



Teaching Statement

Although I have taught at NYU for over 25 years, my teaching has changed the most in the last several years. In part, this is a reflection of shifts brought on by the pandemic and of students' needs in the transition back to in-person education. Yet it is also a reflection of my work as CAS Faculty Director of Curricular Innovation, which exposed me to new pedagogical approaches that I incorporated into my own classes, mentoring, and program development.

In the classroom, I've always made a conscious effort to be inclusive and dialogical. Recently, I began to use the methods of inclusive pedagogy to enhance these efforts and incorporate student voices and perspectives. I also use these methods to make my teaching more meaningful and invite collaboration. So in my Research Methods class, I introduced collaborative working groups and peer reflections. In my seminars, I diversified my course materials and encouraged students to think through those differences. And in my research-based classes, I developed ways for students to learn about and from each other as well as from me. While my teaching continually evolves, I always strive to promote belonging among students and an openness to learn from their diversity.

Outside the classroom, I engage in undergraduate education in many different ways: as director of the Law and Society Program; as director of the Diversity Undergraduate Research Incubator (DURI); as a Presidential Scholars advisor; and as a researcher in the Prison Education Program (PEP). Although this work varies, it is united in at least two ways. First, all of my work highlights student research: I encourage students to ask big, bold questions about the social world and to remain open to being surprised by it. May it be through the new Law and Society Fellows Program I created, which draws students into faculty research in unique ways. Or through the DURI program, which connects CAS undergraduates with GSAS graduate students to collaborate on on-going research projects. The idea is to open up the arena of research for undergraduates--particularly for those new to social science--so they can imagine themselves as active thinkers and knowers.

Second, all of the educational work I do is geared toward encouraging students' connection to the social world around them. This is particularly important at a moment when the world can seem unpredictable and even scary to many of them. So I help students resist the temptation to retreat from it. I urge them not only to *think* sociologically but to *act* sociologically--through increased social proximity and connection. May it be through the weeklong trip to Prague I've organized for 20+ years, where sophomores experience unfamiliar places and periods of history. Or through the Law internship program I created with the Center for Court Innovation, where students connect to legal institutions and practitioners. Or through my work with PEP, where I collaborate with formerly-incarcerated NYU students on original research. Across all of these areas, I encourage students to engage the social world with renewed rigor and vigor, thus uncovering new perspectives on it and new roles for themselves within it.