Teaching and service statement

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This note begins with a brief description of my teaching, including a listing of all of the courses that I have taught at Cornell University since arriving. Then, I describe my advising of undergraduate and graduate students. Finally, I describe my service to the department and to the profession.

1 Teaching

Since I arrived at Cornell in Fall 2014, I have taught 650 undergraduates and 118 graduate students.[1] The majority of my teaching has been of required classes that students are compelled to take to complete their course of study. In addition, I have been active in advising undergraduates and Ph.D. candidates: I have had 79 undergraduate advisees, and I have served on the committee of eight Ph.D. students.

I view teaching and mentoring as comprising one of the core components of the job of a scholar. I was the beneficiary of the patient guidance and mentorship of professors and top researchers in my earlier years as an undergraduate at Princeton University, as a pre-doctoral research assistant in the research departments of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and as a doctoral student at New York University. Thus, I am privileged to offer the same type of guidance to students that was extended towards me.

In the process of becoming a more effective teacher, my capacities as a researcher have also broadened. Part of the challenge of teaching is to convey complex ideas in a clear and accessible manner. These are similar challenges faced by a researcher writing a scholarly paper for the general research community, or preparing slides for a conference presentation. Thus, teaching informs my research, and vice versa.

Below, I describe the various courses that I have taught since I arrived at Cornell. Student evaluations for every course I have taught can be found at `https://christopher-huckfeldt.github.io/files/CourseEvaluations.zip`. Then, I describe my advising philosophy and my record of advising students.

[1] I have taught several different graduate courses, and thus several graduate students appear twice in the total for graduate students. I have taught the same undergraduate course every year, and so only a very few students who have had to repeat the course appear twice in the total for undergraduates.

1.1 Courses

- **ECON 3040: Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory**

  Semesters taught: Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Spring 2020, Fall 2020

  Average student evaluation (out of 5): 3.59, 4.21, 4.17, 3.7, 3.57, 3.69, 3.59

  Average enrollment, pre-2017:[2] 59 students

  Average enrollment, Fall 2017 onwards: 119 students

  ECON 3040 is a required course for all undergraduates majoring in economics. The course offers a systematic treatment of long-run growth, investment, labor markets, consumption, money, and business cycles. Students learn how to formulate and solve economic problems by applying economic models taught in class. The course also offers many students their first exposure to growth processes. In addition to textbook readings, students are assigned readings and podcasts from news sources including the *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, Ben Bernanke's Blog, and *NPR*.

  Key learning objectives include that students understand how small difference in growth rates across economies can generate substantial divergence in economic outcomes, and thus understand the enormous potential for increasing welfare by adopting optimal growth policies; that students understand how government tax policies can mitigate inefficient outcomes that emerge in a competitive equilibrium, such excessive CO_2 emissions; and that students understand the role of the Federal Reserve in stabilizing the aggregate economy in the short-run. A final key objective is for students to be able to critically evaluate policy debates surrounding economic events of the recent decade or so, including the Great Recession and the economic consequences of Covid-19 pandemic.

  I have taught ECON 3040 twice since the onset of the Covid-19 epidemic, during the Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters. I incorporated material in real-time on the effects of the pandemic on macroeconomic activity (and related implications for economic policy) into my lectures. Also, I learned from teaching evaluations of my Spring 2020 course that students particularly valued that they could repeat portions of the recorded lectures where I covered some of the more mathematical material. Thus, prior to the teaching the course again in Fall 2020, I pre-recorded around 25 videos where I covered some of the more technical material in short, ten-minute segments. While I still covered this material live in lecture, the students were assigned to watch

[2]Prior to 2017, the course was capped at 75 students; starting in Fall 2017, the course was capped at 150 students.

the pre-recorded materials as a part of the participation grade. The students indicated both during the semester and in their evaluations that this was a valued component of the course. I plan on using these pre-recorded videos as a teaching supplement again when I teach the course in-person during the Fall 2021 semester.

- **ECO 6140 Macroeconomics II**

  Semesters taught: Spring 2018, Spring 2019, Spring 2020, Spring 2021

  Average student evaluation (out of 5): 3.67, 4.5, 3.17, 4.4

  Average enrollment: 17

  This course is part of the first year Ph.D. core sequence for macro and taken by all students in the economics graduate program. The course consists of two components: I start by teaching the McCall search model as an application of dynamic programming. Then, I teach models where models where households face idiosyncratic uninsurable labor income risk, and thus engage in precautionary savings à la Aiyigari, Bewley, Deaton, and Huggett. Students are taught computational methods by which to solve the income fluctuations problem (and beyond). In teaching the course materials, I convey to the students how macroeconomic methods and concepts can be applied to questions from public and labor economics. Key learning objectives include that students understand how to write down dynamic sequential problems recursively; that students understand implications of the permanent income hypothesis; and that students understand how to define and solve a recursive competitive equilibrium in a setting of heterogeneous agents with incomplete asset markets.

- **ECON 7440 Macro Labor**

  Semesters taught: Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Fall 2016, Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Fall 2020

  Average student evaluation (out of 5): 4.75, 5, 5, 4.5, 4.5, 4.67

  Average enrollment: 7

  This course is a second year elective course for Ph.D. students. The course covers models of equilibrium unemployment, with particular focus on models used to understand unemployment fluctuations over the business cycle. In addition, I use the course as a platform by which to teach students how to confront a macroeconomic model with microdata: for example, students estimate the McCall search model by full-information maximum likelihood à la Flinn and Heckman (1982); calibrate the DMP model à la Shimer (2005); and estimate the DMP model via simulated method of moments à la Hagedorn

and Manovskii (2008). By the end of the course, each student has had the opportunity to prepare a twenty minute presentation of a paper at the research frontier. Key learning objectives of the course are for to students to become familiarized with models of equilibrium unemployment; for students to learn how to estimate a structural model; and to familiarize students with the application of theoretical models of unemployment in macroeconomics and labor economics.

- **ECON 7330 Heterogeneous agent models**

  Semesters taught: Fall 2014

  Average student evaluation (out of 5): 5

  Average enrollment: 5

  This course is a second year elective course for Ph.D. students. The course covers frontier research incorporating either models of heterogeneous households facing uninsurable idiosyncratic income risk or models of heterogeneous firms. Key learning objectives include that students learn numerical methods for solving models with non-trivial degrees of heterogeneity among agents; for students to become familiar with sources of individual or firm-level data that can be used to discipline such models; and for students to be familiar with methods of fitting such models to the data.

1.2 Advising

I have had 79 undergraduate advisees, and I have served on the committee of eight Ph.D. students. Below, I discuss my approach to advising undergraduates and Ph.D. students.

1.2.1 Undergraduate advising

With my undergraduate advisees, I help them complete forms, select courses, and I certify that they are on-track to completing the necessary courses for the major. I also make myself available to chat and offer more informal advice, whether it regard questions of career plans, internships, or how to make the most of (and enjoy) life as a undergraduate. For both advisees and for undergraduates who have had me in ECON 3040, I make myself available to write recommendation letters to jobs, internships, and graduate programs.

1.2.2 Graduate advising

I view graduate advising as one of the most important components of my job.

The assistant professors in the macro group have adopted a cooperative model for advising graduate students: we all take part in a weekly workshop where graduate students are required to present their research in front of their advisors, other faculty, and their fellow students. I attend all of the workshops, and I require that any student that I am advising attend the workshop. Beyond participating in the weekly workshops, I frequently will meet with the presentor to offer comments after the presentation, regardless of whether I serve on their committee. If a student that I am advising is presenting, I meet with them before and after they present.

Outside of the macro student workshop, I hold regular meetings with graduate students advisees. I have developed my own system to make sure that students keep on track: after every meeting, I require that the graduate student write an email summarizing what was discussed, what we identified as next steps, and when we agreed to meet next. These emails serve as an informal contract that, if broken, indicates that the student is getting a bit off track and is need of some additional guidance.

I become even more involved when students are preparing to look for an academic job. I read drafts, I attend practice talks, and I always offer extensive feedback. I also make sure that my graduate student advisees are prepared for what they will encounter when they go on the external job market. I have co-chaired the committee of a single graduate student. This particular student's placement was among the highest-ranked initial placements in an economics department for a Cornell graduate student since I have arrived in 2014.

Former advisees, year of graduation, first placement

1. Sylverie Herbert, 2020, *Banque de France.*
2. Yu She, 2020, *Capital One.*
3. Malin Hu, 2019, Assistant Professor, *Vanderbilt University.* (co-chair)
4. Khai Sim, 2019, Assistant Professor, *Eastern Connecticut State University.*
5. Nobuyuki Kanazawa, 2017, post-doc, *Hitotsubashi Institute for Advanced Study.*
6. Hautahi Kingi, 2016, *IMPAQ International.*
7. Nellie Zhao, 2016, *Capital One.*

Current advisees, expected year of graduation

1. Junting Zhou, 2024

2 Service

Here, I describe my service to the department, and to the larger profession.

2.1 Service to the department

Since arriving at the apartment, I have regularly served on the Ph.D. admissions committee, and I have served once on the placement committee. Although I have never been a formal member of the recruitment committee, I participated in interviews at the ASSA's in 2015-2018; and I have been tasked with writing reading reports for job candidates on at least three occasions.

From 2016 to 2020, I served on the 'Computing Committee'. The initial mandate of the committee was to figure how to organize the computational resources of the department in a manner so that they could be made more generally available. The first step in this process was to move our existing machines to a separate entity on campus, BioHPC. Once our existing machines were moved, faculty were encouraged to contribute nodes to the cluster: contributing faculty would receive priority access to the machines, but the machines would otherwise be available for general use. Several faculty, including me, made such purchases. We now have a fair number of machines available for use housed at BioHPC; and we now have the infrastructure in place for a larger investment in computational equipment (should the funds become available).

2.2 Service to the profession

I have reviewed papers for *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, *American Economic Review*, *American Economic Review: Insights*, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, *The B.E. Journal of Macroeconomics*, *Econometrica*, *The Economic Journal*, *International Economic Review*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Monetary Economics*, *Journal of Money Credit & Banking*, *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *Labour*, *Review of Economic Dynamics*, and the *Review of Economics and Statistics*.

I was the recipient of an "Exceptional Contribution in Refereeing" award from the *Economic Journal* in 2015.

I have been on the program committee for the Annual Congress of the European Economic Association in 2020 and 2021.

I have served as discussant for various conferences, including at the February 2020 meeting of the NBER's Program on Economic Fluctuations and Growth, and the ASSA Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (2019 and 2020).