# Teaching Portfolio

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# 1 Teaching Philosophy

My goal as a teacher is to share knowledge and to assist students in developing the skills necessary for their success. These skills include critical thinking, decision making, applying quantitative methods in economic-related problems, and confidence about their ability to learn.

As a person who finds great benefit in understanding how economics relates to society, I find it important to cultivate students' intuition and curiosity about how economic concepts tie into their everyday life. From the very first class meeting, I make sure to incorporate examples using input from students. Throughout the course, I try to help students develop intuition from simple examples such as their favorite local restaurants to more complex issues including the job market and public policies.

In class discussions, I employ different settings to challenge students to not only contribute using their own views but also to understand and apply reasoning from a different viewpoint. While it is easier to think and defend one's own opinion, it is more challenging to critically think from opposing viewpoints. For example, in a discussion of the minimum wage, I ask students to first detail if they think the regulation is efficient or not, and then to discuss the possible reasonings if they were to think the opposite. I then link these points to how policies are complex and why it is necessary to move beyond one's opinion. In quizzes and exams, I often include open-ended questions to assess how students can apply their knowledge in broader contexts, without limiting them to standard theories. With the in-class practice, my students start to incorporate different angles in answering these questions.

I also find that immediate concept checks help to clarify the information students might have missed and to gain back their attention. In larger classes, I use clickers to assess students' understanding after each topic. In smaller classes, I use handouts to let students work on their own and then discuss the answers with their peers. I enjoy walking around to check with students and answer any questions they may have. These opportunities allow me to interact with my students at a more personal level and allow students to learn from each other. Many times, the best questions come from these interactions, which helps me identify the areas I need to clarify or expand to the class.

During the time of the current pandemic, where most class meetings happen online, keeping students motivated has been a challenge among instructors. Where one form of communication (in-person meetings) is lacking, the other forms of communication become crucial to keep the course flow, especially in the difficult time of the pandemic. To keep the course structure, I created a step-by-step instruction in the course online platform, showing students the clear order of what they need to do to follow the course. I also include a customizable calendar that lists when and what materials are uploaded, assignments due dates, and a suggested workload. Many of my students find the structure helpful, and the assignment completion rate in my class increased to 95% from an average of 85%.

I value meaningful progress in students. Beside absolute assessment scores, I pay attention to how students are progressing in the course. Students' improvements reflects their progress and effort, taking into account other factors in their life. I maintain frequent encouragement and remind my students to visit office hours and try to be flexible for students who cannot come to the stated time. After each exam, I follow up with students

who did not do well to let them know I am available for help and set up meetings to discuss what they can do to improve their performance. By doing this, I have observed students who gain back their confidence and significantly improve in the course. I also reach out to high-performance students to congratulate them. Seeing students learn and improve is one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching.

Through my teaching experience and training, I find that effective teaching starts with getting to know students. Compared to the end-of-the-semester evaluations, early surveys and feedback help me better understand students' goals and skills so that I can adjust my teaching methods in a timely manner and form more relevant examples, activities, and assessments. The sooner instructors know the students, the better they are able to re-evaluate initial expectations and assumptions they have on students because every class is different.

As an instructor, I also aim to create an inclusive learning environment. This is important to all disciplines, but especially in economics, where there is a possibility that some of my students will enter the policymaking or research sectors. The diversity I support goes from gender and ethnicities to learning styles and abilities. In lectures, I use examples with a variety of people's names and characteristics to better relate what students learn to their own experiences. To encourage participation from everyone, I also provide online discussions in addition to in-class activities to assist students who are less comfortable working under time pressure or speaking in front of the whole class. I employ a variety of teaching modalities in the classroom, including visual and hands-on demonstrations, group discussions, and the classic whiteboard. Students have different learning styles, and while demonstrations are useful in engaging and maintaining attention, the simple whiteboard allows students to slow down and absorb more difficult material.

Teaching is an on-going process. Therefore, I continuously educate myself and re-evaluate my teaching methods. I am interested in teaching introductory courses, intermediate economic theory, and statistics courses. As a health economist, I would love to teach the subject at any level. I am also open to participating in designing new topics or interdisciplinary courses. My immediate plan in future courses is to extend both teaching and assessment modalities to assist student learning.

# 2 Teaching Evaluation Summaries

Table 1: Teaching Evaluation Summaries

|  | Class Size | Response Rate | Course Rating (out of 5) | Instructor Rating (out of 5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ECO401 – online (Summer 2020) | 39 | 36% | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| ECO201 (Spring 2019) | 20 | 55% | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| ECO201 – online (Summer 2019) | 25 | 40% | 4.2 | 4.3 |
| ECO201 – online (Summer 2018) | 6 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| ECO201 (Fall 2018) | 44 | 68.20% | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| ECO391 (Spring 2018) | 36 | 33% | 2.7 | 2.5 |
| ECO201 – online (Fall 2017) | 44 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Full teaching evaluations are available upon request.

# 3 Course Descriptions

- **ECO 201: Principles of Eco I (Microeconomics)**

  The study of the allocation of scarce resources from the viewpoint of individual economic units. Topics include household and firm behavior, competitive pricing of goods and resources, and monopoly power.

- **ECO 391: Economics and Business Statistics**

  A survey of statistical techniques relevant to modern economics and business, with major emphasis on correlation and regression, Bayesian decision theory, index numbers, time series analysis, and forecasting models.

- **ECO 401: Intermediate Economic Theory**

  An analysis of the behavior of consumers and firms, price determination, various market structures, and income distribution.

# 4 Selected Student Comments

- *I can not stress how amazing she has been enough. Coming into this I was very nervous but her organization and preparation for our class meeting has been so helpful. She makes every class meeting efficient and beneficial.*

- *She has a clear understanding of the material, and was able to make examples on the fly that helped answer any questions that came up. She was willing to make time for students outside of class to help prepare for exams.*

- *To be honest, I think everything is helpful. (course material, practice exam, exam study guide, assignment, concept check, and office hour)*

- *Greatly appreciated the topic lists that were given before an exam, as well as the numerous resources to study such as practice questions and examples that were recorded and worked through.*

- *She is extremely kind and respectful towards her students. She makes herself available for students to come ask her questions both in and out of the classroom.*

- *She was very friendly and respectful, and willing to listen to and take into account the issues I experienced with group work.*

- *Her many examples, worksheets, and in class activities helped me understand*

- *Helpful critiques on in class assignments*

- *I can tell she loves this class and tries to teach us with her best.*

- *She has a lot patient for students*

- *She was knowledgeable about the subject. truly cared about her students success.*

- *Instructor was very flexible with in person exam times (as this was a distance learning course) and was very flexible with my work schedule. The content was very cohesive (lecture slides were relevant to textbook content and vise versa).*

- *The instructor of this course was very open and approachable to questions and it allowed me to get a further grasp on things I misunderstood.*

- *I think Professor Le really tried to help students understand the material fully and was very willing to work with students individually on assignments and scheduling conflicts. I really enjoyed this class.*

- *I really like the slides that Anh posts along with a voice over, it has really helped me understand the material for this online class. Also there are a lot of links under each module to better help the students understanding of each chapter which is nice!*

- *Anh give a wonderful example of each chapter, which is really helpful for me to understand.*

- *Very helpful to answer questions in depth during office hours! Thanks Anh!*