

The undergraduate courses most formative to my development were those that instilled in me a desire to apply what I learned to the world around me. The professors who made lasting impacts related the material to their own experiences and challenged students to think beyond problem sets and exams. As the instructor of record for three sections of ECON 370: Economic Applications of Data Science and a teaching assistant for both ECON 470: Econometrics and ECON 101: Introduction to Economics, I strive to foster an environment where students develop skills to follow their curiosity about the economics all around them.

This curiosity is not developed from grades alone; there must be a moment where students see that what they are learning has value beyond receiving a good grade. When designing ECON 370, I did not want to just teach R programming, but also how to use R to investigate compelling economic questions. Through a combination of simulations and data analysis, I create opportunities for students to see the practical value of the material and its applications in future coursework. For instance, I developed a simulation exercise that illustrates why the causal effect of attending college on wages cannot be determined by simply comparing average wages across education levels. Although this exercise precedes formal instruction on endogeneity, it provides students with an intuitive understanding of key econometric concepts. I also model this curiosity to students by engaging thoughtfully with student questions, acknowledging when I need to research an answer, and demonstrating how to find solutions. My goal is that the tools developed in ECON 370 empower students to pursue their own questions.

I am convinced students learn most effectively when personally invested in the material. One way I achieve this is by connecting the course content to my research. The final project for ECON 370 requires students to analyze dialysis clinic data from the NBER to replicate findings from Eliason et al. [2020], research on which I served as an assistant. This project integrates the skills developed throughout the course while providing experience with real-world data analysis. Former students have reported that while challenging, this project proved valuable in both their academic studies and careers. Looking ahead, I plan to incorporate airline industry data into my teaching, leveraging publicly available datasets to explore topics like dynamic pricing, upgrade auctions, and firm competition.

My commitment to inclusive education stems from my background in rural West Virginia, where I graduated in a class of just 17 students. The personalized instruction I received in small classes complemented my learning style, and in graduate school, I often created numerical examples to master new concepts. In ECON 370, I provide diverse resources to accommodate different learning styles and programming backgrounds. I maintain small class sizes to enable hands-on instruction and peer learning opportunities. During lectures, I promote active learning by encouraging students to code alongside me and breaking down complex problems into manageable components.

To enhance accessibility, I adapt material to meet students at their current level. In ECON 370, this involved adjusting the pace or explanation style based on students' programming backgrounds. As a teaching assistant for ECON 101, I presented multiple approaches to problem-solving and consciously related concepts to students' experiences, introducing economics jargon only after proper context. These efforts encourage active engagement and ensure all students feel respected, regardless of their background.