

Saharnaz Babaei-Balderlou

Darla Moore School of Business
University of South Carolina
1014 Greene Street
Columbia, SC 29208
Office: DMSB 452Q1

☎ (803) 463-6594
✉ saharnaz.babaei@grad.moore.sc.edu
🌐 <https://saharnazbabaei.wixsite.com/home>
🌐 /in/saharnaz-babaei-balderlou/
🇮🇷 Citizenship: Iran

Statement of Teaching Effectiveness

During my graduate career, I have taught Introduction to Economics in Spring 2021 (Online), Spring 2022 (Face-to-Face), Spring 2023 (Face-to-Face) and I will be teaching another in-person section in Spring 2024 with a 56 student capacity. I have also served as a graduate teaching assistant in several courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, including Introductory Econometrics, Labor Economics and Labor Markets, Industrial Organization, and Public Finance from 2018-2020. Throughout my academic journey, I have continually strived to not only impart knowledge but also inspire a genuine love for learning among my students. My effectiveness as an educator is evidenced by both qualitative and quantitative measures, showcasing my commitment to excellence in teaching.

Course Development and Adaptability

One of my significant accomplishments as an educator has been the meticulous development of the “Introduction to Economics” course. I curated its syllabus and course materials, designed evaluations, and ensured that it provides both foundational knowledge and real-world applications of economic principles. The transition prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic tested the adaptability of many educators, and I am proud of my seamless teaching commencement at this period and shift between in-person and online teaching. This transition was marked not by a mere transfer of content but by a thoughtful adaptation to leverage the strengths of each learning style (online and in-person).

Student Feedback and Engagement

Feedback from my students consistently underscores my ability to make complex economic concepts relatable and understandable. In my “Introduction to Economics” course, I have employed diverse teaching methodologies, from traditional lectures to interactive group discussions and real-world case studies. As a result, students have reported an enhanced appreciation for the subject matter and the ability to apply theoretical concepts to practical scenarios. The positive reception to my use of media, games, and digital tools, especially during online teaching, further underscores my effectiveness in engaging students in diverse learning environments.

Mentorship and Student Development

Beyond structured courses, my role as a mentor for an undergraduate honors student’s research project stands as a testament to my dedication to student growth. By guiding this student through the rigors of independent research, I sought to equip him with the critical thinking and analytical skills necessary for success in academia and beyond.

Quantitative Measures

My teaching evaluations provide a tangible measure of my effectiveness. For instance, in my “Introduction to Economics” course taught from 2021 to the present, the majority of students rated the course and my teaching methods highly. These evaluations, coupled with regular feedback, have been instrumental in my continual refinement of teaching methods to better serve student needs. At the end of this statement, I will provide summaries from my teaching evaluations for the courses where

Last Updated: November 29, 2023

I have been the instructor and developed the course material myself. The full evaluations are accessible on my personal website. Teaching evaluations are not available for the courses where I served as the graduate teaching assistant. Teaching evaluations are conducted anonymously at the end of each semester at the University of South Carolina and students are asked to rate the instructor's performance.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

Given my research focus and personal experiences, I place a high emphasis on creating an inclusive classroom environment. My strategies, such as randomized group assignments and open discussions, have been characterized for fostering an environment where students from diverse backgrounds feel valued and heard.

Teaching, for me, is a dynamic interplay of imparting knowledge, inspiring curiosity, and nurturing growth. The consistent positive feedback from students, successful course outcomes, and my adaptability in diverse teaching scenarios attest to my effectiveness as an educator. As I continue on this path, I remain committed to excellence, always seeking ways to enhance the learning experience for my students.

I always do a mid-semester anonymous evaluation created by myself. The following comments are only from the evaluations collected by the University of South Carolina at the end of each semester.

Spring 2021: ECON224 - Introduction to Economics

This course held online through Blackboard. Blackboard is the learning management system at the University of South Carolina providing the suitable space to share the course materials with students and holding online sessions. Learning from my experience as a student in online classes previously, I used one platform for both teaching and sharing documents to avoid students' confusion through multiple platforms.

Evaluation Statistics

Enrollment	Participation	Global Indicator (St.D.)	Instructor Performance (St.D.)
51 Students	60.78%	4.27 (0.85)	4.44 (0.72)

Notes: where 4 is satisfied and 5 is very satisfied.

Selected Comments from Student Feedback

I think she did a great job. She was always available if needed and during exams she made herself available so if you needed help she could reference you to which slide would have the information you needed which was really nice.

She always made herself available during class time, even if we didn't have a class that day.

She appeared to be very knowledgeable about the subject.

The professor can help me learn the content of economy very well, and the professor is very friendly and will help us solve problems very well.

Her strength is explanations of material and exam structure. She did a really good job of communicating with students and making sure everyone was on the same page. anyone who says differently is the kind of student who just did not show up to class

she was very open to questions, one time when I needed to meet with her for a test she was more than willing to help, and I found my session one on one very useful and helpful.

Her strength is staying on top of blackboard

strengths were the communication piece. There were not many weaknesses. Overall, I think the course would've just been better if it was in person, besides that it was great.

Spring 2022: ECON224 - Introduction to Economics

This course held in-person through a class with the enrollment of 50 students. Following my online class, I kept the course materials through Blackboard to be accessible for my students.

Evaluation Statistics

Enrollment	Participation	Global Indicator (St.D.)	Instructor Performance (St.D.)
50 Students	70%	3.73 (1.14)	4.00 (1.01)

Notes: where 4 is satisfied and 5 is very satisfied.

Selected Comments from Student Feedback

I went into a lot more detail in the course evaluation that my teacher sent out for the individual class but I will summarize what I said in that one. This teacher was on time for all classes, was prepared with slides to teach, always helped out any student, and would go above and beyond to try and help us.

She posted the notes and went over them thoroughly, which was greatly appreciated and if you had questions, she was quick to answer and explain in a way that was easier to understand.

She provided good practice exams to help us prepare for this real exams.

She was great at explaining and answering questions

Mrs. B is such a positive person, and she really cares about her students and wants us to succeed. She was always approachable to ask for help and always willing to understand and accommodate students' circumstances. She did a great job of using examples to break down concepts into simple terms.

She is passionate about the course, thinks of new ways to explain things.

She is very intelligent about economics and was clearly excited to teach the class. She worked to be available for office hours and to meet with students when possible to provide extra help.

Spring 2023: ECON224 - Introduction to Economics

This course held in-person at 8:30-9:20 AM on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays with the enrollment of 12 students.

Evaluation Statistics

Enrollment	Participation	Global Indicator (St.D.)	Instructor Performance (St.D.)
12 Students	66.67%	4.51 (0.97)	4.47 (1.08)

Notes: where 4 is satisfied and 5 is very satisfied.

Selected Comments from Student Feedback

(She is) great speaker and assist us to understand a topic better if we have questions

(She is) knowledgeable on subject, interactive, quick in giving feedback, helpful

I liked the use of slides in the class it allowed for me to go along with the subject and have a visual understanding.

Spring 2024: ECON224 - Introduction to Economics

This course will be held in-person with capacity of 56 students in Spring 2024.