

Teaching Philosophy

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In my role as an educator, I am committed to moving beyond traditional lecture-based instruction in economics by creating inclusive, dynamic classroom environments where students engage deeply with economic theory and real-world applications. I foster a culture that is approachable, professional, and responsive to student needs, supporting the development of both critical thinking and the ability to apply economic reasoning to real-world problems. Because economics often feels abstract or intimidating, I deliberately design lessons to make content accessible and meaningful while maintaining intellectual rigor. My teaching is guided by active learning principles and grounded in structure and clarity. Each class is organized into 15 to 20-minute segments that incorporate varied engagement strategies such as interactive questions, brief videos, Kahoot quizzes, or relevant visual humor to help reset attention and sustain participation. This pacing is intentionally aligned with research on attention and cognitive load, enabling students to absorb material more effectively while fostering deeper engagement.

In my Principles of Microeconomics courses, I incorporate classroom experiments and games to make abstract concepts more tangible. A student favorite is the “Trading in a Pit Market” simulation from Holt (1996), where I divide students into buyers and sellers and recreate a live trading environment. We then graph supply and demand and observe how prices converge toward equilibrium. This activity has proven effective in both small and large sections. In a class of 297 students, I used 30 volunteers as active participants while others observed and made predictions. The experiment consistently helps students visualize core economic concepts in action, such as how the forces of supply and demand converge to determine an equilibrium price in a market.

I also applied an experiment called the “Paper Bag” trading game, in which each student receives a small surprise item and rates its value from 1 to 5. Using Post-its, we build a histogram of initial preferences. In the next round, students may trade only with the person to their right, simulating a restricted market. In the final round, they can trade freely. The resulting histogram almost always skews to the right, toward 5, the highest value, visually illustrating the gains from voluntary trade. This activity combines economic insight with a low-stakes, high-engagement format that encourages student interaction.

To check real-time student understanding, I incorporate interactive tools such as Kahoot and Pear Deck. Kahoot is particularly popular with students, and I often use small incentives like candy to boost engagement. These tools are especially useful in larger classes, allowing me to assess comprehension quickly and identify areas that need review or reinforcement.

For upper-level classes, which are typically field courses designed for senior students, I shift my emphasis toward applied research and analytical depth. In a course such as Health Economics, I plan to assign policy briefs that students develop over multiple stages, enabling them to progressively strengthen both their technical and communication skills. Although I have not yet taught this course, my planned approach is grounded in the scholarship of teaching and learning. I draw on evidence-based strategies from *Teaching at Its Best* by Nilson (2016), which supports the use of active learning, project-based assignments, and real-world application to foster deeper student engagement. These assignments are intentionally open-ended, allowing students to explore topics that are personally meaningful, such as evaluating the Medicaid/Medicare federal health insurance programs or analyzing hospital pricing.

I have begun integrating AI tools into my courses in a thoughtful and structured manner. In introductory classes, I encourage students to use generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and Quizlet to create flashcards or generate review summaries based on the course textbook. These tools are particularly useful for English as a Second Language (ESL) students and others who may benefit from structured study aids. For upper-level writing assignments, I plan to guide students in using AI to support brainstorming, outlining, and editing, while clearly emphasizing that original content must be their own. This approach promotes digital literacy and supports diverse learners while upholding academic integrity.

I approach every class with the understanding that learner variability is the norm, not the exception. My students come from a wide range of academic backgrounds, learning styles, cultural experiences, and personal circumstances. Because of this, I intentionally design my courses to be inclusive, adaptable, and responsive to diverse student needs. Since each student learns differently, I strive to include a mix of instructional formats such as lectures, videos, games, and practice-based sessions to provide multiple entry points for understanding the material. From the first day of class, I use tools such as Pear Deck to gather information about where students are from, what their major is, which year they are in, and what interests them. These insights help me better understand the cohort and adjust my instruction, accordingly, including examples in class that they can relate to directly.

I prioritize open communication and clarity in every course I teach, beginning with a well-organized syllabus, clearly defined deadlines, and consistent reminders. I maintain regular office hours and offer additional meetings over Zoom to accommodate students' schedules. I provide detailed feedback on assignments and devote class time to exam preparation, including sample questions and collaborative review. At the beginning of the semester, I ask students to share their learning goals and expectations, which I reference throughout the course to support their progress and engagement.

I take an inclusive approach to assessment that balances academic rigor with student support. I use a mix of traditional evaluations, such as quizzes, exams, and homework, alongside collaborative assignments like group projects and paired presentations. I incorporate low-stakes quizzes as formative checkpoints and build in time during class for students to begin assignments, which allows me to identify areas where additional support is needed. Flexibility is a core value in my teaching, particularly for students with disabilities or chronic conditions. I follow all university accommodations, offering extended time or remote exam options as appropriate. For students who are unable to participate in class discussions due to specific restrictions, I provide alternative participation formats, such as asking them to find a short real-life video example related to a course topic and submit a brief written explanation. This balance of structure and adaptability ensures that students understand what is expected and have multiple pathways to succeed.

I am committed to continuous improvement in my teaching practice and view effective instruction as an evolving craft shaped by evidence, reflection, and responsiveness. I draw on the training I received through my university teaching certificate and stay current with research on economics education to guide my instructional decisions. I regularly use pre- and post-tests, as well as student feedback from mid-semester and end-of-term evaluations, to make thoughtful adjustments to course design and delivery. When something is not working, I revise my approach mid-semester, always prioritizing learning over simply getting through the material. I am especially interested in inclusive pedagogy and in making economics more accessible and meaningful to students from diverse backgrounds. My goal is to create a learning environment where students feel seen and supported, where economic thinking becomes a tool for understanding the world, and where students gain confidence not only in the class material but in themselves.