

## Teaching Statement

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During many years of learning economics, I have enjoyed the charm of economics and benefited much from the economic ways of thinking. As a teacher of economics, I want to show the students the charm of economics with real world examples and explain economic concepts and analytic skills intuitively so that the students can form the habit of thinking like economists and make optimal decisions. I try my best to make economic knowledge and ways of thinking a life-long wealth for the students, which will ultimately help them to succeed in their careers.

Economics can explain many phenomena in the real world, but it is not easy to see the power of economic knowledge. I like to induce students to use economic knowledge to think about real life issues. For example, after studying the demand and supply model, I would divide the class into small groups and ask them to discuss the price change of a commodity, say, the football tickets, which the students are familiar with and interested in. The students may come up with different answers that can be reasonable. However, eventually I would make them realize that their answers belong to either the demand or supply side. The demand and supply model provides a simple framework that can explain the price change, with which we may easily see whether a factor can be a possible cause. As another example, I like to ask students in the principle classes the following question: are people silly if they choose to check out in longer lines at superstores? After a moment of thinking, students often realize that those shorter lines are short for some reasons: customers with many items, cashiers with appalling manners, and so on. Economics tells us that there is no free lunch, and in many situations, economic ways of thinking, which often mean critical thinking, are necessary. These ways of thinking can be helpful for a student's successful career. I often ask students to talk about their own or their family's experience when explaining related concepts. For example, the concept of opportunity cost: one has to give up one thing to get another thing. Many people spend too much time on making money when they are young, but regret that they have not spent enough time with their family when they are old. Thinking about a situation like this, some students say that the opportunity cost of making money has not been evaluated to be as high as it actually is. By making such connections of economic knowledge with real life examples, I am able to help students to use economics in all aspects of their lives and have successful careers in the future.

For some complicated concepts or procedures, it is important to explain them intuitively. For example, when I taught the course *Elementary Econometrics*, I would introduce several procedures for testing for heteroskedasticity, i.e., whether the error terms of a model have different variances. These procedures all look different and some are complicated. I would explain to the students

that all of them are trying to check whether the error terms are systematically related to some other factors that may change, because, if there is such a systematical relationship, then a change in these factors means a change in the variances; thus we would have difference variances, i.e., heteroskedasticity. On the one hand, the intuitive explanations can help students to remember the knowledge and use it later in their lives; on the other hand, they may benefit from understanding the ideas behind the knowledge, e.g., thinking in similar ways in their future work or their lives in general. It is also very helpful to use varied repetition: using a different way of expression, presenting using tables and figures instead of just languages, asking a related question, giving an example, and so on.

I always strive to establish rapport with the students both inside and outside the classrooms. I often arrive at the classroom ten minutes earlier to learn about the students' interests, concerns and suggestions regarding my teaching. Office hours and the time after each class are also good opportunities to learn more about the students. Then, I would incorporate materials related to students' interests and concerns into my teaching. When the students see the applications of economics in the subjects they are interested in, they are more willing to pay attention. The rapport also makes students feel free to ask questions, which is an important learning process. I also give homework assignments relating to the students' lives and interests. They can have a feeling of accomplishment when analyzing the questions, which encourages them to learn more.

I use all kinds of feedbacks to gauge whether I am accomplishing my teaching goals. The homework assignments and talks with students in all situations help me to improve my teaching methods and course materials. I often do a quick review on some concepts in the beginning of the class and ask the students some related questions. According to the feedback, I can learn the difficulties the students have and properly adjust the teaching schedule.

I feel most joyful when more and more students can experience the charm of economics and apply economics in their lives to help them succeed. I am looking forward to a career of teaching and research.