presents in a clear voice, uses hand gestures effectively, and seems to have created a learning environment where students are comfortable asking questions.

After the lecture portion, which lasted about 15 minutes, Professor Bolter then moved to a kind of mini-case study using video clips from the popular TV series Parks and Recreation. She showed four clips, each about 3-5 minutes in length. Each clip illustrated one of the 4 types of administrative reform strategies.

In a longer class period, Professor Bolter could have used small groups to get the students to answer basic questions about how the clips illustrated the types of reform and the pitfalls and unintended consequences which often result. Instead, she asked for reactions to each clip from the whole class, and was able to get some input. She was able to get a reasonable level of participation. It was apparent that the students were paying close attention the clips and were engaged in the discussion. However they were not as successful in identifying the deeper issues raised by each clip. So Professor Bolter covered those, again using powerpoints to emphasize key points.

She concluded the class with a quick summary of the issues raised in the case and left students with a clear “take-away,” illustrated on a “conclusions” slide on the powerpoint. Professor Bolter created a very well organized and engaging presentation that allowed students to understand a difficult subject. By varying her pedagogical techniques (student presentations, lecture, video clips, and lecture/discussion) she was able to hold their attention and provide several engaging ways for students to learn the material. She managed time well, and in fact ended a minute or two early. She also created the basis for more in-depth discussion of these issues which would take place in the next class period.

Suggestions for improvement

Professor Bolter did a very good job, so I don't have too many suggestions for improvement. My main suggestion is to find ways of dealing with structural classroom issues. Her voice, while clear and confident, is not booming, and because of the width of the room and the hum of the fan, students on the far sides of the classroom might have difficulty hearing. She did a good job of walking side to side and making eye contact with the students, but this presents a problem because when she is turned to one side, students on the other side might have trouble hearing. Also, when the students asked questions, some were a bit soft-spoken, which means she needs to get in the habit of repeating student questions so everyone can hear. If there were enough extra seats, I would suggest that she make students not sit in the far outside seats in the room to alleviate this problem.

I applaud the time and effort it took to find and record the film clips. To show the clips, she uploaded them to OneDrive, which functioned well but did have some problem with buffering. I'm not sure if it is technically possible, but putting the clips on a flash drive that might perform better.

Lastly, while I understand that limited time prevented this, it would be very effective to do a quick small group exercise after showing the film clips. Put students in groups of 3-4 and give them instructions to answer 2-3 short questions on one of the film clips (identify the type of reform being

illustrated, list the problems with that reform illustrated in the clip, and list one unintended consequence of the reform). Then students could share their insights with the whole class, and you would still have the opportunity to summarize the main points that they may have left out. I understand that the course often does do small group work, and that perhaps this was left to future class periods on this subject.

Overall Assessment

As I indicated above, I was very impressed with the organization, effectiveness, and professionalism with which Professor Bolter led this class. In general, POLS 3030 is a difficult subject to teach, both due to the dryness of the material and the mixed academic background of the students. A class size of 60 is challenging when you are trying to promote interaction and critical thinking in the classroom. Professor Bolter has obviously put a lot of time and thought into preparing her course, and has found good ways of engaging her students and helping them relate to the material. Personally, I will be adapting her “news story” assignment for my own courses in the future. She is a very effective teacher and I highly recommend that BGSU hire her again if she is available.