

Teaching Philosophy

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I believe that the purpose of education is to instill in students the curiosity to analyze and question. My teaching style is largely motivated by this ideology and my efforts are focused towards providing my students with the tools with which they can logically analyze any piece of information. Lying in the cusp of arts and sciences, economic reasoning can prove to be an extremely useful tool and my primary goal as an instructor is to help students develop an understanding of the world, using economic methodology and intuition. I have been fortunate as a student at the University of Arizona as it is given me multiple opportunities to develop and hone my teaching skills. I have had the opportunity to be a teaching assistant in very large classes and also be an independent instructor for intermediate micro and macro theory, where the class size ranged from small to relatively large. Different class sizes require different teaching styles and being exposed to both large and small courses has helped improve my teaching style dramatically.

Each class consists of students from different backgrounds and this often determines what they intend to take away from the class. In this respect, it is imperative that the class structure be flexible enough to meet the requirements of all students. For example, in my Intermediate Microeconomics class, I had a few students with an accountancy background. Economics was a relatively new territory for them and many were studying economic tools for the first time. They were in stark contrast to other students who intended to take economics as a major and were conversant with the fundamentals. As a teacher, it was a challenge to strike a balance and make this class interesting for both groups. I conducted optional review sessions which ensured that everyone was comfortable with the present content before moving to the next level. These sessions were also flexible in the sense that I was able to brush some prerequisites of the course if needed. On the other hand, I also embedded the course with extra credit opportunities that required students to think deeply and engaged their intellectual curiosity. In addition, the end of each lecture was structured like an open discussion forum where students had to use core concepts to analyze any event that interested them. This turned out to be one of the most interesting sections of the class as it led to some very lively discussions.

My teaching interests are fairly broad and span an array of both applied micro and macro undergraduate and graduate courses that include education, economic development, labor economics, and applied econometrics. While I have not had the opportunity to teach a graduate class, I have given a lot of thought on how I intend to approach graduate courses. For example, for a graduate labor economics course I would initially like to introduce students to

some of the important questions that have been asked in this field. Labor economics is a rich and diverse field and it is important to get an idea on the kind of questions that have been previously addressed. The second part of the course would be focused on understanding the econometric methodologies that have been developed. Uncovering causal effects is one of the main concerns in labor economics as almost all questions have significant policy impacts. To that end, implementing and critically evaluating one methodology versus another will be a large component of the class.

At the undergraduate level, a large part of the class would be focused on understanding core economic concepts and graphical and mathematical tools of analysis. This objective draws itself from my undergraduate teaching experience where a majority of the students had a strong intuitive understanding of the subject and just needed an introduction to basic mathematical concepts to streamline their intuition. My aim is to bridge this gap between intuition and application using real life examples and group discussions. The fundamental goal of the class is to help students such that they can critically analyze academic papers, data and all forms of news and information. This would help prepare them for the future whether it be in the field of academia, government or industry.

Over the last four years, all of my classes have helped me to grow as an instructor. Learning from my experiences, I have adapted my teaching style and content such that I am better able to connect with my students. However, teaching is a process and to that end I am constantly striving to improve my teaching skills. I am eager to embrace new ideas and techniques which will help enhance both my content and style of teaching. Having been a student for a large portion of my life, I have been blessed with some extraordinary teachers who have had strong influences on my ability to think and assess. Going forward, I am very excited by the possibility of having a similar impact on my students.