

I pursue what I see as the best attributes of a teacher: boosting awareness of both local and global issues, creating an equitable classroom with strong academic integrity, and instilling an enthusiasm for economics. I have witnessed the impact of these qualities throughout my academic career—from my undergraduate years at a small liberal arts school in rural Ohio to my graduate studies at two large research universities. In the summer of 2017, I had the opportunity to refine my teaching philosophy as the instructor of record for 62 students in Intermediate Microeconomics, an upper-level, core course for the Managerial Economics major at the University of California, Davis. Teaching as the instructor of record is not typical for a graduate student in my program—this was an opportunity I specifically sought out. My teaching approach uses active learning and intentional course design so that my students are engaged and motivated to master the material and its applications. I prioritize creating an accessible learning environment that shares the tools and instills the integrity that students need to succeed in and beyond the class. Teaching is important to me as a way to share the frameworks economics provides to understand the world around us.

My teaching approach emphasizes the connections between my students, the content, and the real world. I illustrate material by using practical examples, videos and news articles, with particular attention paid to translating academic research to a level appropriate for the class. For example, in my intermediate microeconomics class, I incorporated anecdotes from my own research on agriculture in sub Saharan Africa to illustrate how I continue to apply academic approaches and tools in my career. In this class I also used materials relevant to contemporary and critical real-life topics, such as flood prevention as a public good in the context of Hurricane Harvey, or the potentially regressive implications of the Berkeley soda tax. Connecting the material to my students' experiences increases student motivation and information retention. I find that by incorporating in-class games for students to apply what they are learning to their own strategic decisions they internalize main takeaways from the theory with greater ease.

As an instructor, I prioritize incorporating the metacognition skills, empathy, and integrity that are integral to student learning. For example, I provide my students with post-exam self-assessments. I designed these self-assessments as a tool for the students to evaluate their own learning strategies, and to make personal commitments to improvements. I foster a class environment where diverse student experiences are valued through inclusive course design, with explicit consideration of the different student characteristics relevant to the class experience. I believe each student should feel as if they belong in, and are important to, the field of economics, particularly if they come from a traditionally underrepresented group.

I will continue to develop my teaching approach and maintain teaching excellence through feedback that I receive from my students. In the future, I look forward to involving both undergraduate and graduate students in research. Through my extensive fieldwork experience, I know how to manage a team in the field and mentor students conducting fieldwork. I will innovate by encouraging students to undertake research projects in collaboration with students specializing in other fields of study—a situation that they likely will encounter in their post-graduate work. I continue to be motivated by the rewards of effectively teaching economic intuition and sharing tools with students.