

DMITRY BRIZHATYUK

Ph.D. Candidate
University of Washington
Department of Economics

dbrizhatyuk.github.io
dbrizh@uw.edu
+1 (848) 218-64-33

November 7, 2019

Teaching statement

I am a firm believer in active learning. As a student, I enjoyed the classes that challenged me to find answers by myself while providing me with the tools to do so. I now seek to incorporate this philosophy into my teaching. To me, teaching is not simply reiterating information that can be easily found in books; it is presenting concepts in a way that helps students to see the bigger picture and connects the textbook with reality. For instance, I like to begin my macro classes with a discussion; I might ask, “What has recently happened in the economy that is relevant to macroeconomics?”, before encouraging the students to express themselves and guiding them in interpreting the events through the lens of course concepts.

I design my classes to be a balanced combination of lecturing, problem solving and discussions. Throughout my teaching, I strive to communicate to students (1) *why* the new concepts they are learning are important; (2) *how* such concepts will help them to understand the world; and (3) *what* previous knowledge they are building upon. In my experience, this is an effective way to engage and motivate the class. This concerns both undergraduate and graduate-level teaching. For most of economics students, an undergraduate-level courses is the only one that they ever take. We, as a profession, are responsible for providing them with a simplified — yet up-to-date and coherent — understanding of economics that will help them to thrive in their future careers. At a graduate level, in addition to rigorous technical training, I believe that it is also important to devote attention to the intellectual history of the field, such as how and why the “big questions” of the profession have evolved. I hope to incorporate these ideas into my future curricula.

Teaching 18 quarters of macroeconomics and microeconomics to undergraduates and graduates during my time at the University of Washington has been an enriching experience. However, there is always room to grow, and I try to improve at every opportunity. For instance, when working as a teaching assistant for various MBA programs at the Foster School of Business I video recorded my classes. Watching these recordings was a useful way to identify my weaknesses and find ways to work around them.

Given my background and experience, I am prepared to teach undergraduate-level courses in macroeconomics and time series econometrics. At a graduate level, I would love to teach a core course in macroeconomics, or a field course on topics such as monetary economics, financial frictions, or micro-founded macro with firm heterogeneity.

All things considered, I believe that the positive impact that academics have on the world through teaching and mentorship is often just as important as research, if not more so. During my time as a student, I was fortunate to have met brilliant scholars who inspired me to pursue an academic career and guided me along the way. I am deeply indebted to them and I hope to pay this debt forward by being a great mentor to the following generations. You can find a list of courses I taught and evaluations on my website at dbrizhatyuk.github.io/teaching.