When teaching mathematics, I'm regularly struck by how ingrained quantitative skills are yet how nebulous they can remain. For example, many of my students often struggle with marginal analysis (even while mastering differentiation). But each one could intuitively calculate a break-even price point and quantity. I believe my role as a teacher is to help students uncover their own implicit abilities, and then empower them and challenge them to apply those skills in increasingly diverse ways. There are, of course, subjects which must be taught and introduced, but one key is conveying concepts in an affable manner. In some sense, my role is to alleviate the intimidation many face when learning quantitative subjects.

I also believe that meaningful study requires rigor. However, rigor is only beneficial if it is complemented by aid, whereby mistakes and misunderstandings can be corrected—to become poignant teaching points rather then penalties. My students would agree: over 82 percent described my course as either "challenging" or "very challenging" in course evaluations but nearly 88 percent considered my exams "fair" or "very fair." For these reasons I reject the notion that students are analogous to customers who must be served and are always right (as the saying goes). They are capable of profound work and reflection, but only when I succeed in my teaching capacity, simultaneously stretching their perspectives while supporting their efforts.

One notable advantage of teaching while in graduate school was the immediate insight I gained into student perspectives: What is pedagogically appealing? What is frustrating? What inhibits the learning process for a student and what catalyzes it? It cemented my teaching philosophy: abandon power point presentations (unless absolutely necessary) and textbook references; embrace online homework modules with immediate and limitless examples; liberally share as many secondary sources as necessary, including YouTube videos and old exams, rather than stifling the free flow of information; give take-home exams, favoring multi-faceted and thoughtful questions promoting deeper contemplation rather than rote and rushed problems; respond to student emails on the same day; and always schedule to meet (during office hours or outside of them) with students as soon as possible. My dual existence also guaranteed that I treat my students with the respect, patience, and maturity they deserve, while maintaining honesty about my own teaching capabilities.

Teaching at Brooklyn College (a senior college within the City University of New York) was particularly inspiring because of the diverse student body. Every semester my best student was of a different age, sex, race, and religion. It crystalized my belief that a university education should be available to anyone who wants it, and financial support should be made available to position students for success. (Too many of my students struggled under the financial burdens of full-time jobs and supporting families at home.)

Like research, teaching is a skill I will always practice and improve. As a nervous graduate student I continually learned about teaching from my students with each additional lecture, exam, and office hour. And incremental gains were evident. While more than three-quarters of my former students were "somewhat" or "very likely" to recommend me as an instructor, by my last semester more than 92 percent of students were likely to recommend me. That only two-thirds of my former students believed they had gained either a "fair amount" or "a lot" in their ability to "analyze and solve" problems, however, remains tremendous motivation to keep improving.

To conclude, I cite professor Anne Hall's perspective on university pedagogy as a simple but unifying principle. A college education "is for developing the muscle of thoughtfulness," whether it be applied towards engaging in intellectual life, making informed civic choices, or solving a personal or professional problem. My job is to train and inspire that muscle.

Courses Taught

- Principles of Macroeconomics
- Fundamental Methods of Mathematical Economics

Courses Willing to Teach

- Income and Wealth Inequality
- Econometrics
- History of Economic Thought
- Politcal Economy
- Development Economics
- Macroeconomics
- Monetary Economics
- International Economics
- Finance
- Microeconomics