

# Teaching Statement

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I have had a rich, fulfilling teaching experience as a graduate student at Northwestern. I have served as a teaching assistant in undergraduate classes, Ph.D.-level classes, MBA classes, and executive MBA classes. I really enjoy teaching and think it richly complements with all other aspects of being a scholar.

Below, I describe my most rewarding experiences as a teaching assistant, and my role in each of these. I also present my teaching principles, and I conclude by analyzing where and how I feel I can best contribute as a teacher.

**Ph.D. Program - Microeconomics** I was an assistant in Professor Eddie Dekel's class for three years. This was the first in the micro sequence of the Ph.D. program. Besides the usual roles of grading, holding problem-solving sessions, and holding office hours, I help overhaul the class notes to make them more useful to the students. I also helped produce exam questions that were uniquely tailored for this class. This was a challenging task: though I was a student in this class, it was not trivial to anticipate how a question would be interpreted by students and then how to adjust the difficulty. Once you know the answer, it is difficult to see a question with fresh eyes again.

**MBA Program - Decision Making and Modeling** Initially, my role was only grading assignments and holding office hours, but with time my responsibilities broadened to include incorporating new material into the class, helping Professor Nabil Al-Najjar write cases, and adding and updating topics. I learned the importance of keeping the material fresh, and how the time and effort invested in adding material is worthwhile, not only in terms of stimulating the interest of students but also in terms of keeping oneself motivated to teach the same class for many consecutive years.

**EMBA Program - Analytical Approach to Uncertainty** This was the first quantitative class in a carefully curated program based in Miami. I was summoned to assist in seven consecutive biannual cohorts. My main role was to complement the theoretical class with in-person assistance to help students learn and apply the material. I learned from this experience

how to communicate with an extremely heterogeneous crowd (MDs, lawyers, military and government personnel, and so on). I also had a lot of fun, and I met very interesting, deeply curious people.

Over the years, I received excellent feedback, in large part, I believe, because **I think actively and continuously about how to improve my communication and teaching skills**. Over time, I learned how to adapt my techniques to the format of the class, the audience, and the topics. My teaching philosophy, however, is based on the following general principles:

- **Relevance:** Engaging the student is fundamental to effective learning. Transmitting the relevance of the contents of the class is an investment that usually pays off in terms of increasing engagement.
- **Question clarity:** If the question is not clear, it is hard to motivate an answer. Good questions trigger intrigue in the student, but there should be no suspense with respect to what the question is.
- **No magic shows:** It is tempting to present, for example, the most elegant or clever version of a proof. This might generate awe among students but, usually, is not the most instructive method. The class should follow a logic that is natural to solving the targeted problem.
- **Class could be just the start:** Students interested in continued learning about topics that interest them should be ably guided, especially in advanced classes.

At the graduate level, my ideal class would cover applied topics with a theoretical approach. For instance, I would thrive teaching a class on the economics of innovation. I would also be excited to teach a more fundamental class, either in information economics or microeconomic theory.

For elementary classes, I feel I have a comparative advantage teaching basic statistics. In my experience, theorists tend to think of statistical problems in a way that is natural and useful to students—especially those students who will pursue a career in business, finance, law, and other fields outside of science. (I also believe that professors who do empirical research probably have a comparative advantage teaching basic microeconomic classes.)

I would also be a good fit to design and teach undergraduate level class on behavioral economics.

These are, of course, classes where I think I have an edge and where my contribution would be most valuable. However, I would be excited to contribute to teaching in any way that I can be useful.