FRANKLIN MADUKO

madukof@ceu.edu . franklin.maduko@gmail.com

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Some of the most important components of excellent teaching include: a clear and lucid communication with students, instigating understanding and inquisitiveness through thought-provoking processes, and accelerating the intellectual development of students. I care a lot about these components in the preparation and delivery of my lectures. I have had the opportunity to co-teach several courses at the graduate level at Central European University (CEU), and pre-undergraduate level at Milestone Institute, both in Budapest. These courses include macroeconomics, game theory and mathematics pre-session in the Master of Art (MA) in Economics programme, and economic analysis for policy in the Master's in Public Administration (MPA) and MA in Public Policy programme both at CEU. At Milestone Institute, I taught introductory courses in economics and mathematics. From these opportunities, I realised that I obtain great satisfaction by being able to facilitate someone's learning.

My teaching philosophy is positioned on creating a participatory environment where students see themselves as contributors to their learning process. As such, I consider myself as an enabler of an atmosphere where reasoning and constructive arguments are employed to initiate learning which help students to appreciate the main concepts of a given subject. I believe and practice the shared responsibility model of learning whereby the tutor and students engage in healthy dialogues which assist in sharpening the students critical thinking and ability to see beyond the basic problems.

I acknowledge that the Socratic Method of teaching may not be suitable at all times with all categories of students. For instance, while the Socratic Method may be a perfect tool for students in master programmes, the same may not be very productive when teaching undergraduates, wherein the teacher is required to concentrate in teaching the basics and the terminologies of a course. In that case, I strongly believe in exploiting different teaching techniques depending on the nature of students in my class. Yet, even in a master programme, it is possible that all the students in a class may not have different levels of knowledge in a given course; what I regularly do, is to identify those students in the first few weeks of the course and concentrate more efforts in ensuring that they understand each class, either by encouraging them to ask questions or by using examples and regular vocabulary to explain concepts. In exceptional cases where a student or a group of them is not measuring up due to a weak background knowledge of economics, I do fix tutorial classes that could help bring such students up

to speed.

Similarly, as more students have become tech-savvy these days, I have realised the need to incorporate technology into my mode of delivering courses. For instance, quite recently, I experimented with technologies such as mobile apps, clickers, small focused group discussion and other interactive teaching methodologies to propagate the thinking process in students. I have introduced, pop quizzes, case studies and policy labs in teaching graduate students in public policy, and the feedback from students regarding these teaching apps was very positive However, this does not imply that I subscribe to the view that the traditional teaching styles should be completely phased out, given that in any international setting where students come from various backgrounds, attention must be paid to ensure that a significant number of students are not adversely affected by the complete use of tech-based teaching.

I have worked in the finance and market strategy sectors and I do understand the practical linkages between economic theory, market strategy and finance. Thus, I plan every teaching session with the goal of nurturing in-depth understanding of the basic ideas, coupled with real-world instances and how the theoretical knowledge could manifest in the real world. I have also found the use of hypotheticals quite useful during my lectures, and they assist me in connecting economic theories to real-life issues. From my experience so far, the use of real-life instances and hypotheticals provokes important questions in the minds of my students, and often times, the debates generated in class do continue after the end of a lecture. In addition, I concretely emphasize the connections between the theoretical concepts and the quantitative tools and highlight how the different concepts relate to or contribute to each other.

I believe that learning does not end with understanding the main concepts and excelling at evaluations, but to nurture a deeper understanding of the concepts, to question their validity, to improve on them, and to apply in solving real life problems.

I also believe that teaching and research should go hand in hand, and one's research interests should mirror the subjects that are being taught to students. This way, the students become the primary beneficiaries of new research findings and the current status of the body of knowledge in the particular subject. This ability to link research with teaching will prepare the students for the job market and to become competent participants on issues of economic reform.

My teaching interests are in international trade, applied econometrics, and macroeconomics at the graduate level. At the undergraduate level, I can prepare and teach any course in economics.