

Teaching Statement

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As an educator, my goal is to give students tools to improve their lives and the lives of others. For advanced students, this entails preparing them for graduate studies and involving them in research projects. For non-economics students, it involves helping them discover economics insights for sound real-world decision-making. I find it incredibly rewarding to see students at all levels grasp and apply the economic way of thinking. To achieve this, I focus on teaching methods that are engaging and adaptable, and that open the door to mentorship.

In class, I use several strategies to engage students and improve understanding. From the first day of class onward, I use group activities that prompt students to interact with each other and with me. These activities are often experimental-style games that illustrate key concepts. Trading games and double auctions demonstrate basic microeconomics topics. I also use hands-on activities to illuminate more advanced, abstract concepts. For example, to demonstrate Cobb-Douglas production functions and the optimal mix of labor and capital, groups compete to produce the most booklets using different numbers of workers and pens. In addition to improving understanding, these activities foster cooperation and teamwork. My students consistently cite these activities as key learning tools. I also encourage lively class discussion. I react positively to all answers and questions from students, and establish a norm of calling on students randomly. This allows me to gauge comprehension and help lead students to discover concepts themselves.

I have also learned that a key aspect of good teaching is adaptability. This is especially necessary when teaching students with a wide variety economics experience. It can be difficult to keep senior economics majors challenged while remaining accessible to newcomers to economics. Activities and questions help keep me aware of my students' learning paces, and I change my plans in response. I take notes after every class period, improving my lessons and activities for that class and future ones. Halfway through each semester, I distribute unofficial course evaluation sheets so that I can address students' concerns promptly. Based on student feedback, I have developed more in-depth course outlines, and emphasize real-world applications. Students seem most engaged when I incorporate current events, interdisciplinary insights, and connections with my own research, so I include more of those elements. To offer more to advanced students, I developed an extra credit option of presenting a seminal economics

paper to the class. These helped prepare presenters for graduate studies and introduced new research applications to the class. Adapting to student abilities and needs ensures I provide value to all students. As my own professors inspired me to pursue economics, I consider mentorship an essential part of teaching. I provide students with all available learning tools and university support services. In addition to normal office hours, I allow students to meet with me by appointment. Former students have contacted me for letters of recommendation, advice on other courses, and guidance on their own research projects. As a professor, I look forward to advising student groups and helping organize economics events on campus.

I am prepared to teach a wide variety of courses. I have taught managerial economics and mathematical economics. I have tutored graduate-level macroeconomics and microeconomics, and guest-lectured in undergraduate intermediate macroeconomics. To an undergraduate macroeconomics course I would bring my interest in agglomeration and productivity. Experimental findings and institutional analysis would inform my teaching of microeconomics. Given my research, I am prepared to teach field courses in urban economics, public choice, and institutional economics, as well as applied econometric methods. Regardless of the topic, however, I seek to create an engaging and enriching course for all levels of students. I hope to inspire students to pursue economics, but also aim to give them problem-solving tools even if mine is the only economics course they ever take.