

Teaching Philosophy

The ultimate challenge for students is whether they can apply their newly found knowledge to new and different situations. While gaining knowledge for the sake of knowledge is sometimes sufficient, there is an imperative need to add value and encourage students to further apply obtained knowledge to situations and problems that are relevant to our lives.

My goal as an educator is to be an illuminator and a presenter of ideas. My teaching objectives differ slightly depending on the level of the course. At the undergraduate level, the difficulties most students face are primarily psychological as well as inadequate background knowledge of the fundamentals of economics. Hence, my objective is to make my students appreciate and even enjoy topics in economics by applying the basic principles and theoretic models to current policy issues.

Economics is a relatively abstract subject yet full of real world applications. Students are more likely to be interested in it when they realize how economics closely relates to their world. Using examples that relate to students' own experiences work much better than purely emphasizing the theories. In my classes, I supplement formal lectures with practical applications, real world examples, in-class demonstrations, simple experiments, and group discussions on current topical issues. These methods of teaching provide students with hands-on experience as well as motivate involvement and interests.

I see every student as an individual. I also believe that it is very important to challenge students, encourage them to express themselves, and think critically about the concepts in economics. Different viewpoints can be used to complement in-class discussions. I respect intellectual diversity and encourage students to express their own thoughts. At the same time, instructors should enable students to become responsible for their own learning. I do recognize that students learn in different ways and I am committed to respecting and including all students in the learning process.

One of my primary concerns is successfully balancing the quantity of material presented during a semester with solid and rigorous exposition. I believe that at the undergraduate level, emphasis should be placed on thorough explanation of material, supplemented by graphical analysis and simple mathematical expressions. Problem sets and small projects should be given on a regular basis to ensure that students keep up with the material and to motivate critical thinking of more challenging concepts covered in class.

In all classes, I conscientiously make the effort of knowing all my students and their interests in order to help shape their academic and professional development. In addition, I encourage communication and feedback both to and from my students. Needless to say, having an open atmosphere gives me the chance to evaluate my teaching approach and adjust accordingly.

Personal interaction while maintaining a professional relationship with students is beneficial to students, especially for those who are uncomfortable expressing their concerns and questions in a group setting. I always encourage students to meet with me regarding any problem, academic and non-academic, even outside my regular office hours. I also provide information on my website to ensure that students are always informed on course assignments and activities.

I like employing facilities offered by the school (computer software, library facilities, online-teaching) and consider technology to be an invaluable tool for addressing different learning styles. My past teaching experiences have always left me humbled. I realize that the contributions from students through their questions, comments, and interests have always helped me to better prepare for future classes.