APRIL H. BAILEY

Teaching Statement

The idea that science is a methodology rather than a mere collection of facts revolutionized my worldview and taught me to think critically. I believe that regardless of students' background, primary discipline, or ultimate career goals, they have much to gain from learning about psychology's scientific approach to human behavior. As a teaching fellow, guest lecturer, and mentor, I have endeavored to teach my students about psychology's approach as one tool that can be used to understand our complex world. I thereby aim to teach my students *how* to think more than *what* to think.

Teaching methods to undergraduate and graduate students

One of the chief tenets of psychology's scientific approach is its reliance on inferential statistics to separate signal from noise. I served as a teaching fellow to a statistics course enrolling advanced undergraduate students, first-year psychology doctoral students, and graduate students from other departments taught primarily by Dr. John (Jack) Dovidio. I sought out this teaching fellow assignment because it is one of the more demanding available. As such, I played an active role in directing the evolving trajectory of the course throughout the semester: Meeting weekly with the instructor, providing individualized feedback on students' weekly assignments, meeting with students to answer questions, and helping students shape their final original research paper. In the course evaluation, one student wrote, *"April was an amazing [teaching fellow] and was constantly available via email and in person. She provided detailed, quick feedback on take home assignments and emailed long, detailed responses to every email inquiry. She went above and beyond what is expected of [teaching fellows], and I am very grateful for her work to benefit our learning."*

Even in the seemingly objective context of a statistics course, the primary instructor and I focused on teaching students *how* to think. We held discussion-focused classes that sought to give students' the tools needed to work through difficult research problems rather than merely providing the students with a list of do's and don'ts. We challenged students to consider the ways that the choices researchers make, from exactly what tests to run to determining sample size, can bias data.

Students enter the course with a range of backgrounds in statistics. For the incoming psychology graduate students, performance in the course is considered by the faculty to be diagnostic of their long-term success in the graduate program, which can add further pressure in a domain that many students already find intimidating. I was thus committed to ensuring that regardless of prior statistical background, all students left the course with an improved set of research skills and the ability to think through statistical issues. Many students wrote that I was exceptionally responsive and provided detailed feedback to every email inquiry. One student wrote, *"April was extremely helpful and supportive. She was open and non-judgmental in answering questions, and very reassuring when students were unsure about the material. She was very generous with her time--in terms of meeting with students for extra help, and providing feedback and suggestions on work assignments."* Conversely, some students felt that the course was *too* simple, and expressed interest in learning statistics in R (the course was taught in SPSS). To also serve these more advanced students, I provided the R syntax equivalent for each statistical test that the instructor and I taught during lectures and gave an introduction to R workshop. Overall, multiple students wrote that I "went above and beyond" as a teaching fellow, and in the intervening years several graduate students have continued to seek me out for statistical input and advice.

Teaching content to undergraduate students

In addition to teaching statistics, I have sought out and given multiple guest classes on gender bias and related topics in courses cross-listed in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Department. These courses enroll students from across the university, giving me experience discussing the benefits of science with a non-scientific audience. When I teach these classes on

gender bias I am particularly cognizant that students might not feel comfortable voicing dissenting viewpoints given the topic's political charge. Indeed, after my first class students' indicated anonymously that they "felt free to disagree" with me at levels lower than I would have liked to have seen (3.7/5). Given my commitment to teaching students *how* to think rather than only *what* to think, I made several changes to the style of these guest classes to encourage diverse participation. The most recent version of this class was the most successful in generating discussions so far, and indeed, every student who provided feedback indicated that they felt free to disagree with me (5/5). I am delighted by this improvement because it suggests that even thought the content of the material has changed little, my ability to engage students across viewpoints has. One student wrote, "*Great lecture! I learned a lot and have been looking at the gender biases in everyday life more critically ever since. I would totally take a class taught by her. Very engaging, responded well to student input*."

I would thus be excited to teach a course on Research Methods or Psychology of Gender. I have also served as teaching fellow for Social Psychology with Dr. John Bargh, Attraction and Relationships with Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Clark, and Introduction to Psychology at Colgate University with Dr. Spencer Kelly. For these courses, I graded papers and exams and held regular office hours and test review sessions. Together, these experiences have helped me hone a number of skills that will serve me well when I teach a variety of courses within my range of expertise, namely, Introduction to Psychology, Social Psychology, Social Cognition, or Psychology of Stereotyping and Prejudice.

Serving as a mentor to undergraduate and graduate students

I genuinely love public speaking, and I come alive when I teach large-scale lectures or lead seminar-style discussions. But for me, the spotlight is not the draw. My joy in teaching derives from the simple pleasure of sharing knowledge. Thus, I also enjoy meeting with students individually and serving as a mentor.

I have independently recruited and mentored several undergraduate research assistants. I view these relationships as opportunities to train students in the research process while helping them advance their specific career goals. Thus, rather than fostering a purely directive relationship, I adapt the research assistantship to meet students' specific needs. For instance, one student expressed interest in learning more about color-blind ideology, a topic related to, but not a core part, of my research programs. I thus designed a syllabus for her to read over the course of a summer, and we met weekly to discuss the readings. She then developed a yearlong senior thesis project on this topic, which I supervised alongside Dr. Jennifer Richeson. This student wrote, "*Working as your [research assistant] was an amazing experience to start to learn the ropes. Doing my own research proved to be challenging, but immensely rewarding with your mentorship.*"

Communicating with the broader community

My commitment to conveying the value of science extends not only to undergraduate and graduate students but also to the broader community. For instance, I taught a local high school class about gender bias in a discussion-focused lecture, and I have provided an annual evolving workshop for the Society of Women Engineers at Yale on gender bias in the science and technology fields. This latter workshop is attended by graduate students, faculty, and staff who are science literate but who are less accustomed to applying science to the study of human behavior. These community-facing classes and workshops have thus given me invaluable experience teaching psychological principles to individuals' with diverse educational backgrounds. They have further allowed me to give back to the community and to share the importance of using scientific methods to address questions about human behavior and biases with a broader audience, including those who are most adversely affected by the very biases I study.