

TEACHING STATEMENT

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Teaching Experience

As a Ph.D. student and postdoc at USI Lugano, I have accumulated substantial experience in teaching a variety of undergraduate and master-level courses in economics. Most of my teaching has been in the area of political economy, my main field of expertise. As a teaching assistant for the bachelor class in political economy (2019-2023), I was responsible for preparing problem sets that I discussed with students in weekly tutorials, for writing and correcting exams, and for guiding the students in crafting their in-class presentations of a top-journal article on topics related to media and politics.

The teaching assistantship in an advanced master-level class in political economy and public finance (2018-2022) involved similar tasks with two exceptions: First, I had the opportunity to create my own teaching material that introduced students to formal models of voting and preference aggregation that had not been presented previously in the lectures. Second, I mentored students in conducting their own small-scale empirical research project, which entailed an analysis of voting behavior using statistical software (Stata or R) and an in-class presentation of the results at the end of the semester.

During my Ph.D., I further served twice as a teaching assistant in introductory macroeconomics (2022-2023), conducting biweekly exercise sessions in Italian to help students prepare for the exam. As a postdoc, I lectured 8 hours of a course in development economics co-taught with Prof. Patricia Funk and Prof. Lucia Corno. Finally, I assisted in supervising three master's and two bachelor's theses in economics.

Teaching Philosophy

The ultimate goal of teaching economics, I believe, is to equip students with the concepts and tools that help them understand how the world works, ask the right questions, and solve problems both inside and outside of academia. This requires students to deeply comprehend economic concepts and methods, rather than simply memorizing them for exams. To achieve this goal, I have three core principles in my teaching.

First, I regularly highlight the relevance of the class material by linking it to real-world policy debates or current events. This not only demonstrates the usefulness of economics in understanding real-world phenomena but also strengthens students' motivation to grasp, critically evaluate, and apply the material taught in class.

Second, I use a mix of teaching methods to actively engage students with the material. In-class exercises or take-home problem sets provide opportunities for students to think through abstract theories by solving specific problems and to address empirical questions by applying econometric tools to real data. Students frequently report that conducting data analyses significantly enhanced their understanding of econometrics, reinforcing my belief in the importance of these teaching methods. One teaching method that students in the master's class in political economy particularly appreciated was a small research project on the determinants of voting behavior, which they completed at the end of the semester. They were tasked with formulating theoretically motivated hypotheses, testing them using post-electoral survey data, and presenting the results in class. Students benefited greatly from this exercise, as it allowed them to apply the theoretical and empirical tools acquired in the course to address their own real-world questions. When class size permits, I believe this is one of the most effective teaching approaches to consolidate acquired knowledge while simultaneously developing analytical, methodological, and presentation skills.

Third, I strive for an inclusive learning environment where every student feels comfortable participating in class, engaging in discussions, and raising as well as receiving constructive criticism. I strongly encourage students to ask questions and regularly remind them that doing so is a contribution to the collective learning experience. If one student is confused, others are likely confused as well, possibly because I did not explain the concept clearly enough. Along with students' questions, in-class exercises provide valuable feedback. Understanding the problems that some students face not only makes me aware of the diverse needs of students with different backgrounds, but also helps me recognize my own shortcomings as an instructor and how to improve my teaching in the future.

Future Teaching

Given my research background and prior teaching experience, I would be excited to teach political economy, applied econometrics, public or development economics at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Additionally, I am comfortable teaching any applied microeconomics class at the master's and bachelor's level, and would be happy to serve as an instructor for service courses, such as introductory microeconomics, macroeconomics, or econometrics. Moreover, I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the department by organizing seminars or reading groups for Ph.D. students, postdoctoral researchers, and interested faculty members.