

Paul Shaloka Teaching Statement

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Teaching Philosophy

Four principles are fundamental to my teaching philosophy: (1) treat each student with dignity and respect, (2) create an engaging environment, (3) encourage constant learning, and (4) build towards intellectually stimulating and attainable goals. First, everyone deserves to be treated with compassion and respect, both in and outside the classroom. I always ask students about themselves and their interests, which allows me to tailor the examples and problem sets to fit their experiences. I memorize each student's name, and send personal emails to congratulate them on their successes and improvements. I also reach out to struggling students and work to foster an environment where students feel comfortable and encouraged to reach out for additional help. Secondly, I have found that students will reflect my level of energy and enthusiasm; if I am not engaged and proactive in class, how can I expect my students to be? Thirdly, I connect the materials we cover to real-world examples, and I constantly encourage students to think about economics and statistics in action in their everyday lives. One of the most powerful aspects of economics is that it gives us a tool-set to think about the world, and I want to give the students a new framework for thinking about problems, no matter their major. Finally, I strive to always push my students intellectually and make sure expectations are clear and consistent. I ensure that exams closely follow assigned practice tests and problem sets to make sure students know exactly what is expected and can target their studying. I also incorporate data from in-class questions and anonymous polling outside of class to make sure that assignments remain fair and to track student progress and feelings about the pace and content of the course.

Teaching Methods

I primarily try to teach by example. Lecturing is important for conveying information, but in my experience recitation of material from slides alone can cause students to lose focus and struggle to apply the information being conveyed. Most of my teaching experience has come from smaller, remedial sessions, and that setting was well suited to going through problems in greater detail; effectively I was teaching how to answer problems instead of just teaching material. I find that students appreciate this more involved, applied style of lecturing. I also frequently tie material to real world examples, often by referencing current events or interesting (and understandable) published papers. This is an effective way to convey to students how the class material can help them understand the world, and how what they are learning can fruitfully be applied to interesting and important research. This is especially important for connecting with students who are economics majors and could be inspired to pursue their economics education further. I also believe it is important to be an energized and engaged lecturer.

Outside of class, I try to provide as many resources to students as possible. First, I always provide sample problems and solutions that are similar to those given in quizzes or on problem sets, to reinforce the types of answers I am looking for and the methodology for solving problems. I supplement these sample problems with video recordings of how I approach tackling a

problem, which gives students clear examples they can return to as many times as they like. I also provide students with supplementary material if they are interested in exploring concepts further, or would benefit from a slightly different framing or explanation. Finally, I ask students to email me ahead of time before office hours with specific issues so I can make sure that valuable time is targeted as much as possible to what would be most beneficial to students.

Teaching Experience

I have been a teaching assistant at the University of Notre Dame for three semesters. For all three classes, I created a Stata tutorial course which I taught to the students at the beginning of each semester. I also created Stata based problem sets for the students to complete, designed to test for a deeper understanding of commands besides rote memorization and/or trial and error. Throughout the course, I graded assignments and held remedial lectures for students who wanted more in-depth coverage of certain class topics. In the Spring of 2022, I met every week with a student who was struggling with the course and created personalized lesson plans to work through material and to prepare for quizzes and tests.

I am interested in teaching courses in the broader field of microeconomics, applied econometrics, labor economics and development economics at all both graduate and undergraduate levels. I would also be comfortable with teaching a beginner's or level course in statistics.

Summary of Teaching Experience

- Fall 2020: Describing an Unequal World: Introduction to Development Economics (Teaching Assistant)
- Fall 2021: Describing an Unequal World: Introduction to Development Economics (Teaching Assistant)
- Spring 2022: Econometrics (Teaching Assistant)