

## My teaching philosophy

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### THIRD-PERSON SYNOPSIS

Dr. Richard Frank is a Lecturer in the School of Politics and International Relations and the current Convenor of the Bachelor of International Relations. His research focuses on the causes of political violence, contentious elections, and human rights. Richard has taught introductory, upper-level undergraduate, and graduate-level courses in international relations, comparative politics, and political methodology. His classes have ranged from five to over 600 students, and he has supervised teams of up to ten tutors teaching over 40 tutorials. Taking a collegial and fun approach, Richard is committed to teaching students the study of politics by integrating systematic theory, cutting-edge research, and policy practice. His goal is to produce students who think clearly, systematically, and deeply about important issues of their day. His commitment to innovative, fun, and interactive teaching has received consistently positive feedback as evidenced by exceptional student evaluations, peer recognition, and the receipt of two College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) teaching awards in 2020 and 2017.

### OVERVIEW

I am honoured to be a nominee for this award and to have the chance to share my teaching philosophy and teaching experience. What is my teaching philosophy? To paraphrase Plutarch (46-119 CE), I believe that the mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled.<sup>1</sup> One of my greatest joys as an academic is lighting a fire of curiosity and a thirst for knowledge in my students. My fiery intellectual curiosity drives my research and teaching on topics at the intersection of international and domestic politics. I have taught thirteen different undergraduate or graduate classes, most of them I designed (or redesigned) myself. I have taught five undergraduate classes at the ANU—two are large classes on International Relations theory and practice. Three focus on topics connecting political science themes with real world import—civilian victimization in civil wars, environmental and human security, and African politics. I designed these three classes to address pressing international issues and to offer students classes I thought were important but were not currently being offered at the ANU. For example, before my African politics class, no current ANU class on the politics of a continent of 54 rapidly (or not so rapidly) developing countries with over 1.2 billion people was being taught.

I enjoy lecturing, and I am (thankfully) good at it. At the same time, I believe that teaching is a craft—one you can never perfect but one that can be honed and refined through repeated cycles of innovation, evaluation, and revision. My approach follows a Humboltean approach to higher education where research and teaching are equally important, which makes teaching at the ANU so rewarding.<sup>2</sup> For the ANU's motto "First to know the nature of things"<sup>3</sup> reflects our shared dedication to produce and disseminate new knowledge about the world. This process requires excellence in both research and teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, Frank Cole Babbitt (trans). 1927. *Moralia, Vol. 1: On Listening to Lectures*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 257.

<sup>2</sup> For an overview and critique of this approach see Uwe Schimank and Markus Winnes. 2000. "Beyond Humboldt? The Relationship Between Teaching and Research in European University Systems." *Science & Public Policy* 27(6): 397-408.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase (in Latin "Naturam primum cognoscere rerum") comes from a poem by Lucretius.

My teaching philosophy is based on four fundamental principles:

1. The study of politics is fundamentally the study of power—who has it, who wants it, and the institutions channelling (or blocking) it.
2. As a relatively new field, political science is changing quickly, and research and teaching need to keep up with best practices without dogma or prejudice.
3. Students learn when they are interested in the material, see that it matters in the real world, and see that the teacher is passionate about the topic.
4. Students are more likely to engage and learn if they are having fun and are active participants in the learning process.

My teaching is inspired directly by the ANU's 2021-5 Strategic Plan—I strive for excellence in everything I do, even if, honestly, I occasionally come up short. Here are a few parts of my teaching portfolio that demonstrate an established record of excellence:

1. A 2020 College of Arts and Social Science's Dean's Commendation for Teaching Excellence.<sup>4</sup>
2. A 2017 College of Arts and Social Science's Deans Award for Teaching Innovation.
3. A 2017 Vice Chancellor's teaching enhancement grant.
4. A peer-reviewed journal article on a teaching innovation I developed.

My dedication to student teaching has been recognized throughout my career. The markers of my teaching success include positive student feedback, peer recognition, and teaching awards.

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### **Approaches to teaching and the support of learning that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn**

Political scientists differentiate their field from others by its focus on governmental power. Such power can be a double-edged sword. Governments need power to provide security and services to their citizens; however, this power can be (and often is) used to repress challengers, both foreign and domestic. ANU students, of course, have their own experiences with how power can shape individual relationships, group dynamics, and broader institutions. My approach to teaching political science centres on helping students link generalizable power dynamics to specific classic, and current, case studies and giving them the tools to reach their own evidence-based conclusions.

As a field of study barely a century old, the research and teaching of political science has evolved (and is evolving) rapidly, especially during the last few decades. It is a very exciting time to both be producing and teaching knowledge in this field. My approach to teaching highlights old truths (e.g., democracies are less likely to go to war with each other) and new challenges (e.g., do nation-states still matter in a globalized world?) at the heart of my field. My teaching highlights new and exciting research findings that affect how students view the shifting political landscape they are entering and make them eager to learn (even on Friday mornings) and conduct research, which inspires students to be lifelong learners.

**Influencing how students see the political world and their place in it.** My passion for ANU's educational mission stems from my own, atypical journey to the study of international relations (IR)—as an undergraduate I majored in English literature not political science. After being steeped in the human experience in class I longed for experience outside my hometown. After graduation the world called out—and I listened. My curiosity about the human experience led me to work in Hollywood movie theatres, suburban banks, a Welsh mountain hotel, an Alaskan salmon boat, a Baja California cruise ship, an Aleutian former naval base, a sailboat off the Horn of Africa, and a South Pole kitchen. I read widely, experienced much, and saw even more as I crossed the seven continents. I was left with a visceral impression of the importance of governments and international relations played in peoples' lives around the world. I returned to academia with a focused and enduring interest in the subject.

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<sup>4</sup> Because of the global pandemic, CASS awarded commendations rather than awards in 2020.

As I reflect now on my educational contribution, I conclude my appreciation for the important, complex realities of the world outside the classroom and for the struggles we all face drive what I teach, how I teach, and the recognition my teaching has received. Students are good at telling between instructors who do (and do not) have a passion for their subject, have an ability to explain this passion, and can describe why students should be passionate about it as well.

My atypical journey to the study of political science also enables me to influence students' willingness to risk asking important questions that *they* want to know the answer to, not necessarily the ones that have been asked before. For instance, the traditional approaches to international relations often focus on the interactions of nation-states. Political scientists are only now looking at how broadening the focus of power dynamics can affect previously overlooked groups.

"Richard is good at explaining the concepts, he uses case studies which link the concepts learnt from the readings and lecture to real life political situations around the world. Which helps me a student to see these cases in real life rather than something that is required of me to learn for the test or quiz." (POLS1005, S1 2017)

**Motivate students to learn and conduct research** How do I motivate student learning? Primarily by following a similar path I take in my research: (1) show students how to ask important questions, (2) help students find and understand others' answers to these questions, and (3) encourage students to develop their own answers. Lectures, workshops, and discussion are geared towards lighting students' fire of curiosity and channelling their efforts. Assessments are varied and geared towards ensuring student engagement, ensuring consistent and useful lecturer feedback, and developing critical thinking and research skills.



Both learning and research should be fun, interactive, and carefully documented. This reminds me of a joke I once heard. Why did the teacher write on a window? ... Because the lesson needed to be clear. I motivate students' curiosity and independent learning through a problem-based learning approach and extensive written and in-person guidance. Once students clearly understand what question we are trying to answer and what format (but not what conclusions) I am looking for, this gives students a clear roadmap, which they are more likely to want to follow.

**Inspire!** Great teaching, in my experience, is three-fourths preparation and one-fourth theatre. A spoonful of lecturer goofiness, random examples, dad jokes (see above), and topic-relevant music played before and after class help inspire students and get them energized for the weekly lectures and discussions. This ability to inspire and kindle student interest is not something, sadly, that I developed quickly. Rather my pedagogical development approximated Malcolm Gladwell's 10,000-hour rule.<sup>5</sup> Teaching is a skill that requires years of practice and effort. For me, practicing this craft also involved taking advantage of at least eight teaching classes available through CASS and CHELT. One favourite was "Lecture as Performance", which enabled the instructor to give me invaluable peer feedback on my POLS1005 lecturing and suggestions for inspiring and instructing my students.

"This course did a good job of making IR theory less dry and more accessible/interesting. I liked the care taken to link theory to practical application. It was challenging because it forced me to engage with and thoroughly apply theory in a way you can avoid in pretty much all other courses I've taken, but I see this as a positive. The course was well taught, and I felt like I got a lot out of it." (POLS3017, S2 2016)

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<sup>5</sup> Malcolm Gladwell. 2008. *Outliers: The Story of Success*. New York: Little, Brown & Co.

## Development of curricula, resources or services that reflect a command of the field

Given the ever-proliferating number of political science journals, freshly minted PhDs, and established faculty breaking new theoretical and empirical ground, I would not claim that I have a command of any field, let alone my own. Rather as I have developed and revised thirteen different courses from a first-year field survey to advanced graduate methodology,<sup>6</sup> I have sought to (1) create unique snapshots in time of the research questions defining an issue area, (2) define major research or empirical trends, and (3) chose compelling case studies, and selecting compelling readings from both influential Western authors as well as those from previously underrepresented groups. Doing so, I developed new curricula to present topics in new and compelling ways while connecting these curricula to my own research. The three examples below highlight my (relative) command of my field. First, I discuss my redesign of POLS1005 Introduction to International Relations, which included a new way of incorporating a semester-long simulation. Second, I developed new classes to fill clear teaching gaps. Third, I have trained and mentored HDR tutors and my departmental peers.

**Teaching established classes in a new and compelling way** After co-teaching one of the largest classes (over 500 students) at the ANU Introduction to International Relations (POLS1005) in 2015 and 2016, I had the opportunity of teaching this class on my own in 2017. Facilitated by a Vice Chancellor's teaching enhancement grant I significantly redesigned the course's structure and included a semester-long tutorial-based simulation of the ongoing Syrian conflict that built off the weekly lectures and readings. In 2017, 543 students learned about one (state, non-state, or international) conflict actor, its constraints, and its interests before a two-week simulated peace conference. Bookending the conference were two written assessments—a position paper and a reflection. A 2016 POLS1005 tutor and 2017 head tutor, Jessica Genauer, helped me design and implement the simulation, and then she helped me co-author and publish an article describing it in the top political science educational journal.<sup>7</sup> She also subsequently co-taught POLS1005 in 2019 and is now a Flinders Lecturer teaching her own version of this class. Since there were so many students enrolled in the class, I taught each lecture twice in a week. This took much more time, but it allowed me to directly adapt the same material to the audiences that were in front of me. After the Intro to IR redesign, 82% of students rated the class as "good" or "very good" overall (a 60% rise from 2016), and 49 of 115 comments (42%) mentioned the simulation as a course strength.

"I think [the simulation] was the most creative approach to demonstrating key IR concepts and practices and really illustrated the complexity of negotiating in a conflict with so many state and non-state actors. Taking on the role of a specific actor demonstrated how and why actors behave in regards to (sic) their interests, needs and alliances."

**Developing new classes** While the Introduction to International Relations is a class offered every year, I have also actively engaged in designing my own classes that reflect important theoretical and normative issues in my field. First, in 2016 I designed POLS3033 (Environment, Human Security and Conflict). This class is the most cross-disciplinary class I have taught as it includes issues of environmental challenges (climate change, drought, natural disasters, population pressures), human security, and civil conflict. The class was designed to introduce students to the best new research on whether and how climate change might lead to conflict. That climate change leads to conflict is an ongoing claim made by politicians to motivate climate action, but the empirical record is much more nuanced. Our class maps this nuance through a multi-step process. The class also has increasingly drawn students from across campus from the Fenner School to the College of Asia and the Pacific. Student feedback has been great (SE Item 8) and the number of enrolled students in 2020 was triple that in 2016 (SE Item 7).

Second, I proposed a third-year undergraduate course on Conflict and Change in sub-Saharan Africa (POLS3040). As mentioned above, ANU had not offered a class on African politics since I have been a staff member. I often incorporate African cases in my other classes given my research interests in conflict and

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<sup>6</sup> See for example supplementary evidence (SE item 2), several slides from my maximum likelihood class.

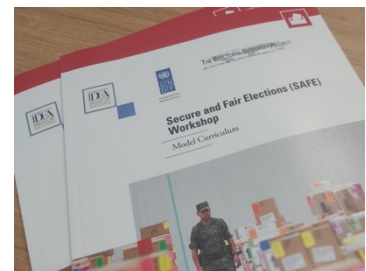
<sup>7</sup> Frank, Richard W. & Jessica Genauer. 2019. "A Classroom Simulation of the Syrian Conflict." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 52(4) 737-742.

development, and my students often asked me whether there were ways to learn more about African cases at the ANU. While my research is not limited to Africa, two of my graduate school mentors were world-renown Africanists, Ali Mazrui and Robert Bates, and I had done a significant amount of research on a number of African conflicts. In designing this new class, I incorporated some overview material from classic introduction to African politics classes while also introducing important themes and challenges the continent has faced of particular relevance to my research. The first iteration of this class was in 2019, and I am currently teaching 46 students (and 2 auditing students) in POLS3040 in Second Semester 2021.

“...the course was exceptionally well put together—it was dedicated to taking as many difference approaches and covering as many topics as possible, while maintaining a balance of still being able to go into an interesting depth. [T]he interest and dedication of the lecturer was infectious. I also thought the assessments were fantastic—this was the first literature review I've ever done, and it has changed the way I read in such a way that will be beneficial for the rest of my life.” (POLS3040, S2 2019)

Third, in Semester 1 2021 I taught an honours seminar on a rapidly growing area of research—civilian victimization in civil war (POLS4021). This class explored three important and interconnected themes in this area (1) the nature of contemporary forms of civil conflict and the use of violence; (2) the experiences of civilians in conflict zones; and (3) the responsibilities (and efforts) of domestic institutions and the international community to seek the protection of civilians in (and after) conflict. I put together a class that integrated this rapidly growing field and incorporated previously excluded groups—including women and children as both perpetrators and victims. As an honours seminar, students were pushed to shift their thinking from consumers of primary research to producers through bi-weekly critical reviews of recent research and an end-of-semester research paper poster session.

My fourth effort at developing new curricula lays outside the scope of my ANU teaching. Given my research interests in election integrity and security, I have worked to develop training resources that could help develop teaching links between policymakers and academic research. For example, in 2015 I developed a curriculum on secure and fair elections in conjunction with members of the United Nations Development Programme and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). This curriculum built on a 2014 workshop I co-organized while I was at the



University of Sydney. This workshop presented cutting-edge research on contentious elections and violence to the election management bodies of Afghanistan and Nepal. In 2015, I also partnered with ANU's Professor Ian McAllister and the Australian Election Commission to co-organize the three-day 2015 Australian Election Commission/Australian National University Electoral Management Course Curriculum Workshop held in Denpasar, Indonesia.

**Influencing and mentoring peers and student teachers** One final example of my demonstrated ability to develop teaching materials and resources that are cutting edge is the efforts I have put into mentoring graduate students and my faculty peers. I see a crucial part of my educational contribution as mentoring HDR students and early career researchers. For my Introduction to International Relations course, I led tutor teams of up to 10 tutors, and in my International Relations Theory course (POLS3017) we had two tutors a semester. In finding tutors to teach these classes, I recruited across campus. This brought new theoretical and topical perspectives to students in tutorials, and it also gave the SPIR tutors a chance to interact with ANU peers. I mentored these tutors in several ways. First, I encouraged several graduate students to give guest lectures in their areas of expertise. Second, I put together a 61-page tutoring handbook for my students that included reading summaries, simulation guide, and discussion questions (SE item 3). This served two purposes. It helped encourage consistency across tutorials, and it gave new tutors concrete advice about how to structure their tutorials and engage undergraduates in discussion of readings and case studies.

From 2015 to 2017 I served as SPIR's HDR convenor. In that role I sought to redesign with the head of school



our HDR training. Towards this end and to incorporate many departmental voiced I organized a 2017 HDR retreat at the National Portrait Gallery attended by an equal number of staff and HDR students.<sup>8</sup> In five panels we discussed important HDR issues including graduate school milestones, publishing and being on the job market. This was but one day, but it brought the department together and away from day-to-day distractions to focus on strengthening our HDR program and share knowledge with our HDR students.

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### **Evaluation practices that bring about improvements in teaching and learning**

Assessment is a necessary evil. It takes motivation for students to study and complete assessment, and it takes (on occasion) motivation to grade this student assessment and provide feedback in a timely manner. Done well, however, assessment items can be a positive and incredibly valuable part of the semester for both students and faculty. I have not reinvented the wheel here by any stretch, but I have worked to include assessments in my classes that ensure students are reaching the learning outcomes included in my course guides.

Three examples are worth highlighting. The first springs from my Introduction to International Relations class. As part of the course redesign mentioned above, I added two written assignments—(1) a position paper that students write as their Syrian simulation actor that gets them to externalise what they believe their actor wants and (2) a post-simulation reflection paper that makes students explicitly link the simulation outcome (the most common being no ceasefire) to International Relations theories and gives them an opportunity to reflect on the semester.

The second evaluation practice at the heart of my undergraduate teaching approach is also writing focused. This practice involves splitting the main research project students complete for my third-year classes into three parts: a literature review, a research proposal, and a final research essay. This is done for several reasons. It approximates the research process of many political scientists—mapping out a literature, finding a theoretical or empirical gap, and then filling this gap with their research paper. Students in my third-year classes write a literature review where they chose two or three leading explanations for an outcome and discuss influential or compelling research focusing on these explanations. This helps students find research questions that are more likely to be novel, more likely to directly spring from the existing debates in the literature, and more likely to be of interest to them. The research proposal gives students an opportunity over a month before the final paper due date to outline their research agenda and let me give detailed feedback about it. The final research paper lets them complete a project they have been working on for most of the semester and that they can be justifiably proud of. At least two of my students have then turned and published their papers in undergraduate journals.

“The assessment structure - lit review -> proposal -> final essay really sets you up for success, gives a strong foundation to write a good final essay and really understand the content. Adapted really well for online learning.” (POLS3033, S2 2020)

“Great course structure (Doing lit review, then research proposal, then research essay) - this allowed for an in depth understanding of the topic to be developed and gave the class a nice flow. Also, the course content was clear, the expectations were clear, and the lectures being filmed as multiple parts rather than a 2 hour block allowed for students to understand each topic before moving on to the next - giving us extra clarity.” (POLS3033, S2 2020)

“I really liked - and daresay even enjoyed - the research essay. I liked how we could choose our own topic area. Personally, I find if I'm investigating a topic that I actually care about then I am far more motivated to do the research and write the essay. By choosing a topic I found both interesting and relevant it, again, proved to me that IR theory did serve some purpose in understanding IR and the actions taken by states.” (POLS3017, S2 2017)

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<sup>8</sup> SE Item 4 includes a link to the conference schedule.

The third evaluation process is my evaluation of my own teaching. Every time I teach a class, I keep a notebook where I keep ideas and notes about what worked and what did not. I also keep notes from reading new issues of political science pedagogy journals (e.g., *PS: Political Science and Politics* and the *Journal of Political Science Education*). In co-taught classes I include notes from discussions with my co-teaching peers about what worked and what was worth revising. After each semester I go through my notes and revise the course assignments, readings, and activities while the memory is fresh. For example, this process led me to extend the Syrian simulation to two weeks instead of one because I felt, in retrospect, there was too much to cover in one week. Additionally, my weekly notes in POLS3033 back in 2016 suggested that students asked repeatedly about how to write a literature review because many had never written one before. As a result, I wrote guides to writing literature reviews, research proposals, and final papers that I share with students at the start of each semester (SE Item 5), which helped address student concerns and clarified expectations.

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### Innovation, leadership, or scholarship that has influenced and enhanced learning, teaching, and the student experience

**Innovation** As the saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention. The last eighteen months have witnessed a lot of invention and innovation by anyone calling themselves a teacher. Covid-19 forced all of us to adapt to a new teaching reality where inspiration would be harder won. I adapted my 117-student Semester 2 2020 class on the Environment, Human Security, and Conflict in several ways. I recorded quality lectures (five to eight videos per week), which students uniformly said they enjoyed (and YouTube metrics suggest they watched).<sup>9</sup> I periodically filmed my lectures on location around Canberra (e.g., the Australian Mint, Scrivener Dam, Namadgi Park, Kambri) to keep students interested and to highlight weekly topics.

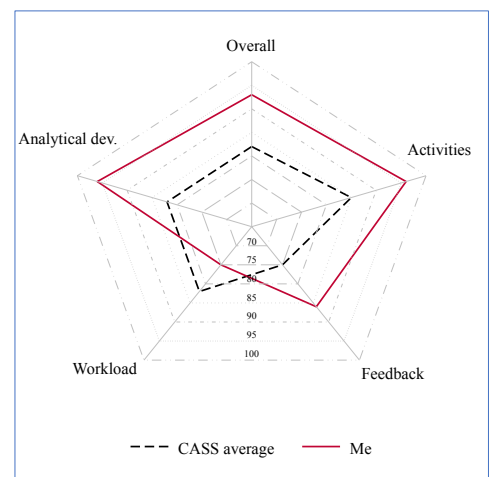


“Last week's lecture you opened up with some wooden blocks to help demonstrate a point. This was simple yet effective I feel, as I wasn't just looking to see what you'd do, and I had to listen in order to understand - I was engaged.” (POLS3033, S2 2020 midsemester student survey)

Students participated in this class in one of four ways—in-person workshops, Zoom workshops, self-organized groups, or individually. Surprisingly, the class independently split almost evenly across them. This was the only Semester 2 2020 course in my School to include a (socially distanced) in-person element.

I encouraged regular engagement through three short lecture questions and workshop activities (e.g., simulations, article analysis, online data analysis, and student-selected case studies). Lecture questions ensured engagement with the lecture material. I also shared lecture slides, lecture notes, and workshop questions in Microsoft Word format, so students could focus on substance instead of worrying about writing verbatim notes. In the end, 2020 student engagement for this course was higher than in previous years, and enrolment has more than doubled since 2017. I am also currently supervising one of my former POLS3033 students' honours thesis, and I received a 2020 CASS Dean's Commendation for Teaching Excellence for my innovative response to pandemic teaching.

“Richard's ability to cope with the tumultuous semester and not only continue to uphold a high standard of teaching, but to go above and beyond by dedicating so much time and effort into making the weekly lecture videos for us is outstanding. Richard is by far the most dedicated lecturer I've had at the ANU, he has been focused on providing a fun and relaxed learning environment while showing lenience and understanding when the semester has gotten too much for us. Huge commendation,




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<sup>9</sup> See metrics and link to my channel in SE Item 6. I have been recording online classes since 2012, which also helped.

this has been my favourite course so far in International Relations and that is largely own to Richard's teaching style. Thanks so much for all your work!" (POLS3033, S2 2020)

There is no innovation without lessons being learned. While the SELT results for this course were dramatically higher than most CASS classes that semester (see Figure 1), I did score below average on one metric—workload. Student feedback suggested this was due to the new lecture and workshop questions only counting towards the 10% participation mark. While workload complaints are always a possibility, this was a fair critique. In the next iteration of POLS3033 in Semester One 2022 I am adding these elements as separate assessment items.

Figure 1: SELT results for POLS3033, S2 2020



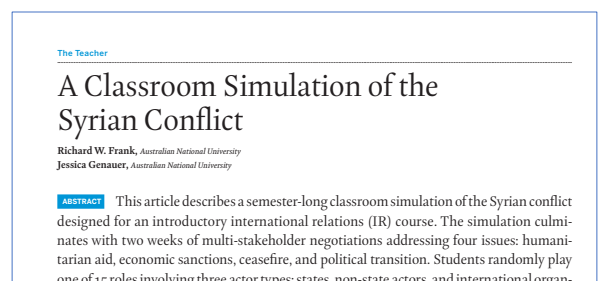
Figure 2: Sample in-class POLS3033 survey

I have also worked on several other areas of innovative teaching practice as a means of encouraging greater student interaction. To start, I am a frequent user of PollEverywhere software. In my Introduction to International Relations class, I created a live poll where students could ask questions directly during class and I would answer either at the end of class or in end of week question-and-answer recorded videos. In other classes I asked questions directly linked to the course material to increase student engagement and spark discussion (for example see Figure 2).

**Leadership** Over my teaching life, I have had opportunities to exhibit leadership in teaching amongst my peers. Above, I mentioned my experience in mentoring my lecture tutors and Higher Degree Research students. I have also been a teaching mentor and leader within my School. In my team-teaching efforts in large lecture classes, I taught with two staff members who were either an early career academic or in their first semester at the ANU. In their first semesters at my School, I served as the lead lecturer and helped them develop their own teaching material and adjust to the ANU's system and students. These lecturers used many of the innovations I developed in future iterations of these classes, and three years after I stopped teaching these classes I am now advising the current conveners of POLS1005 on using my simulation and writing assessments. I have also mentored five other SPIR staff who started teaching large lecture courses.

Given my success with adapting my Environment, Human Security, and Conflict class for hybrid teaching, I was invited by the Head of School to teach a workshop to other teaching staff on hybrid teaching in February 2021. POLS3033 was also recognized by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Grady Venville who visited my Semester 2 in-person workshop, which was the only in-person class in my School and one of two classes held in the Marie Reay top floor (6.02) all week. After I received excellent SELTs for this class, the DVC(A) suggested I apply for the ANU Educational Fellowship Scheme, which I am currently doing.

**Scholarship** Disseminating teaching innovations is also crucial. After the 2017 POLS1005 course redesign, I invited my head tutor, Jessica Genauer, to co-author an article "A Classroom Simulation of the Syrian Conflict" that was published in 2019 in *PS: Political Science and Politics*, the premier political science pedagogy journal. This article also gave us the opportunity to both describe the simulation and describe the pedagogical benefits of a longer simulation-based case study in a theory-focused class. This was my head tutor's first peer-reviewed publication, and co-authoring also gave me the opportunity to mentor her through the journal publication process. After completing her PhD in 2019, Dr. Genauer is now in a continuing lecturer at Flinders teaching her own version of this class.





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## Conclusion

Two teaching awards and a Vice Chancellors' teaching enhancement grant; thirteen different courses at various levels developed at two universities; innovative teaching approaches that motivate and inspire my students to learn more about international and domestic politics; teaching resources that demonstrate command of my field; systematic and student-centred evaluation practices; a co-authored publication with one of my students; a record of peer recognition and peer mentorship. This is a record I am proud of. I thank you for the opportunity to reflect on my teaching journey, which has had the added benefit of giving me several interesting ideas to incorporate in future courses. The kindling of students' curiosity continues...