

What do you find most appealing about the position and Milestone Institute?

In the last year I have begun teaching at the Milestone institute I find it convenient to organize my appreciation around 3 axes. The first axis is it's organizational strength, Milestone is a wonder to behold, when I had sent my contract to my lawyer (who happens to be my sister) she expressed that she also had never seen such well documented sign up procedures, I feel like I have a lot to learn about how to organize myself and any ventures I would undertake in the future. As a second axis, the teaching staff, I have found that the people I have had contact with all seem genuinely interested to learn and teach at the same time, which is in alignment with my own attitude, and as such, I feel like I am a great fit. Finally, the final axis, is the students, though I have taught to the 'crème de la crème' before, I find that there is something refreshing in Milestone students, they seem to do the work, they are passionate and argumentative, I can't imagine an institute that better captures the spirit of Plato's academy today.

What are the most relevant current challenges of education in your academic field?

Economics is stuck in a strange place between mathematics and empiricism. To have a proper appreciation of economics, one requires a mix of philosophy, history, and mathematics. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to get all of these across in one program. Most programs have dropped the teaching of philosophy and history altogether, transforming economics into an inferior pure mathematics. Other programs have emphasized practical mathematics in the form of statistics and inference, but this also seems to be mistaken. Some have argued that the ideal solution is that economics not be taught at undergraduate level at all so that students can come pre-baked with philosophy, history or mathematics. On top of all this, there is pressure to adopt more 'heterodox' approaches to economics, which used to be taught in history of economic thought classes, but not risks extinction due to the new emphasis on mathematics.

What is the mission of gifted education in the secondary school age group?

The modern schooling system, being organized by age, resembles industrial processes. Yet students evolve in an organic way, I have personally met 13-year old's who are studying university level mathematics. The industrial model does not work when the thing being processed is organic. Gifted education allows for picking out those who have exceeded their current placement in the line, and aims to place them further ahead, in accordance with their capacities. The mission is to help students learn and learn to how to learn, but gifted education is about tailoring education for students who have exceeded expectations and, due to their current sorting, will not be challenged again until later on their education. Gifted programs aim to make sure that gifted students continue to learn in accordance with their capabilities, during the time in the program and beyond.

What is the most exciting educational innovation that you have come across recently?

As a Greek, I am often looking backwards. I think of innovations not as new things but as re-discoveries of ancient culture. It seems like, in theory, one could become the best economic theorist alive by simply reading papers online. However, this has not occurred, it seems now clear that institutions do not add value simply by making content available to students, but it is the method of delivery which is their value added. As such, many institutions are attempting to reduce their class sizes or to make smaller micro groups. In other words, the main thing that excites me is the frequency of feedback that students receive, small groups allow for higher feedback. Once the classes get smaller, teacher themselves will adapt to allow for more interaction, as this was counter-productive when classes were much larger.