

TEACHING STATEMENT

As an educator, I have taught and helped teach undergraduate and graduate courses in economics. I always aim to spark excitement through sharing my personal passion for economics. I believe that economics is a field that helps to understand and analyze the forces that shape our lives through powerful set of tools and frameworks. Bearing this in mind, my goal is to make sure that my students has something they can learn in my class that will improve their understanding of the world around them and their relationship to it. I measure my success as an educator by the extent to which I am able to convince my students of this point through my teaching.

A personal philosophy I hold dearly is whether we inspire interest in our course subject or not, I believe that it is critically important to acknowledge that we, as educators, don't always get it right the first time. When poorly explained concepts are not clarified, students can begin developing self-limiting beliefs about their understanding of course topics that severely hinders their ability to actually learn and enjoy the class itself. As an instructor, I had no problem revisiting course material as needed in order to explain certain concepts more clearly. I believed then and believe now that it is a powerful opportunity to show that you are accountable to your students and that you believe that it is okay to make mistakes.

My first time teaching as the primary instructor was for an online summer course for Money, Banking and Financial Markets. The online environment was particularly challenging as the different rates at which students learn, their diverse preparatory background caused concerns over keeping the students captivated, and the requirement of using predesigned teaching materials provided by the department restricted my control over the teaching style. At the end of the semester, when asked to rate my overall teaching effectiveness, they collectively gave me a rating of 2.27; when asked to rate my ability to motivate their interest in the course subject, my students collectively gave me a rating of 2.45. For comparison, a rating of 1 corresponds to "far above average" and 5 indicates to "far below average". Overall, I performed slightly better than average. In retrospect, I think I could have gotten the problem difficult mix better when building the examinations and problems sets for my course. Learning from my shortcomings, I plan on creating course components that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge in a more unstructured way. As a student and educator, my experience showed me that students develop acceptable levels of understanding of course topics but have trouble translating that understanding to acceptable exam scores. My aim is to provide an environment for my students with a way of demonstrating what they've learned without worrying about a "right answer". In addition, it will also provide all students with an opportunity to relate to course concepts in a manner of their choosing.

After struggling to teach in an online setting, I sought help from my mentors on pedagogical strategies which has led to effective outcomes in my teaching style. My in-person teaching opportunity was at the graduate level. I assisted Andrei Shevchenko as a teaching assistant in the PhD level macroeconomics course EC 813B which is a combination of topics in macroeconomics and mathematical tools that will be used to study various macroeconomics topics. I hold recitation sessions each week reviewing the topics and solving sample questions. I have received countless messages thanking me for my help in improving understanding of students and in preparation for the first-year qualifying exams. For example, following messages from two of my students reminded me how rewarding teaching can be:

"I want to thank you for everything you did for us this semester in EC 813B. Your recitation materials really, really helped in my preparation for the macro prelim, so I'm very grateful that you spent so much time in preparing those for us. They were very clearly written and easy to follow. I do know I was more prepared due to your materials. So, thank you!"

"I think I can't make it to this summer without the helps from many people, especially my TAs. Throughout the past semester, my favorite course was EC 813B, and I learned a lot from your recitation. Those solution files you prepared really helped me to figure out problems I didn't understand in class. Besides, I really appreciate your prompt replies when I got confused."

While I am proud of what I've been able to do as an educator thus far, I know that there are ways in which I can improve and be more effective. These messages motivated me more to continue to learn and progress in teaching, which I see as one of the fundamental roles for academics.

Besides teaching, I look forward to mentoring students. I worked as a research fellow for the American Economics Association Summer Program in 2020. The program aims to encourage students from underrepresented backgrounds and better facilitate their inclusion in academic economic life. As a research fellow, I helped students to carry out research projects and was awarded the Best Research Fellow award, demonstrating my ability to develop students. As a faculty member, I will therefore welcome the opportunity to advise students.

My relationships with my advisors and mentors were a large part of what motivated my interest to become a professor. I want to be able to provide that sort of service to the next generation of economists. During my time as a student, I noted what my instructors did that resonated with me. By drawing on these best practices, I hope to pass on skills, knowledge, and valuable experiences to others.