

# Teaching Statement

Chun-Ting Chen\*

Historical examples and empirical findings are critical components of my Economics teaching. The vivid examples in *The Worldly Philosophers* by Robert L. Heilbroner introduced me to how economists think about production and consumption and was a major reason for my pursuing a career in Economics. I believe that student interest in economic theory is stimulated by empirical applications and examples. How excited I was when I discovered a significant coefficient in my first empirical methods course. Moreover, students' questions and feedback can improve their teacher's understanding of Economics. For instance, an classroom experiment may lead to a new direction for research.

My research informs my teaching. For instance, suppose I were teaching decision theory, say the expected utility theorem. I might conduct some variant of the Allais Paradox experiment before getting into the details. Only after students are made aware of the strong assumptions behind the theory would I introduce the main results. Suppose I were teaching industrial organization to undergraduate students and suppose the day's topic were price discrimination. I might discuss something from the business news to make students understand what the theory is meant to explain. Just as a thorough understanding of the literature is indispensable when conducting research, I believe students better understand what economic theories are used for when given the relevant context.

As a faculty member I will practice teaching techniques which I have found particularly useful as a student over the years. One such technique is drawing graphs to derive theoretical intuition. When I was an undergraduate student in Civil Engineering, Mohr's Circle left me with a deep impression of how useful a clever chart can be in the understanding difficult concepts. Many Economic theorems involve a continuum. Using a graph to represent mathematical objects typically gives me strong intuition about the underlying maximization problems. In the classroom, I have found that a short motivating theoretical result accompanied by lecture notes and supplemental material is the best way to hold my attention and my interaction. Keeping that in mind, I am committed to help students to actively participate in the classroom.

---

\*cuc230@psu.edu