

Teaching Statement

As a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh, I have taught Introduction to Microeconomics as an independent instructor and have led recitation sessions as a teaching assistant for induction to Macroeconomics. I have also taken on the role of a teaching assistant and mentor, engaging in one-on-one interactions with students, both outside the classroom and in remote learning settings. Based on my teaching experience, I have distilled my teaching objectives into two key goals: (1) Spark students' enthusiasm for economics by encouraging them to apply the economic principles they have learned, and (2) promote participation from all students and offer a supportive and inclusive environment to accommodate students from diverse backgrounds.

To inspire students' interest in economics, I use daily-life examples and real-world events to explain concepts using clear and simple language. As a teaching assistant, I guided students on term papers that involve applying macroeconomic principles to real-world issues. To aid this, I've added policy discussions in my recitation sessions, touching on pressing social issues such as public housing and Medicare, and relating them to our course. This activity helps them to adopt an economist's perspective viewing the world. As the main instructor for the Introductory Microeconomics course, I integrated a discussion on labor market discrimination, a topic not being covered in the textbook I used. I explained concepts like statistical and taste-based discrimination through tangible examples of gender and racial biases in employment. I presented data showing that job applicants with typically white names receive 50% more callbacks than those with typically Black names. I also encourage students to share personal stories related to gender differences in task allocations that they or others have experienced. These activities tie economic concepts to empirical data and everyday experiences, thereby sparking their interest in the subject.

In my teaching approach, I encourage student participation by engaging with them directly and adapting my methods to suit their individual needs. During my online classes, I employ online surveys and office hours to familiarize myself with students' backgrounds early on and continually gather their feedback through post-class quizzes and midterms. Based on students' performance and feedback, I adjust my teaching methods. For students who appear to be having difficulty and do not show up at the office hours, I provide explanatory notes on their graded assignments and actively arrange post-midterm meetings with them. When I noticed that many students in my online courses weren't interacting with the recitation videos, I segmented the recitation problem sets into shorter tasks with added hints and formatted them as quizzes and assignments. This approach proved more effective than the initial videos.

I aim to foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment for my students. I aim to foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment for my students. In assembling study groups, I make an effort to mix students from various ethnicities and genders, ensuring that groups are balanced and no individual feels isolated due to their gender or background.

In addition to teaching undergraduate courses in Microeconomics and Macroeconomics, I'm enthusiastic about teaching and developing courses in public economics, urban economics, political economy, data analysis, and subjects related to racial inequality, suitable for both undergraduate and graduate students. My diverse research experiences across different countries enable me to infuse my teaching materials with a broad spectrum of cultural and national backgrounds. For instance, I'm eager to develop an interdisciplinary course merging political economy and urban economics. In a U.S. setting, I'd address how partisan leadership and minority representation in local government influence neighborhood development and urban racial/income inequality. In a Chinese context, on the other hand, I'd discuss how the promotional ambitions of Chinese mayors have fast-tracked urbanization in the country.