

Teaching Statement

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During my time at the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities, I had the valuable opportunity to teach two, distinct courses and TA in several others. These experiences made me a better economist, as it made me a more effective communicator, and helped me develop a distinct teaching philosophy. Indeed, I am excited about the prospect of teaching economics at any level of complexity and topic, but I prefer teaching microeconomics, public economics, IO, auction theory, game theory, or financial economics. My teaching philosophy is based in two tenets that I discuss in detail below.

I first believe that students must be intellectually respected. This means that an instructor must present economic concepts in breadth, but to do so in the most technically accessible manner. I achieve this point in the following steps. First, I present the basic economic concept in the simplest manner possible i.e., in a way that presents the topics covered with the least deviation from what they have observed. While teaching industrial organization (IO), for instance, I first taught perfect competition using a unit demand framework and the simplest technical assumptions. The second step is to point out all simplifying assumptions made in the simple framing as well as the flaws inherent in making each assumption. This step allows me to clarify that the example is simple to present an idea and the extent to which that idea generalizes. While teaching IO, I clarified that the perfect competition model is not a description of most markets, but it serves as a stylized benchmark to whom all other market structures compare. The third (and crucial) step is to demarcate how the economics taught in the classroom translate into the student's future career e.g., understanding the key features underpinning a firm's predominant market guides determined the relative importance of news presented in financial statements.

My second teaching tenet is to focus on building professionals. Students must be shaped as well-rounded and critical thinkers, but they must also I ask them to follow strict assignment guidelines. This does not mean that I do not make exceptions for extraordinary circumstances, but that a strict adherence to the basic expectations must be paramount. Next, I require students to collaborate in groups for each assignment. This is because in most careers, cooperation among colleagues is paramount to effectively complete required tasks. Lastly, I ask students to give a professional project presentation. Students must dress professionally and communicate a solution to a problem using their knowledge of economics. I further require that they must effectively communicate their insights to a non-technical (priority) and technical audience. This step is crucial since even the most valuable technical insight is not well received or understood when it is not communicated effectively.

These tenets are focused on undergraduate instruction, but they reflect how I view the teaching component of my career. I believe that an academic's role is to create knowledge *and* promote its content to the largest possible audience. It is acceptable for my ideas to reside in academic journals, but they should be communicated to a general audience seeking to generally apply its content. Therefore, I see the teaching aspect of my career to be central alongside my research.