

## Teaching Interests

My teaching interests are wide, and I would be happy teaching any of a number of courses. At the graduate level, I would be best equipped to teach political economy field courses or first-year courses in microeconomics or mathematics. At the undergraduate level, I would be interested in teaching principles, intermediate microeconomics, political economy, game theory, or statistics. I could also teach labor economics, which was my second qualifying field.

## Teaching Philosophy

### *The Euphoria of Discovery*

Few experiences in life are more exhilarating than discovering new insights and mastering useful techniques, or helping others enjoy the same epiphanies. Since long before I discovered economics, teaching has been an integral part of my life. My belief, after sixteen years of teaching various subjects, is that students love learning, when they are successful. As a student that I tutored wrote to me in an email, for example, “I went from just wanting to get through the class to now considering a possible major in economics. I appreciate your time and patience. Our work together really paid off.”

### *Respect and Participation*

In a classroom setting, students naturally hesitate to ask or answer questions, for fear of appearing incompetent. Class participation is essential, however, in identifying and preventing misunderstanding. In my classroom, therefore, there is no such thing as a stupid question. Similarly, students are free to express disagreement either with me or with each other, but must do so politely and respectfully, so that viewpoints can be presented and examined without fear of being belittled. Language, dress, or behavior that may distract other students are discouraged.

### *Active Learning*

“Learn” is an action verb. In an important sense, I cannot “teach” students anything; they must do the learning for themselves. To help students pilot their own course of learning, I try to focus lectures, problem sets, and exam content on applications that they will find useful, including current events (and, when applicable, my own current research). Since every class and every student is different, this necessarily requires flexibility both in curriculum and in course requirements. Accordingly, I try to design course outlines and problem sets to be customizable, according to students’ interests.

### *Mastery*

My earliest teaching experience was teaching piano lessons. Students practiced not just until they played their music correctly, but until they could no longer play it *incorrectly*. Economics is no different: at first, many results are counterintuitive, but with practice a correct intuition develops. To help students achieve this level of mastery, exam concepts are presented repeatedly in earlier homework and quizzes. During lectures, I pause to allow students preliminary practice, sometimes explaining their logic to one another.

### *Permanence*

As students follow correct reasoning carefully and repeatedly, they develop new ways of thinking, and thereby continue the process of discovery well beyond final exams. This, ultimately, is the goal of a university education.