

Political Science Education in the Digital Age: Perspectives for Higher Education



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ABSTRACT

This paper starts from the task of finding pedagogical circuits that contribute to the improvement and innovation of pedagogical conditions that appeal to the latent potential of students. The question that serves as a beacon is: How are recent waves of change in the political and university arena shaping pedagogical strategies in political science, and what innovations could trigger an optimization of student training? Within this journey, the analysis flows into several estuaries: the current trends in political science education, the challenges that stand as hills in its university teaching, and the seismogram of technological innovations in political science pedagogy. At the same time, pedagogical strategies are outlined, and research tools are proposed as cartographies for political science education. In a last section, the knot of the political science curriculum in higher education is unraveled under the guidance of a qualitative methodology.

Keywords: Political Science, Higher Education, Pedagogy, Educational Innovation, Digital Era.

La Enseñanza de la Ciencia Política la Era Digital: Perspectivas para la Educación Superior

RESUMEN

La presente parte del cometido de hallar circuitos pedagógicos de aporten a la mejora e innovación de condiciones pedagógicas que apelen al potencial latente de los estudiantes. La interrogante que sirve de faro es: ¿Cómo están moldeando las recientes olas de cambio en el terreno político y universitario las estrategias pedagógicas en ciencia política, y qué innovaciones podrían desencadenar una optimización de la formación de los estudiantes? Dentro de este periplo, el análisis desemboca en diversos estuarios: las tendencias actuales en la enseñanza de la ciencia política, los desafíos que se yerguen como colinas en su enseñanza universitaria, y el sismograma de las innovaciones tecnológicas en la pedagogía de la ciencia política. A su vez, se dibujan estrategias pedagógicas y se proponen herramientas investigativas como cartografías para la formación en ciencia política. En un último tramo, se desenreda el nudo del currículo de la ciencia política en la educación superior, bajo guía de una metodología cualitativa.

Palabras clave: Ciencia Política, Educación Superior, Pedagogía, Innovación Educativa, Era digital.

O Ensino da Ciência Política na Era Digital: Perspectivas para o Ensino Superior

RESUMO

A presente parte tem o compromisso de encontrar circuitos pedagógicos que contribuam para a melhoria e inovação das condições pedagógicas que apelam ao potencial latente dos estudantes. A questão que serve de farol é: Como as recentes ondas de mudança no terreno político e universitário estão moldando as estratégias pedagógicas em ciência política, e que inovações poderiam desencadear uma otimização na formação dos estudantes? Nesta jornada, a análise conduz a diversos estuários: as tendências atuais no ensino da ciência política, os desafios que se erguem como colinas no seu ensino universitário, e o sismograma das inovações tecnológicas na pedagogia da ciência política. Por sua vez, estratégias pedagógicas são delineadas e ferramentas investigativas são propostas como cartografias para a formação em ciência política. Em um último trecho, desfaz-se o nó do currículo da ciência política no ensino superior, sob a guia de uma metodologia qualitativa.

Palavras-chave: Ciência Política, Ensino Superior, Pedagogia, Inovação Educacional, Era Digital.

1. Introduction

Political science, since its recognized consolidation as an academic and theoretical field, has maintained a rich and diverse tradition in terms of its approaches and, of course, its different areas of study. Its interdisciplinary nature allows us to explore fundamental dimensions of society, encompassing the study of government systems, the analysis of behaviors and trends in the political sphere, as well as the detailed examination of the exercise and distribution of power and resources of various kinds.

In the effervescent 21st century, political science unfolds as a great spectacle, a dance of shadows and lights that tells the human stories that shape our globalized society. It is not simply a cold examination of power structures or a disquisition on government policies. Rather, under the umbrella of this academic discipline, we explore the fascinating and sometimes bewildering complexity of life itself.

Undoubtedly, politics also functions as an ecosystem, or a whirlwind of practices that sprout and intertwine, creating patterns of change and frequent evolution. But, like any ecosystem, it is not without its challenges. Under the cloak of the 21st century, the resurgence of nationalism, the rise of populist movements, the constant struggle for democracy and human rights, and the unstoppable advance of technology become storms that rock our boat.

Regarding the theoretical field, Guevara, (2020) points out.

In recent years, within the field of social sciences, the so-called decolonial turn has gained presence, which develops an epistemological critique of the paradigms centered in Europe and the West, including Marxism, Critical Theory and post-structuralism, which have established a commitment to the emancipation of human beings and, likewise, have developed a critique of inequality and domination (p. 132).

Now, starting from the premise outlined by Ángel, (2020), “the development of Political Science programs in Colombia has not brought with it the consolidation of an institutionalized discipline, but of multiple knowledge about the political, grouped around different nomenclatures and different epistemological traditions”. (p. 20). This discipline undoubtedly represents a critically important component in the vicissitudes of contemporary higher education, forging individuals capable of decoding the complexities of the political world while preparing them for a wide range of careers in the public sector, government, politics, law, and beyond.

However, the teaching of political science in university settings and contexts is not without its thick challenges and dilemmas. In recent years, profound and accelerating changes in the university and political landscape have generated a new set of challenges and opportunities for political pedagogy. For example, the notorious and acute peak of the digitalization of public debate, the growing diversification of the student body, as well as the increase in political polarization, are structural factors that have substantially modified the dynamics in the classrooms where political science is taught and learned.

The analysis of the discipline of Political Science reveals that gender as a transversal analytical category and women as protagonists of knowledge are essentially absent from the official curriculum of the degrees, as shown by the scarcity of gender competencies included in the teaching guides, the low inclusion of references to inequalities or the under-representation of women in the bibliography. (Verge & Alvarez, 2019, p. 11).

With this understanding, the broad spectrum of academic literature has paid considerable attention to the various facets at the margins of teaching in the fields of political science, of course, from the centrality of the effectiveness of traditional teaching techniques to the impact of technological innovations on student learning, there is a compact gap in the study of how these recent changes are influencing the teaching of the discipline addressed by this study in the face of this galloping reality, the present article aims to investigate the current practices of teaching political science, with the objective of identifying areas for improvement and innovation, and outlining pedagogical strategies that can contribute to optimize the training of students.

For this purpose, we will resort to the dynamics of the qualitative methodological approach, which will necessarily include a bibliographical review, as well as the proposal of a pedagogical scheme for the indissolubly dialogical teaching of political science. Consequently, we hope that this study will contribute to the existing body of literature and generate new views, perspectives and ideas in order to enrich the teaching of political science in higher education. From the above, the following question arises: how do the recent transformations in the political and university environment impact the pedagogical strategies in political science, and what innovations could optimize the training of students?

Theoretical approaches to political science in the light of modern pedagogy

Political science, in its deepest essence, navigates on a permanent and meticulous search of the political task in its multiple dimensions, offering a detailed dissection of political and governmental regimes, decision-making processes, political behavior and, as mentioned in previous paragraphs, the distribution of power.

During the last twenty years, the social sciences and especially the political sciences have questioned the object of the disciplines; they have questioned whether the object of these disciplines and their methodological approaches are relevant for scientific work (Córdoba, 2019, p. 199).

As an academic field, political science navigates the unfathomable ocean of the political, trying to decipher the mysterious dynamics underlying the webs of governance and the exercise of power. As expressed by Chinkes and Julien, (2019), "These elements, related to the generation and appropriation of knowledge, make up a totally different scenario to that to which universities have been accustomed for centuries." (p. 26).

Within the vast domain of political science, several theoretical approaches have emerged that give visibility to various aspects of political practice. Each of these theoretical prisms presents us with a particular perspective on the tangled world of politics, providing valuable analytical tools that enrich our understanding of politics.

Critical (radical) knowledge aims not only to describe a phenomenon but seeks to reach an understanding of its causes. It does not treat the phenomenon in isolation, autonomously, as self-determined, but seeks to appropriate its multiple determinations, inserted in a reality that contains and determines it. (Montaño, 2019, p. 12).

One of these far-reaching approaches is Rational Choice Theory, which starts from the premise that individuals, imbued with an imminent, hence intrinsic, rationality, seek to maximize their own interests, whether collectively or individually driven, in the unstable arenas of politics. This approach sheds light on a wide range of political behaviors, from the motivations underlying a citizen's vote to the strategic machinations that take place in the legislators' chambers.

From another area of knowledge, the Theory of Political Behavior explores the depths of the collective psyche, seeking to decipher the hidden forces that drive individuals, groups and organizations towards certain political actions. This approach seeks to unravel the motivations and impulses that give rise to specific political behaviors, providing a deeper understanding of the social and cultural dynamics that shape politics.

Then then, the full scope of political science, in its entire theoretical evolution, strives to provide tools in the heat of analysis that allow us to navigate the turbulent waters of politics, illuminating the darker angles of decision-making, the distribution of power and the dynamics of political behavior. As a field of study of an interdisciplinary nature, political science draws on multiple perspectives and approaches to build an increasingly sophisticated and complex understanding of politics and its many manifestations. Entering the heart of the theoretical fabric of modern pedagogy, we find ourselves in a vast labyrinth of ideas, an ecosystem of practices and theories in constant evolution. This intricate educational landscape feeds and grows in response to the dizzying social, technological and cultural changes that shape the fabric of our contemporary reality.

Within this nebula of concepts and practices, some theoretical luminaries emerge that articulate the conceptual body of modern pedagogy:

One of the most brilliant constellations in this educational spectrum is, without a doubt, Constructivism. This paradigm situates learning as an active and vigorous process, where students become the architects of their own knowledge. This principle rejects the view of the learner as a mere passive recipient of information, and instead celebrates the learner as a sculptor of knowledge, shaping his or her understanding through experience and critical reflection.

Continuing in this orbit, we find *Learner-Centered Pedagogy*, a powerful lens that focuses educational attention on the individual learner. This perspective advocates a tailored educational approach, sensitive to the particularities, interests, and abilities of each student. Here the integral development of the learner is deeply valued, a harmonious balance between the academic and the socioemotional.

At the same time, in an increasingly digitalized world, technology and information pedagogy is emerging as a milestone in the path of modern education. This approach values and appropriates the leading role that information and communication technologies (ICT) play in our social fabric. “Such integration of ICT in the constructivist methodology is optimal for motivating, creating experiences, and, as a joint result, for teaching to think, teaching to learn and increasing knowledge through meaningful learning.” (Reyero, 2019, p. 111).

Its goal is not simply to teach with technology, but to form citizens capable of understanding, criticizing, and transforming this digitalized world. With the same theoretical stature, there is *Collaborative Learning*. This approach defends the value of collective work, of learning as a joint effort in which each piece adds and multiplies. Here dialogue is honored, relationships are strengthened, and essential teamwork skills are cultivated.

Therefore, modern pedagogy, with its theoretical and practical richness, is a sort of multifaceted polyhedron, an entity that lives and breathes in tune with the demands and challenges of our time. Its task is none other than to form well-rounded, critical and creative individuals, capable of navigating skillfully in the sometimes-turbulent waters of our contemporary era.

Teaching Political Science in Higher Education: Current trends in political science education

The pedagogy of political science, immersed in the sphere of higher education, has undergone a significant metamorphosis considering the evolution of recent decades. The etiology of this transformation is to be found in the structural and conceptual changes that have been delineated in the vast canvas of the global educational landscape. Through the eyes of the analysis and exploration of these current trends, we are given a broader, more lucid, and precise view of the contemporary context of this discipline and its future projections and typologies.

With the structuring of learning outcomes according to university syllabi, which addresses the new procedures, actions and opportunities in the educational process that arise as ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) advance and become more present in the academic system. (Cuenca, Álvarez, Ontaneda, Ontaneda, & Ontaneda, 2021, p. 12).

Experiential immersion: simulations and role-plays

The pedagogical resource of simulation and role-playing has gained significant momentum in the teaching of political science. These playful-experiential pedagogical approaches allow students to transcend the passivity of theory and enter the active dynamics of practice. By simulating political situations, debates and conflicts, students are challenged to activate and apply their theoretical knowledge and to develop a range of practical skills and essential competencies such as negotiation, problem solving and leadership.

Disciplinary polyvalence: the interdisciplinary approach

The teaching of political science, in tune with current times, has adopted an interdisciplinary vision that expands the cognitive horizons of students and brings them closer to a more complete and nuanced understanding of political phenomena. Political science is enriched and strengthened through the links established with other disciplines, such as economics, sociology, history, and psychology, to unravel the intricate dynamics of power, ideology, and political behavior.

The digital revolution: the use of digital technologies

The digitization of education has introduced a schism in the traditional teaching of political science. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are metamorphosing teaching and learning methods, broadening access to knowledge, encouraging active participation and democratizing the ability to analyze large volumes of data. Virtual environments constitute vigorous learning tools, MOOCs, podcasts, social networks, and online databases are some of the digital tools that are reshaping the didactics of political science.

Regarding social networks and education, exposes Belanche, Lozano & Perez, (2019).

It has facilitated the learning of the theoretical aspects of the subject, giving the student a more active role both in the elaboration of the content and in its evaluation. In addition, it has helped the student to improve transversal competencies (innovation, communication, creativity, teamwork). (p. 207).

Towards a pragmatic pedagogy: competency-based education

The growing shift towards a pragmatic, competency-oriented pedagogy, as opposed to an approach centered on the mere transmission of content, is highlighted. This approach places a strong emphasis on the development of skills and abilities that students will need in their professional and civic life, such as critical thinking, analytical skills, effective communication skills, participation and truly informed decision making.

Challenges and dilemmas of teaching political science at the university level

Navigating the fragile strait between tradition and modernity, the teaching, and didactics of political science at the university level is facing a tangled web of challenges. This discipline, whose roots are deeply rooted in an intellectual heritage impregnated with a plurality of approaches and areas of study, is compelled to face the thorny dilemma of preserving its intangible essence while simultaneously adapting to the mutating demands of the present. According to Casasola, (2020), "General didactics allows a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental pedagogical resources in the teaching and learning planning process, and special didactics focuses on the creation of specific strategies to optimize this process". (p. 40).

This educational crossroads, which oscillates between the valorization of classical knowledge and receptive openness to emerging currents of thought, demands a meticulous balancing act. The task of accommodating these dynamics without distorting the epistemological framework that is the latent heart of the discipline stands as a challenge of Herculean proportions, although unavoidable.

According to Borgobello, Sartori, and Sanjurjo, (2019), “universities currently promote the implementation of virtual environments in their pedagogical practices. However, at the local level the development of experiences of this type is still incipient.” (p. 40).

Moving into the digital sphere, the undisputed heyday of information and communication technologies has given rise to a reshaped educational landscape, in which virtual learning environments and online learning resources have become protagonists. However, the transition to virtuality is not without its intricate dilemmas, especially regarding the quality of student interaction and participation. Although digital tools provide accessibility and flexibility, their use can diminish the depth and richness of face-to-face interactions, so crucial for learning a discipline as discursive and debatable as political science.

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In addition, the rise of political polarization, a phenomenon that is not only shaping political reality but also permeating university classrooms, raises serious questions about how to manage sensitive debates and how to teach political science in an increasingly charged and divisive environment. The increasing diversification of the student body adds another layer of complexity, challenging educators to cultivate a learning environment that is inclusive and receptive to a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

In this regard, Chuliaquer and Vommaro, (2020) argue, “The debates on the role of the media in the construction of political polarization were revolutionized by the emergence and centrality acquired by social networks as a public space and as a vehicle for information consumption worldwide”. (p. 237).

The orbit of these challenges are not mere stumbling blocks on the cobblestone road, but rather catalysts for change and transformation in political science education. While each undeniably poses considerable challenges, they also represent a worthy opportunity to reevaluate and reinvigorate the spires of political science pedagogy, seeking to dig into innovative solutions and more inclusive and effective teaching methods for the formation of future political leaders and conscientious citizens.

The resulting march towards digitization, while posing challenges, also opens a door to a field of possibilities for innovative teaching in political science. The creation of blended learning environments, which take advantage of both face-to-face interactions and digital resources, could be a viable strategy. For example, the use of digital technologies should not be limited to the systematic transmission of information but should actively promote student engagement and interaction. Online discussion platforms, discussion forums, virtual policy simulations, and other digital and interactive tools can be entirely useful to provoke in-depth discussion from the perspective of collaborative learning, thus restoring the dialogic spirit and dialectic to the pulse of political science education.

There is a strong relationship between flexibility, the Concept of Teacher Training and creativity, demonstrating that disciplinary and didactic management are necessary to lead to processes of reflection, which requires an opening of knowledge that lead to specialize and seek collective work to obtain more evident and contextualized products to their reality. (Mendoza, 2019, p. 90).

On the other hand, with regard to increasing political polarization, the classroom must be a safe place for open discussion and the necessary respectful and dialogic exchange of opinions. This requires, however, careful management by the faculty to ensure that all points of view are considered and fully respected. In addition, the curriculum should be designed to cultivate science, critical thinking, and ethical reflection, thus encouraging students to question and examine their own political positions without losing that of others, that is, the encouragement of plurality.

The inclusion of modules or units that resonate under the premises of communication skills, debate, negotiation, and conflict resolution, as well as empathy and intercultural understanding, could go a long way in preparing students to engage with infinite passion in politics in a critical and constructive manner. Based on the findings of Benavides and Ruiz, (2022), “One of the most relevant challenges facing teachers in this new technological age is teaching students to think independently.” (p. 76).

However, for approaches to the diversification of the student body, in general terms, it is crucial to understand political science education to be inclusive and to reflect the rich diversity of student experiences and perspectives. This involves not only weaving inclusion from a wide range of varied voices and experiences into the curriculum, but also the necessary adaptation of teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles and readiness levels. Tools such as differentiated instruction, formative assessment and project-based learning can provide a sure path in this regard. In addition, the co-creation of a learning community in which all students feel deeply embraced by dynamics of respect for difference, and in which they can learn from their professors as well as from their peers and the different strata that give life to the university’s work, should be promoted.

On Technological Innovations and their impact on pedagogy in the light of political science

The imbrication of technology in the tapestry of education has generated a digital mirage, whose possible replicas are felt in the pedagogy of political science. This paradigm shift, the result of the confluence of the influx between technological innovation and academia, has carved new roads of knowledge that lead to an ocean of pedagogical possibilities. However, this exploration of the unknown also raises profound questions that call for critical analysis.

ICTs have caused profound transformations in various sectors of society, including education. In the teaching and learning process, the inclusion of technological tools has facilitated communication and understanding of the numerous contents taught in academic training. (Villarreal, García, Hernández, & Steffens, 2019, p. 12).

Data analytics, for example, has become a powerful beacon that illuminates the complexities inherent in political science. Data visualization and analysis tools have opened the doors to interactive and participatory learning, where students can uncover hidden patterns and trends, connecting the abstract world of political theory with tangible reality. A new pedagogical model is thus emerging, where learners are active explorers of knowledge rather than mere passive receivers.

At the forefront of this revolution is artificial intelligence and machine learning. These technologies are building a series of mirrors that reflect the intricacies of politics. The simulation of political scenarios serves as a bridge for students to have the opportunity to experience the palpable consequences of different political decisions, thereby gaining a deeper and more nuanced understanding of political dynamics and cycles of power.

However, the promise of technology comes with its own shadow. The digital divide, a chasm separating those who have access to technology from those who do not, threatens to exacerbate existing inequalities in political education. Moreover, the pervasiveness of misinformation and the continued bid to inoculate fake news on social media introduces a new, walled-off challenge to the battlefield of political science education, forcing educators to equip their students with dense, razor-sharp critical thinking.

Information and digital competence (IDC) are not just another competence, but a complex reality that involves the entire university organization, the ways of learning and teaching, and citizen training the ACRL/ALA defined information and digital competence (IDC) as a competence for survival in the information age. (Sales & Gómez, 2020, p. 3).

In this new scenario, technological innovations have become double-edged. On the one hand, they bring renewed vitality to the teaching and learning of political science, but on the other hand, they raise profound questions about the equity, ethics, and social impact of technology. As custodians of knowledge construction, political science educators have the challenge and responsibility to navigate this mined territory, to ensure that technology is a compass that guides their students to knowledge, rather than a maze that confuses them.

Research skills as a beacon for teaching political science in university settings

In the vast arena of political science, the ripples of inquiry tend to reverberate in the recesses of our understanding of human complexities. It is an intricate terrain, where political theories, government systems, comparative politics, international relations, public policy, public administration, and the kaleidoscopic nuances of identity politics converge.

The advent of the digital age has brought about a quiet revolution in the contours of competencies. Data analytics tools, which spread their power like a beacon, are dispelling the shadows that once hid patterns and trends in large data sets. This irruption has opened up the possibility of understanding political phenomena through a more detailed, refined and nuanced lens.

International organizations that direct educational policies in Latin America have emphasized that the training of competent professionals committed to social development is an essential mission of contemporary higher education in order to achieve quality levels in the preparation of young citizens. (García and García, 2022, p. 2).

At the same time, technological innovation has engendered a new cosmos, a digital scenario in which an unprecedented dimension of political activity is developing. Areas of study such as cyber politics and information politics are emerging as new frontiers in political science, mapping phenomena such as the influence of social networks on electoral processes, the spread of fake news, or the use of algorithms and big data in political decision-making.

But technology is not a panacea. With it emerge challenges that urge critical examination. Ethical and privacy issues proliferate as data collection and analysis penetrate the privacy of individuals. Researchers must navigate the pitfalls inherent in data-driven methods, aware that results can be skewed by flaws and biases in the data itself.

Beyond technology, changing global dynamics are making their mark on political science. Issues such as increasing political polarization, the resurgence of nationalism, shifts in the global balance of power, and

migration and refugee crises are gaining prominence in political science research. These issues demand an interdisciplinary approach and a critical analysis that considers both current and emerging power structures.

It is necessary to emphasize the idea that political science research is a turbulent and turbulent river that flows through the intersection as well as the concurrence of technology, society, and power. Researchers plunge into it, with the inescapable task of unraveling the political dynamics of our world, illuminating dark corners, and contributing to the building of more equitable societies. In this context, political science is more than a mere academic discipline: it is a 'well-squared mirror reflecting the multidimensional pulse of our times.

Pedagogical strategies and research tools to optimize the training of students in political science

We live in a world in constant change and development, where knowledge and information have become decisive factors for individual and collective progress. In this context, the university, as a central axis in training and intellectual growth, must adapt and evolve according to the demands of today's world. This leads us to the following reflection: According to Guzmán, Herrera and Espinosa, (2020).

Analytical reflection and critical debate about the characteristics and the need to develop research competencies in the University is an imperative of the current times, where information technologies, the media and the expansion of interconnections on a global scale extraordinarily dynamize scientific knowledge. (p. 84).

Having said this, it is worth noting that immersing oneself in political science is like opening a window to a horizon of infinite opportunities. This discipline, rich and multifaceted, constitutes the conceptual apparatus that allows us to decipher the mosaic of society, politics and power. In this sense, the training of students in this discipline requires an elaborate pedagogy, a refined dance between theory and practice, between the legacy of the past and the uneasiness of the present.

Pedagogy in political science must elucidate a window of opportunity, a space that not only illustrates but also instills motivation and hunger for learning. The classroom, from this logic, becomes a living laboratory where ideas come to life and theories are subjected to scrutiny. Using debates, simulations and case studies as mediation, students can deploy the conceptual apparatus of political science, testing it and at the same time enriching it with their own experiences and interpretations.

Emerging technologies, in turn, offer a new horizon of possibilities for teaching and research. Drifting under the umbrella of digitalization, educators can make use of online learning platforms, MOOCs, data analysis and visualization tools, to create a more interactive and enriching learning environment. In this context marked by the digital, pedagogy becomes an organ of convergence between humanism and technology, where both complement each other offering a meaningful didactic type of education.

The application of escape room has promoted different types of emotions, highlighting the fun, motivation and anxiety for the resolution of the proposed enigma. Regarding the resolution of clues, collaboration and teamwork have been key aspects guaranteed by this game (Sierra & Fernandez, 2019, p. 113).

This means that training in the frameworks of political science must be imbued with a compact culture of active and always creative research. Political science is a field of study characterized by its broad and eloquent dynamism, its constant change. Students, then, must be more than mere consumers of knowledge;

they must be generators of ideas, critical analysts, tireless detectives in search of answers. Research tools, both quantitative and qualitative, are the essential equipment they need for this intellectual adventure.

It is essential to work with authentic and diverse texts to favor the development of skills that allow understanding, analyzing, and constructing different types of texts according to the dissimilar communicative situations that speakers must face and the diversity of discourse (Jadán, Zambrano & Becilla, 2018, p. 8).

This means that in terms of challenges and opportunities, pedagogy, research tools and emerging technologies are the instruments that allow us to turn this march into a journey necessarily full of discoveries and frequent learning. In this dance between teaching and research, we not only train students in political science, but also forge critical, conscious and committed citizens.

The new challenges of higher education demand the acquisition and development of research competencies that can be useful to respond to the new demands of the work environment, which is a strong motivator to rethink the pedagogical strategies used, given that new ways of achieving knowledge in students are required, integrating methodologies based on teamwork, as is the case of cooperative learning (Hernández, Herrera & Rodríguez, 2021, p. 242).

The Curriculum of Political Science and Pedagogy at the university level

Political science, such a broad and diverse sphere of knowledge, a discipline that is a melting pot of thought, analysis and debate, requires an educational strategy that is equally thoughtful and nuanced. In this section of the present dissertation, we will delve into the tricky terrain of developing a political science curriculum in university settings, explore the complex confluences between the branches of pedagogy and political science, and seek to understand how these intertwined threads can be skillfully woven together under the spotlight of effective learning. According to Cangalaya's assertion, (2020), "the shallowness of research topics during regular basic education generates a void in students in the first cycles of universities." (p. 148).

The political science curriculum is a delicate balance, an intellectual puzzle, that must radiate and encompass the vast landscape of the discipline. From political theory to public policy, from comparative politics to international relations, each piece is crucial in shaping a complete view of the political mosaic. However, the task is not limited to a languid listing of content; it requires careful consideration of how these elements interact, overlap, and reflect each other.

Once we enter into the creation of the curriculum, every step, every decision, must be taken with an eye to the learners, their most felt needs, their capabilities and their aspirations. This is not a pale exercise at the mercy of the theoretical, it is an intellectual and also a socio-emotional journey, a continuous dialogue between the educator and the learner. An effective curriculum is, therefore, a reflection of this dynamic conversation and of the multiple dimensions of political science, from the global spheres to the most intimate corners of local and personal politics. In the words of Quero, (2021), "New technologies have proven their worth in the process when applied in a timely and appropriate manner." (p. 215).

Pedagogy, that beautiful art that surrounds teaching, becomes a powerful tool in the hands of a political science educator. It is not just a matter of transmitting knowledge, but of igniting a spark, of fostering a passion for analysis, debate and understanding. Simulations, role-playing, problem-based learning, become the brushes with which we paint a vivid picture of politics in the student's mind. But we must always

be aware that this painting is never finished; it is always evolving, always responding to change. In the analysis of Cruz and Hernandez, (2022), "At present, the focus on competencies can reorder the curriculum in the wake of the school emergency resulting from the pandemic." (p. 18).

Therefore, we must subject it to regular scrutiny, looking at it critically and willing to see its strengths as well as its weaknesses. And when change is exposed as an imperative need, we must be ready to build it, no doubt under the guidance of students' interests, advances in the discipline and of course changes in our political and social scaffolding. The construction of the political science curriculum at the university level is, therefore, a fine and complex skein.

But if done with care, with respect and with passion for the discipline, it can produce an educational experience that not only bets on mechanical training, but also inspires, not only transmits knowledge, but also fosters understanding and engagement.

3. Discussion

5 pillars for the debate on the teaching of political science in university contexts

Digital adaptation stands as the first pillar in the debate on the teaching of political science in higher education. It is imperative that this discipline embrace the digital transformation and take advantage of the benefits it offers for the creation of innovative learning environments. Educators must actively promote student engagement and interaction through online discussion platforms, discussion forums, virtual policy simulations, and other digital tools.

The use of emerging technologies becomes the second pillar in this discussion. Adapting to change also involves the adoption and use of these technologies in teaching and research. From various online learning platforms to data analysis and visualization tools, it is vital that educators are aware of the latest trends and consequently apply them in their various teaching methods.

The third pillar, pedagogy, becomes a point of convergence between the threads of humanism and technology. During the digitalization, it is imperative that teaching in political science frameworks maintains a healthy balance between both aspects. Educators should not only focus on technological tools but should also strive for a deep and meaningful understanding of political science subjects.

The comprehensive curriculum emerges as the fourth pillar in this debate. It should encompass all aspects of the discipline, from political theory to public policy, comparative politics, and international relations. Educators must provide students with a holistic, pluralistic, as complete, and multifaceted as possible view of the field of political science.

The fifth and final pillar concerns the interconnectedness of content. Beyond providing a list of content, political science educators must demonstrate how these elements interact, overlap, and reflect each other. In teaching political science, it is critical to highlight the inherent connections between different areas and topics and to foster in students a holistic understanding of the discipline.

In terms of assessment Digital tools can offer more engaging and personalized assessments, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding in more creative and contextual ways. The use of online platforms, adaptive testing, data analytics, and other emerging technologies can improve the accuracy and effectiveness of assessment. Unlike summative assessment, which measures learning at the end of

an instructional period, formative assessment is an ongoing process that helps educators understand and improve student learning as it unfolds.

This form of assessment requires students to use their skills and knowledge in tasks that reflect real-life situations, while Constructive Feedback. Feedback plays a crucial role in assessment and in learning in general. Educators must provide students with timely and constructive feedback to help them understand their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and chart a clear path for progress.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the teaching of political science in higher education has undergone a series of profound and arduous transformations. With this perspective in mind, digitization, far from being a mere appendix, has become a protagonist in this process, bringing new opportunities and challenges to educators and students alike.

At the heart of this metamorphosis is the imperative need to generate blended learning spaces, in which both traditional and digital interactions take on a balanced role. Online discussion platforms, discussion forums, virtual simulations, among other resources, emerge as valuable tools in the search for a teaching that encourages active participation and reflective depth of students. A critical point in all this, then, is for educators to appropriate these tools to enhance the interaction and engagement of their students, enriching their learning experience and reviving the dialogic and critical spirit of political science.

In parallel, emerging technologies continue to expand the horizon of what is possible in teaching and research. The adoption of online learning platforms, MOOCs and data analysis tools not only facilitates the creation of more enriching learning environments, but also opens the door to a form of pedagogy in which humanism and technological frameworks merge in a harmonious symbiosis, consequently giving rise to a deeply critical as well as meaningful education.

In this scenario, political scientists are not superfluous spectators. They are both meticulous analysts and enthusiastic citizens, deciphering the complexity of this political landscape and, at the same time, guiding society through the changing winds of our time. As the backdrop of history unfolds, these scholars act as beacons, guiding us amid the growing complexity.

A window is opening in this digital information age, providing political scientists with powerful new tools to explore this vast terrain. We now have an unprecedented wealth of data and information, allowing us to unravel the intricacies of contemporary politics. However, this same window confronts us with ethical dilemmas about privacy and data security, adding an extra layer of perplexity to our journey. As it is, political science in the 21st century becomes a labyrinthine march of ideas and heated debates that become entrenched in the veins of our societies and cultural system. It is not a static discipline, but a dynamic and constant conversation that invites us all to participate, to question, to weave reflections and, ultimately, to act. Political science, as a witness and participant of our times, accompanies us on this journey, providing valuable insights, provoking necessary and enriching debates.

Finally, the political science curriculum emerges as a complex pulse that spans the vast landscape of the discipline. The shaping of this mosaic requires more than a simple uncritical enumeration of content. It is essential that careful attention be paid to how these elements relate to each other, overlap, and reflect each other. Only then will it be possible to propose to students a holistic view of political science that resonates

with the complexity and richness of its natural object of study. Therefore, the fruit of these reflections show us the possible expeditious path towards a teaching of political science that adapts to the times and prepares students for the amalgam of challenges that are opening in the present and the future, always with an eye fixed on the infinite possibilities that the angles and synergy of this discipline has to offer.

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