

Teaching Statement

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As an educator, my primary objectives are twofold: first, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the course material, and second, to cultivate skills that equip students for critical thinking beyond the classroom's walls. This commitment drives me to structure lectures actively, emphasizing immersive in-class activities and discussions that are both relevant and engaging. At the heart of my teaching approach is building a relaxed learning environment and fostering an inclusive atmosphere. I strongly believe in maintaining an open dialogue, always welcoming students' unique perspectives and inquiries.

To maximize comprehension and retention, I break down subjects into three progressive phases. Firstly, I lay the foundation by introducing pivotal concepts along with their practical implications. This is followed by illustrating these concepts through real-world applications, ensuring that students perceive the relevance of what they are learning. The final phase consists of applications: students immerse themselves in hands-on activities, applying what they have learned. Throughout this process, students are encouraged to question and dissect models and underlying assumptions, thereby developing the ability to apply economic thinking to real-life situations long after completing the course.

When providing feedback to students, I aim to enhance their comprehension and encourage growth. First and foremost, feedback should always be constructive. This entails not only highlighting the students' strengths but also pinpointing areas for improvement. Rather than merely stating what was incorrect, I delve into the 'why' behind each mistake. For example, after exams and assignments, I organize review sessions where students can discuss their answers, facilitating group learning and fostering a deeper understanding. Whenever feasible, I provide specific examples or alternative solutions. Additionally, I encourage students to ask questions or share areas they found challenging, as these discussions can unveil insights into aspects they find difficult. I always try to celebrate successes, no matter how minor. It can be a tremendous morale booster, motivating students to strive for a better outcome.

My strong teaching evaluations underscore the effectiveness of my teaching approach. As a summer instructor at the University of Pittsburgh, I taught Game Theory Principles (4.2/5) in-person and Introduction to Macroeconomics (4.1/5) online. As a teaching assistant (TA) at the same university, I have had diverse experiences across both graduate and undergraduate levels. In the Ph.D. program, I served as the TA for Introduction to Mathematical Methods for Economists (4.8/5), Mathematical Methods for Economists (4.7/5), and Ad-

vanced Microeconomics Theory II (4.6/5). Meanwhile, at the undergraduate level, my primary role was as a TA for Introduction to Microeconomics (4.3/5).

Although my preference leans towards teaching microeconomics-related courses at various levels, I am qualified to instruct across a broad spectrum of economics topics. Specifically, at the undergraduate level, I can proficiently teach both introductory and intermediate courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, game theory, industrial organization, behavioral economics, and econometrics.

As an example of my teaching philosophy, during the course “Game Theory Principles”, I meticulously developed a curriculum that not only emphasized a robust theoretical understanding of games but also incorporated myriad examples and diverse classroom activities. A highlight of this course was a semester-long initiative where students were paired at random to compete in games. A specific game was introduced for each activity, and students were designated roles. After the game was completed, we logged individual payoffs. By the semester’s end, students’ cumulative payoffs determined their extra credit, adding an extra layer of motivation and realism to their learning experience. The syllabus for this course can be found on [my website](#).

Selected Student Comments:

“Benjamin was very responsive to questions and often helped me to better understand concepts. I like that a few of the same examples were used repeatedly to examine different concepts, as that limited confusion about how each example worked, and allowed us to focus on the new concept we were learning.”

“The in-class examples were really helpful for understanding the material.”

“Instructor always had a positive attitude and was more than willing to help when needed. Gave us ample time to work on problems ourselves and would then proceed to explain in depth to class.”

“Benjamin was able to make recitation both a fun environment to be in and teach the subject well.”