My teaching philosophy comes from a combination of my own experience as a student and what I learned about teaching while at Georgia State. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, Georgia State ranks first among public universities for its commitment to undergraduate teaching. As such, before I could become an instructor of record, the Economics Department required that I take a course in pedagogy. When I teach, I incorporate best practices into my course design and instruction.

One of the first lessons I learned about teaching was that course design should "begin with the end in mind." In other words, the learning outcomes should be developed first. These are the measurable goals the students must achieve in the course, and there are three types: cognitive, behavioral, and affective. The first type refers to actual content the students should learn in the course. The second refers to the abilities, skills, and competencies they develop, and the third refers to the values, dispositions, and attitudes they acquire. Although the specific outcomes will change depending on the course, the broad strokes should remain consistent.

First, in terms of cognitive outcomes, I want my students to leave with a basic understanding of the core concepts. This is perhaps the lowest requirement for an economics instructor, and implicit in this goal is the expectation that students retain the information beyond the final exam. Understanding economics is essential to understanding how the world works, and any instructor who fails to instill this knowledge in a student who is willing to learn has done that student a disservice.

Second, for behavioral outcomes, I want my students to leave with sharper critical thinking skills. Political rhetoric often masquerades as economics in most newspapers and blogs. To be fair, most journalists cannot be experts in every topic they report on, including economic issues. Even so, students will need to think critically before accepting any asserted claim as truth. Failing to do so means students are left either uninformed, misinformed, or deceived by charlatans. Indeed, the students themselves should be aware of their own biases and never uncritically borrow ideas from others.

Finally, for affective outcomes, I want to motivate my students to be lifelong learners. Learning is a process, and it takes effort on the part of individual learning. Ideally, students should be motivated to learn for its own intrinsic value. However, even if this were not the case, students should recognize that one purpose of their education is to equip themselves with skills that employers are willing to pay for, and that these skills depreciate over time. Therefore, just at a pragmatic level, students should be motivated to continually update their skills.

After the student learning outcomes, assessments come next, followed by the teaching strategies. Starting with the outcomes and moving backwards helps ensure all three aspects of the course stay in alignment and reinforce one another. I taught Principles of Macroeconomics in the spring of 2020. In doing so, I was able to apply what I learned and practice tying my assessments and teaching strategies to my student learning outcomes.

I found that telling my students the story of how the economy functions helps them remember the core concepts much better than drilling them on the models. For example, early in the course we discussed how the problem of scarcity forces society to make three difficult decisions: what goods and services to produce, how to produce them, and how to distribute them. To illustrate these decisions, I showed them the production possibilities frontier, using the classic composite goods of guns and butter to represent military and domestic spending. I then asked my students to imagine themselves as president and say which point along the frontier they would choose and why.

Usually, the production possibilities frontier is taught as an introduction to model building and to illustrate the gains from trade. However, I taught international trade at the end of the semester. By then, my students struggled to remember the technical details of the frontier, but they did remember the problem of scarcity and the three decisions it forces society to make. They understood that trade would alter our choice of goods and services, and that those changes would impact the shape of the frontier. This experience and others like it showed me that stressing the ideas that economists use will benefit students much more than stressing the tools that economists use.

To help foster critical thinking skills, I connected each topic to a real-world current event, and there were many to choose from in the spring of 2020. Midway through the semester, one of the students in my class, afraid of what she was seeing in the news about COVID-19, asked me if the country was going to enter another Great Depression. That was an excellent question, and I thought it would make a great teachable moment. So, I showed the class a news clip discussing the impact of the outbreak on global supply chains. After it finished, I asked my students to interpret the video in economic terms. Then, after hearing them say it was a negative supply shock, we worked through what would happen in the aggregate demand-aggregate supply model. I repeated this flipped-classroom-style exercise two more times by showing them videos of the lockdown and how the Federal Reserve responded.

When I think of developing critical thinking skills, I imagine students climbing Bloom's Taxonomy. First developed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom and extensively revised in 2001, Bloom's Taxonomy lays out six tiers of learning in the form of a pyramid. At the bottom of pyramid, which represents the foundation of learning (and which is also my first goal), is remembering. Understanding comes next, followed by applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Connecting topics to current events works so well because it requires students to apply what they learn in the classroom to real-life situations.

Finally, to help motivate my students to become lifelong learners, I use myself as an example. Like most academics, I love learning. I feel genuine excitement when I discover a new relationship and I take immense pleasure in catching up to a truth I thought might exist but was unconfirmed. Moreover, the journey from ignorance to competence is liberating. To me, acquiring new knowledge and skills is the best form of self-improvement; it opens doors to new opportunities and people. As an economist, I know just enough about human motivation and how computers work to carry a conversation with a psychologist or computer programmer.

My mid-semester evaluation and end-of-semester survey responses were very positive. Ninety percent of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that my teaching methods aided them in understanding the material. When asked what they appreciated most about my class, one student wrote "He would use real world topics to relate to the class and help enforce the topics we were learning." Another said, "The instructor was very patient and answered questions with examples of how it relates to the real world which I felt made me more receptive to the material."

I am ready to teach introductory and intermediate micro- and macroeconomics. I am also happy to teach health economics at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Because the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to pose a threat to public health for the foreseeable future, I've earned a certificate of mastery in online teaching from the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, which is the office in charge of instructional support at Georgia State. As a result, I am entirely comfortable teaching face-to-face, fully online, or in a blended learning format.

For many students, a good or bad instructor can make or break a class. Sometimes, a good or bad instructor can make or break an entire major or life's career. I have gone through the training and thought deeply about my teaching. I do not want to be just a good instructor; I want to be an excellent one.