

# Teaching Statement

Toufiq Rahman

My teaching philosophy is a direct extension of my research identity as an applied microeconomist: I aim to empower students to use the tools of economic theory and econometrics to understand and analyze the world around them. In my classroom, economic models are not abstract theories to be memorized, but frameworks to understand rational behavior and economic problems. My goal is to bridge the gap between theory and empirical application, fostering an environment where students develop not only a clear understanding of economic principles but also the practical data skills necessary to become critical consumers and producers of economic analysis.

I have had the opportunity to put this philosophy into practice and refine it as an Instructor for diverse courses at Georgia State University. My first teaching experience, “Principles of Macroeconomics” with 79 students, was a formative one. The primary challenge was making complex macroeconomic concepts intuitive and relevant to their daily lives. I used current events, policy debates, and real-time data visualizations to connect abstract concepts like inflation and unemployment to their lived experiences. This role taught me invaluable lessons about pedagogical clarity and managing a large classroom. The student evaluations (4.31/5) were a crucial source of feedback, highlighting areas for growth and reinforcing my commitment to taking teaching seriously and continuously adopting better methods.

I applied these lessons directly to my subsequent masters-level course, “Human Resources and Labor Markets”. For this class of 14 students, I cultivated a broad, seminar-style environment focused on engaging with how empirical results often diverge from theoretical predictions. We critically analyzed seminal papers, debated identification strategies, and I guided students in developing their own research proposals. This more refined approach, which brought my own research experiences directly into our discussions, was met with very positive feedback, earning a teaching evaluation of 4.95/5. These varied settings demonstrate my commitment to adapting my teaching style and my desire to continuously learn to meet the needs of different student populations.

I am committed to equipping students with modern technical skills, integrating my proficiency in Python, R, and Stata directly into my courses. I move beyond textbook examples to guide students through the entire “full stack” of applied economic research: from formulating a question and cleaning public datasets like the CPS to implementing regression analysis and visualizing results. This approach prepares them for success in graduate school and data-driven careers.

I am prepared to teach broadly across the curriculum. This includes core undergraduate courses (Principles, Intermediate Micro, Econometrics) as well as graduate courses in my fields of Labor Economics, Health Economics, and Econometrics. Furthermore, I am eager to develop new skills-oriented courses, such as “Applied Econometrics with R” or “Machine Learning for Economists.” My ultimate goal is to inspire students to see economics as a vital lens for understanding and improving society.