

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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I view Economics as the study of human action and interaction. In the classroom, this translates into a pedagogical style that avoids emphasizing facts and basic information. Instead, I help my students develop the skills to ask why facts matter and to whom. To do so, I focus on teaching students the analytical tools of economics to understand the world around them. For example, in my Money and Banking class I begin with the history of money. Furious note-taking begins when I mention where and when money first came into use. Then, I pause and ask my class to consider *why* money came into existence, in that society, at that particular time? This simple exercise sets the tone of my class and has a lasting impact on students.

To succeed as an instructor I plan extensively. First, I distill the course material down to a set of core learning objectives. Then, I list the skills that students need to develop in order to meet each objective. Lastly, I make it clear to students how they will show they have successfully mastered the required skills. Completing the alignment between learning objectives, instruction, and assessment, exams contain only questions which assess competence in a core skill. Following these principles streamlines the process of defining and meeting objectives for each meeting, anchors my instruction to those objectives, and simplifies the development of assignments and exams.

My classroom is best described as active. This means I use a variety of techniques and learning activities in order to help students develop the skills they need to meet the listed objectives. Activities include frequent exercises, in-class experiments, and informal assessments. In-class experiments, for *real* stakes, have proven to be an incredibly powerful learning tool in my classroom. The data generated from these experiments engages students in a way a table of data from a textbook never could. I also encourage *active* engagement with podcasts and news-clips to reinforce important concepts. These exercises help me to assess learning as students are asked to use a model or theory to explain the content of the clip. I then collect and review students' exercises along with informal feedback at least weekly. The frequency and variety of exercises identifies struggling students quickly. I engage those students by meeting with them to learn where they are struggling and how I can help. Students have remarked how the variety of techniques used and the alignment between learning goals and assessment helps them remain engaged, aids their study and exam preparation, and exposes connections between various components of a class. The success of my approach is best reflected in my teaching evaluations where students frequently report working just about as hard as in other classes but claim they have learned much more.

Lastly, the research process has improved my teaching skills remarkably, illustrated by my high and increasing "overall teaching effectiveness" scores (2013: 4.67/5, 2014: 4.8/5, 2015: 5/5). Writing and presenting my own work forces me to constantly reflect on how best to identify, highlight, and communicate information. As I move from being a student to being an educator I will continue to nurture my teaching philosophy through feedback, practice, and by finding new inspiration for my teaching in the world around me.