Teaching Statement

Economics is a subject that is applicable to anything and everything – from deriving less satisfaction as you drink more water when you are thirsty to larger issues such as debt crises or recessions. It is this fact that motivates my teaching philosophy: learning through application. I teach Economics by first presenting concepts and showing students real-life examples of these concepts, and then providing a space for them to learn and apply the concepts to their own lives.

One way that I teach through application is by presenting concepts for any class through a variety of mediums: through slides, by writing on the blackboard, and through visual mediums depicting the concept. For example, linear regression can be presented by writing the equations on the blackboard and detailing the different assumptions that exist. I then show students examples of applying this to real life by running regressions on real data and presenting the output. While students now understand the concept and have some real-world examples, these are still theoretical concepts. In a study session follow-up, I generate fake data and show how estimates change when assumptions do not hold or when using an incorrect specification, thus, demonstrating how the heteroskedasticity or omitted variable bias works. This is one example of learning through application which helps makes theoretical econometrics fun and invites students to be curious about the concepts they are learning.

Learning through application is incomplete without providing a space for students to question and be inquisitive. One of my most used phrases is: "There is no such thing as a stupid question." This is particularly important given the diverse educational settings students come from, where they may not have been encouraged to voice their doubts. . I also ensure that there are various settings in which students can ask questions: in class, during office hours, and over email, depending on their comfort level. Further, I believe learning is social, and to facilitate this, I will pair up students in classes for small group activities where they 'think-pair-share' – students will individually think about the problem at hand, then discuss it in their pairs, and finally, share with the group. Overall, I work to make all students feel included in the classroom by encouraging them to talk with me and by asking students to collaborate.

In my classes, I aim to offer a variety of assessments through homework, quizzes, and exams as well as presentations or case studies. I will also allow for the option of homework to be done in self-assigned study groups, further extending the idea of cooperative learning. My exams will have an assortment of questions: multiple-choice, short-answer, and open-ended questions so that all students can demonstrate their learning through their preferred modes and will primarily focus on their understanding and application of the concept. While in introductory classes, I will have short-answer questions that test application through a case; in upper-level courses, I will encourage students to either write a paper or present on a topic related to the course in lieu of an exam. I will ensure that all study materials are easily available and do not add any financial burdens to the students, especially those from low-income backgrounds.

To ensure inclusivity in my teaching, I am mindful of giving examples that are relevant to students of varied backgrounds and of citing different authors and perspectives in class. For example, guns and butter is a commonly used example to describe production possibility frontiers; yet it is not obvious to all students that guns refer to defense and butter to food. Therefore, I prefer using health and education, a universal trade-off. Another technique I want to employ, especially in introductory courses, is to have diverse individuals who are considered role models

visit the class one or two times a semester and tell them about their experience choosing a path using their Economics major. I believe strong role models have a large impact on the way we view a subject or a career path.

To this end, I also aspire to be a mentor to my students, inside and outside the classroom. I have reaped the benefits of having generous mentors at different stages of my academic career and I want to continue the cycle by ensuring that I speak to my students about my research, my background, and my journey here. While my office hours are generally focused on questions relating to class, I specify that students can come to me for questions outside of our course content as well. I have also set up a graduate student mentoring program within the department where students from their later years can mentor students who are earlier on in their journey. I look forward to further opportunities to mentor students and to continue this cycle of support as a faculty member.

I believe learning through application helps students connect Economics to their everyday lives, either through micro decisions in their daily life or through looking at the macro economy. I aim to always create an environment where students with different learning preferences can engage with the material and apply it by teaching the concepts and evaluating them through diverse mediums. However, teaching is a learning process and I hope to keep incorporating feedback and improving as I build upon my teaching experience.

Teaching Experience. I have served as a Teaching Assistant for the following courses: Structural Microeconometrics (graduate level) and Research in Healthcare Management (undergraduate level).

Teaching Interests. In my academic career, I look forward to teaching a wide range of courses at the undergraduate level such as Principles of Microeconomics, Labor Economics, and Applied Econometrics, as well as graduate-level courses such as Advanced Econometrics, Structural Microeconometrics, Labor Economics, and Household Economics.