

Teaching Statement

Nicolas Pastrian

University of Pittsburgh

I have had the privilege of instructing a diverse range of students, from undergraduate to Ph.D. students, and teaching a broad variety of courses in economics. My adaptability in tailoring teaching styles to suit different academic environments has been a cornerstone of my approach.

During my Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh, I had the opportunity of teaching Game Theory and Intermediate Microeconomics during the Summer terms. This fall semester, I am teaching the newly created Economic Modeling Skills class, and was also involved in its design. Jointly with the director of undergraduate studies, a senior faculty, and a fellow graduate student, we designed this course to provide additional support to students struggling with the challenges of more advanced courses in economics. Based on the analysis of the main obstacles to students' success in the Intermediate Microeconomics class, we created new material and implemented novel teaching strategies to support their learning experience, improving both their mathematical skills and study effectiveness.

Additionally, I served as a Teaching Assistant for the two core courses in Microeconomic Theory sequence in the first year of the Ph.D. program, and Introduction to Microeconomic Theory and Intermediate Microeconomics at the undergraduate level.

I also had previous experience teaching before I started the Ph.D. program. I had the opportunity to teach two classes in the Department of Engineering at Universidad Adolfo Ibañez in Chile and I have previous experience as a Teaching Assistant for several undergraduate and graduate courses in the Department of Economics and Business at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile while completing my B.A. and M.A. degrees. At Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, I taught two introductory courses: Principles of Economics and Introduction to Microeconomics.

I am very passionate about teaching; I am dedicated to continuously improving my teaching skills as well as expanding my pedagogical resources to provide effective support and feedback to the students. I think it is not only important to guide already proficient students towards further improvement, but it's equally important to provide tailored assistance to students who may be struggling with the material or lacking foundational skills. For this reason, I constantly try to include a variety of references that could allow more advanced students to deepen their knowledge in the topics, but also include references that could work as additional support for those facing challenges. I encourage them to be proactive in managing their own learning but at the same time I make sure they know I am there to support this process.

In the classroom, I strive to foster analytical and critical thinking skills that students could use not only to analyze economic problems but that are useful to their everyday and future professional lives even beyond economics. I believe that the use of active learning techniques and constantly

seeking innovative ways to enhance student participation and learning experiences is fundamental for effective teaching.

My teaching philosophy centers around three main tasks: fostering continuous improvement, providing effective support, and cultivating an inclusive learning environment through active participation, mutual respect, and encouraged curiosity. I firmly believe that all three of these tasks are key for students' success. I think that one of the main advantages of economics is that it is easier to find applications both in everyday interactions as well as more technical domains that make it easier for students to grasp the different concepts developed during the classes. Personally, I found that the use of mathematical tools to analyze more tangible problems like the common problems we encounter in economics makes their application more natural than in other disciplines. In the classroom, I try to continuously exploit this advantage by linking students' insights to the equations, formulas, definitions, and features of the models we are studying. This makes it easier for them to understand the mechanisms behind the problems, allowing students to use these tools to describe and analyze diverse phenomena.

During my lectures, I encourage students to ask questions, recognizing the positive impact it has on the overall learning environment. By addressing individual concerns, we create a shared space for growth. I always strive to incorporate diverse approaches into course design, recognizing that students have unique learning needs and overall objectives. I try to balance the different activities and evaluations outside and inside the classroom to better suit the requirements of the course. I prioritize creating a safe and inclusive environment that allows students to feel comfortable sharing their concerns and critics, recognizing that errors are a crucial part in the learning process and that they will receive the support they need in order to succeed in the class.

The effectiveness of my teaching has been recognized in the evaluations I received both as an instructor and teaching assistant at the University of Pittsburgh. In my two summer courses I received outstanding average scores of 4.4/5 and 4.7/5 for Game Theory and Intermediate Microeconomics respectively. For my work as teaching assistant for the graduate courses I also earned similar evaluations, scoring 4.4/5 for the first course in the microeconomic theory sequence and 4.7/5 for the second. While my average score as a teaching assistant for undergraduate courses has been 4.2/5. These scores are evidence of my compromise with the quality of my teaching and my sincere concern for my students' learning experience.

In terms of courses, my expertise lies in microeconomics, especially Game Theory and Microeconomic Theory, and I am well prepared to teach the core microeconomic courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as courses in Industrial Organization, Behavioral Economics, and Public Economics. While not my primary expertise, I am also prepared to teach basic and intermediate courses in Econometrics and Macroeconomics. I am particularly interested in developing courses in Market Design, Economics and Computation, and Behavioral Public Economics. Due to my background and experience, I am proficient in teaching in both English and Spanish and am prepared to deliver instruction in different formats having taught online, hybrid, and in-person classes during the last summers.