Teaching Statement

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During my first year in college, I took an introductory course that almost inspired me to change my major from economics to geology. The class took place in a 150-student lecture hall filled with freshman hustle and bustle, but the professor always managed to grasp our attention with igneous rocks, natural disasters and weather patterns. His face lit up with excitement when showing us the first glimpse of light in the universe from nearly 13.6 billion years ago. He eagerly gave us tours to his office cluttered with rock samples, photos from his expeditions, and his footprint in what once was scorching hot lava. He took us on field trips, showing us wave breakers protecting shores from storms, turbines that transforms wind into energy, and the Puddingstone conglomerate that built walls, houses, and churches in Massachusetts. Over ten years have passed, and yet I still remember vividly how the professor's passion and skills in teaching motivated me to learn a subject I never thought would spark my interest. Through this experience, as well as my own teaching experiences as a teaching fellow and later a course instructor, I believe effective teaching requires fostering interest in the topics, assigning clear logistic and academic expectations, and being flexible in teaching styles.

My teaching philosophy is rooted in the belief that learning is most effective with engagement due to genuine interest, with support from clear guidance, and with encouragement to explore through diverse methods. To make abstract ideas tangible, I incorporate interactive, real-life applications into my classes. For instance, when teaching tariffs in an introductory microeconomics course, I designed a role-playing activity where I acted as the home country government, while students played domestic consumers, suppliers (importers), and foreign producers. Through this simulation, students explored how tariffs affect prices and trade dynamics, then connected these insights to concepts of relative elasticities and tax burden, of which we learned previously. This exercise not only clarified complex ideas but also sparked lively discussions about trade policies' real-world implications. Similarly, when I was a teaching fellow for a macroeconomics course, I brought fiscal and monetary policy to life by analyzing historical examples like the Great Depression and stagflation in the 1970s. By examining how governments and central banks responded to these crises, students saw the practical impact of policy decisions, fostering a deeper appreciation for the subject. These activities reflect my commitment to making economics relevant and engaging, mirroring the enthusiasm I felt in that geology classroom.

I believe clear logistic and academic expectations are the foundation of a productive learning environment. In my econometrics course, I dedicated the first class to reviewing the syllabus in detail, outlining learning objectives and classroom expectations to ensure transparency. I reinforced this structure by conveying timely reminders about important deadlines and holding review sessions before exams to help students prepare effectively. Regular office hours provided a space for students to seek clarification or discuss challenges, fostering an approachable atmosphere. As a teaching fellow, I also learned the importance of setting clear expectations with teaching assistants. By establishing consistent grading rubrics and communication protocols, I ensured alignment throughout the semester, which led to effective cooperation between myself and my teaching assistant, as well as enhanced fairness and clarity for students. These practices, informed by my early experiences with ambiguous instructions, empowered my students to take ownership of their

learning while feeling supported throughout the process.

In my philosophy, flexibility in teaching is also essential to meet the diverse needs of students, particularly in economics, where quantitative concepts can be daunting. One way I have embraced this is by treating artificial intelligence (AI) as a partner in the classroom. Early in my econometrics course, I led a discussion on the ethical and effective use of AI tools, highlighting both their potential to enhance learning and the risks of misuse. I cautioned students against using AI as a shortcut, emphasizing that the skills gained through genuine effort are invaluable. At the same time, I showed them how to use AI productively /–/ for example, by posing clear and precise questions when my explanations were unclear, or by critically evaluating AI outputs for accuracy. I encouraged my students to bring AI-generated responses to class or office hours so we could analyze them together. This collaborative process not only helped students strengthen their critical thinking but also created a shared space to grapple with the opportunities and challenges of emerging technology. By weaving AI into the classroom in a thoughtful way, I empower students to approach economics with creativity, adaptability and a sense of curiosity.

Beyond delivering content, I am dedicated to mentoring students in their intellectual growth. In my econometrics course, I used my experience with large-scale administrative data to inspire students to think like researchers. For the final project, I tasked them with writing an original economic research paper using Stata, a tool they learned in class. I guided them through each stage: identifying viable topics, developing research questions, reviewing the literature and conducting empirical analysis. For instance, one group explored the relationship between youth unemployment and suicide rates using World Bank data. I provided hands-on feedback on refining hypotheses, interpreting regression results and structuring their arguments. By the end of the semester, every group produced a paper they could be proud of. For many, this was their first economics paper, and several expressed excitement about developing these projects further for graduate school applications. This experience not only strengthened their technical skills but also gave them confidence in their ability to contribute to ongoing conversations in economics.

Looking ahead, I aim to enrich my teaching by incorporating data visualization tools to make economic patterns more tangible and by building interdisciplinary bridges, such as linking economics to mass media studies or to environmental policy. My overarching goal is to create a classroom that sparks curiosity, supports students through challenges and transforms learning into a collaborative journey of discovery. By fostering interest, providing clear expectations, and embracing flexibility, I strive to equip students with the tools to master economics and apply their knowledge meaningfully to the world around us.