



Teaching Philosophy

I first encountered economics in my freshman year of college when I took an introduction to economics course. Economics helped me see the world differently. For example, if the minimum wage is increased, unemployment may be affected, in turn potentially triggering bigger problems. I hope to inspire the same appreciation for economics in my students, whether or not they plan to major in economics. My teaching philosophy is summarized by the following themes: course design, student feedback, availability to students, learning from students, and passing the torch.

Course Design

As an economics instructor, I design my courses to foster learning for all types of students. I am aware that different students have different learning preferences. While some students learn better in an environment that promotes discussion, others prefer a lecture-centered learning environment, and still others learn better when they read and write independently. My course design aims to address these multiple learning preferences and to spark students' curiosity. For example, in my macroeconomics course, I asked students what topics they are most interested in and what they wanted to learn. Then I grouped students based on their expressed interests so that they can explore those interests together. In addition, I asked students to read recent articles from credible news sources and write a two-to-three-page reflection paper about the subject they wanted to explore. In my introduction to economics course, I also use experiments to make the material more understandable.

I recognize the importance of group projects because teamwork is becoming an increasingly important skill that employers are seeking. For students to learn how to be good team players, I assign group projects requiring students to apply what they have learned. Group projects also provide opportunities for students to evaluate their peers and to receive peer feedback. I often encourage students to work on classroom problems as a group, a strategy that gives students more confidence in sharing their ideas with the rest of the classroom after discussing them within small groups.

Finally, I try to make economics engaging and intriguing. Reflecting on my college years, I have realized that I understood the content better when I enjoyed the learning process. For example, I prepare interesting visuals to motivate students. I also prepare clicker questions to give students breaks during the lecture and to see if they are understanding the material being presented. I use interesting statistical information and videos related to the topics covered to stimulate interest.

Student Feedback

I value receiving feedback from my students in order to improve the course quality. Using anonymous one-minute response papers once a month provides me with student feedback. I read the comments and try to address common issues in the next lecture. For example, in



my course on law and economics, I used to begin a lecture with questions related to material in the previous lecture. In the one-minute papers, several students mentioned that sometimes they are missing points as a result of a previous class running longer, causing them to be late to class. As a result, I moved those questions to the end of the lecture and discussed answers at the beginning of the next lecture, addressing students' common concerns and reminding them of material previously covered.

Availability to Students

At the beginning of each semester, I emphasize that while my office hours are dedicated to students, I am available at other times to provide help. For that reason, I post my calendar on my personal webpage under the appointment section for students to schedule appointments. Being flexible in accommodating their schedules, I have received positive feedback. My availability is not restricted to my course. For example, a student majoring in journalism interviewed me for an assignment in another course. Students have also sought my help with other economics courses.

Learning from Students

One of the famous sayings in my culture states "Seek knowledge from cradle to grave." Likewise, I believe in the importance of lifelong learning. In each class meeting, I try to learn from my students while I am teaching them. Specifically, as an international instructor, I seize every opportunity to learn more about American culture from my students. Teaching for the first time is a difficult task, especially for international doctorate students. Fortunately, my enthusiasm for teaching helped me overcome the difficulties of being from a different culture. The more I taught, the more I gained experience, thus improving my teaching skills. On the other hand, I use the advantage of coming from a different culture to share interesting experiences from Turkey, my native country, thus providing students insight into a culture outside their own.

Passing the Torch

As an economist, I receive my best reward when I observe improvement in my students as they reach the course objective. I feel I am doing my job to grow future economists when I see the quality of my students' discussion improving and watch my students comfortably use new and complex economic concepts. For example, students who know nothing about moral hazard at the beginning of the semester are reading and discussing articles about government policies related to moral hazard by the end of semester in my introduction to economics course. Having students in my upper-level economics courses who took my introduction to economics course and chose economics as their major reminds me of my first experience with economics in my undergraduate education. In this journey, I feel that I am passing the flag that I received from my professors to future generations.