

TEACHING STATEMENT

EXPERIENCE

My teaching experience at the University of Michigan and Johns Hopkins University includes many different roles - instructor, teaching-assistant, and mentor.

I taught Introductory Microeconomics and Introductory Macroeconomics as the **Primary Instructor** at the University of Michigan. I was responsible for designing and delivering all course content - from creating the syllabus to submitting grades. I was also a **Graduate Student Instructor (GSI)** for four years, teaching Introductory Microeconomics and Macroeconomics at the undergraduate level and Statistics and Data Analysis at the graduate level. I taught weekly discussions and lab sections in traditional classroom formats, as well as online. These sections of around 35 students were an interactive and personalized setting for students to engage with the class material. For two of these years, I was **Head GSI**, organizing and leading the team of six GSIs assigned to a course of over 300 students. Based on my teaching experience and performance, I served as the **Graduate Student Mentor (GSM)** for a year in the department of economics. In this role, I trained 20 new GSIs and mentored a pool of 80 GSIs to be effective teachers.

PHILOSOPHY

This range of experiences has helped me develop my teaching philosophy based on the following key themes.

1. Teachers should always be invested in their students' learning and success.

Although this statement seems obvious, unfortunately in many settings, it does not hold true. For some instructors, teaching is not a priority but a burden forced upon them. As a student, I experienced the frustration of being taught by instructors who were not interested in my learning. Students can always tell when instructors are not fully committed to them and it is incredibly demotivating, especially for students already struggling in the class.

My goal as a teacher is to support my students in achieving their goals. I set this expectation about my role with my students upfront and reinforce it many times. This accountability significantly changes classroom dynamics. Students see me as an aide instead of a disinterested authority figure. They are more willing to discuss their challenges with me and understand that we can work jointly to address them. Better communication improves both my teaching and my students' learning. I also emphasize this idea when training new GSIs. Teaching is a much more rewarding experience for everyone when instructors focus on their students' success. It requires effort, but the results always show.

2. Given the proper support, all students can excel in economics.

Students sometimes believe that understanding economics and excelling in economics courses requires innate skills. They think that if they are not the economics or mathematics "type", they will struggle in these courses regardless of the effort they put in. Some teachers also reinforce this idea. As a result, students become discouraged, avoid taking economics courses, or stop putting in effort in class. This negative approach disproportionately affects marginalized students and contributes to the lack of diversity in the profession.

I have always challenged this idea and believe that economic and analytical thinking is a skill that can be taught and learned. If students struggle in class despite putting in the effort, teachers need to

reconsider their instruction and evaluation methods. To address such concerns, I anonymously survey students at the beginning of the course to understand their baseline math skills. Based on their responses, I share learning strategies and supplementary material with them to ensure they can access the right tools to succeed. I repeat this exercise a few times during the semester to get feedback on areas where students need more support and emphasis.

3. Economic tools are applicable in many diverse situations.

The strongest selling point of economics is its broad applicability. In class, I present data, figures, and articles from media and academic sources to show students how economics affects their daily lives. I highlight that economic tools are used to address a range of social and policy issues; from health and education interventions to designing markets and auctions. I encourage students to discuss both the strengths and weaknesses of applying certain economic models to these real-world issues. I have found that students engage with the material more actively and are also more likely to pursue advanced economics courses when they see these practical applications in class.

INTERESTS

I am interested in teaching courses based on my research interest and teaching experience. I am, of course, also happy to teach any courses that best meet departmental needs.

- Introductory/Intermediate Microeconomics - Undergraduate
- Introductory/Intermediate Macroeconomics - Undergraduate
- Data Analysis/Program Evaluation/Causal Inference - Graduate and Undergraduate
- Development Economics - Graduate and Undergraduate
- Public Economics/Public Finance - Graduate and Undergraduate
- Labor Economics - Graduate and Undergraduate
- Any courses based on departmental needs