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Teaching Statement

From peer tutoring in my liberal arts college as an undergraduate, then going to graduate school and assisting professors with their courses, and eventually acting as a solo-instructor of my own course, I have always found great fulfillment in influencing the lives of students on a day-to-day basis. I served as the teaching assistant for the largest Principles of Microeconomics class at Emory for three consecutive years, and incorporated all that I learned when teaching my own Intermediate Microeconomics course. Additionally, I led several workshops for undergraduates on conducting effective economic research, I have given guest lectures on the intersection of health and behavioral health economics, and I held supplemental math sessions for economics students who needed extra support. My dedication to effective teaching and student development is demonstrated in my receiving the the Graduate Student Teaching Award of Excellence in 2022 and my positive teaching evaluations. I have three central philosophies to successful teaching: well-communicated organization, clear material delivery with opportunities to practice and apply knowledge, and fostering a productive culture.

I am comfortable teaching a variety of courses, and open to filling the needs of the department, with particular expertise in microeconomics topics. If I were given the opportunity to teach upper level courses, I would love to develop a course about health care supply, incorporating both theoretical models and policy applications.

1 Well-Communicated Organization

My first goal in teaching a course begins well before the first day of class. No matter the university, students come from a diverse set of backgrounds that ultimately affect their expectations of how to be a successful college student (Collier and Morgan 2008). Therefore, especially as a young female instructor, setting clear goals and guidelines for success is essential to build student trust, establish authority of the subject matter, and give all students the ability to succeed. I have experienced firsthand the added frustration it brings to a student if expectations cannot be met because they were never clearly communicated.

I set clear expectations by including comprehensive due dates, schedules, and other expectations into the syllabus, and by regularly revisiting them throughout the semester. In practice, I implement this by beginning each class with the schedule on the screen, and I summarize the topics covered in the last class, what will be covered that day, and any due dates approaching. As long as they attend class, my students will never need to question where the course is heading or if they are forgetting an assignment due date. An example schedule for the first five weeks of my designed Principles of Microeconomics course is found in Appendix A.

This approach to setting clear expectations of students also indirectly improves their understand-

ing of course material, as I leverage it as a method of active recall, which is shown to be a more effective study method than passive repetition (Dunlosky et al. 2013). When summarizing the previous lecture's material, I ask a few questions related to the topic, and ask students to recall main conclusions from that topic.

2 Material Delivery & Pedagogy

Clear delivery of course material is a vital part of student learning. Just as I set expectations of students to put effort into learning and applying concepts, I also set expectations of myself to be prepared to present material in the most effective way possible. The skill of delivering an engaging and successful lecture is one that is developed with time and practice. I first began learning this skill by sitting in on lectures of various faculty. Most often, I attended Professor Hashem Dezhbakhsh's ECON 101 course, which I was a teaching assistant for, and paid close attention to his lecture delivery. I observed the way that skilled lecturers are able to move slowly through the material, gauge the understanding of the class, build on simple examples, and thoughtfully answer questions.

I began to incorporate these skills into my own lectures as I led workshops and guest lectured for various faculty. While not every lecture delivery has been perfect, I approach each opportunity with humility as an opportunity to grow. When it came time to instruct my own course, I gained confidence by first practicing lectures in an asynchronous video format, which I made available to students as an extra resource. With time and practice, I am now a proficient lecturer, confident with a variety of course topics.

While lectures are an important part of student learning, equally as important are how students understand and apply what is taught in the lecture. Stemming from my liberal arts undergraduate education, I highly value a diverse variety of pedagogical techniques accessible to all learning types. As all students are different types of learners, material should be presented in various ways that incorporate active learning, critical thinking, applying knowledge, and collaboration (Freeman et al. 2014). One of my favorite ways to do this is to incorporate student-led days throughout the semester. In my introduction courses, I use problem-based learning (Yew and Goh 2016), where students bring in news articles related to the topics covered in class, as a major goal of this course is to learn to interpret the world through an economics lens. This activity is included in week 4 of my Principles of Micro syllabus in Appendix A, and involves students analyzing each others' articles in small group discussions and summarizing to the class.

Another student-led activity that I incorporated into my Intermediate Microeconomics course involved students taking turns preparing a homework problem to teach the rest of the class. All students have turned in the homework at this point, but earn extra credit points by walking step by step and thoroughly explaining the solution to a question. My Intermediate Micro students loved this activity as it gave them an opportunity to earn extra credit, and they often expressed that they understood the material more thoroughly after teaching it to their classmates. Incorporating student-led activities gives regular opportunities for students to test their knowledge, develop communication skills, and apply memorized facts to real world scenarios.

Finally, as research has showed the importance of consistent, constructive, and tangible feedback (Wiggins 2012), I commit to grading and providing quality feedback within a week of each assignment being turned in.

3 Classroom Culture

I aim to create a classroom culture rooted in mutual respect, honesty, and a genuine enjoyment of the learning environment. To foster this atmosphere, I prioritize making myself approachable to students. I believe that by getting to know them beyond their academic performance, I can build a foundation of trust that enhances their experience in the classroom. One of the ways I do this is by arriving 5-10 minutes early to each class, playing music, and engaging students in casual conversations about their interests, such as restaurants they like or places they've traveled. This informal interaction helps create a warm, welcoming environment that makes students feel more at ease.

While not every student will develop a love for economics, I've found that building personal connections contributes significantly to overall success, both in my classes and in their broader academic journeys. My teaching evaluations have consistently reflected that students feel comfortable approaching me for help. Relationships with students extend beyond the classroom as well; I've had the privilege of writing recommendation letters for several students who valued the effort I put into getting to know them personally. This approach not only enriches their academic experience but also prepares them for future challenges, equipped with both knowledge and confidence.

References

Collier, Peter J and David L Morgan (2008). ""Is that paper really due today?": Differences in first-generation and traditional college students' understandings of faculty expectations". In: *Higher education* 55, pp. 425–446.

Wiggins, Grant (2012). *Seven Keys to Effective Feedback*. Accessed: 2024-08-05. URL: `https://ascd.org/el/articles/seven-keys-to-effective-feedback`.

Dunlosky, John et al. (2013). "Improving students' learning with effective learning techniques: Promising directions from cognitive and educational psychology". In: *Psychological Science in the Public interest* 14.1, pp. 4–58.

Freeman, Scott et al. (2014). "Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics". In: *Proceedings of the national academy of sciences* 111.23, pp. 8410–8415.

Yew, Elaine HJ and Karen Goh (2016). "Problem-based learning: An overview of its process and impact on learning". In: *Health professions education* 2.2, pp. 75–79.

A Course Schedule Example

Class	Material	Chapter	Activity	Due Dates
Week 1:				
Class 1	Syllabus Why study economics?			
Class 2	Basic economic concepts	1, 2		
Week 2:				
Class 1	Production Possibilities Trade	3		
Class 2	Demand, Supply	4		
Week 3:				
Class 1	Equilibrium	4	quiz 1	
Class 2	Disequilibrium, Price control	6		
Week 4:				
Class 1	In-class activity		bring articles	
Class 2	Elasticity	5	quiz 2	HW 1 (date)
Week 5:				
Class 1	HW 1 Presentations		student-led	
Class 2	Consumer Theory	-		