

Teaching Philosophy

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For me teaching is more than just explaining theories and solving equations; it is about igniting curiosity, fostering critical thinking, and helping students see the world in new and meaningful ways. My own journey to becoming a professor was inspired by incredible educators who left a lasting impression on me. Their enthusiasm, kindness, and genuine care transformed them into not just teachers but mentors and role models. They guided me academically and personally, and it is this same approach I strive to bring to my own students.

I am drawn to economics because of its ability to help us understand and tackle complex societal challenges. As a professor, I want to do more than share knowledge. I want to motivate my students to engage with the world and contribute to building a fairer, more equitable society. To me, education is about creating a space where diversity of thought, critical reasoning, and hands-on learning come together to spark growth and discovery.

In my classes, I prioritize active and experiential learning because I believe students learn best when they are actively engaged. I use backward design to structure my courses with clear learning outcomes in mind. To bring economic concepts to life, I often incorporate tools like simulations, games, and case studies. While traditional methods such as quizzes and exams still have their place, I have found that interactive approaches tend to leave a deeper and more lasting effect on student learning. They help students connect theory to practice in meaningful, memorable ways.

I have applied a variety of teaching techniques in my courses, including the following. In my Elementary Business and Economics Statistics course, I incorporated case studies and Excel-based simulations using real-world problems. I also created interactive activities, such as a Probability Bingo game, where students solved problems to mark answers on their individual cards until a winner emerged. To increase engagement, I introduced online simulations of probability, distributions, and statistical experiments, including tools such as Seeing Theory and PhET Plinko Probability. In addition, I frequently used Pear Deck to solve exercises collaboratively during class. The course also included a final project, where students applied regression analysis in Excel to solve a real-world case.

In my Urban economics class, I prepared a sequence of case studies in which students applied the knowledge gained in each module to solve practical problems. Each case study included a technical component, where students answered questions based on selected findings from scientific papers, and a problem set, which typically required solving a mathematical problem and interpreting it in the context of policy effects. For the final project, students were required to develop a policy brief addressing a real urban problem, supported by scientific and technical data. They then created a slide deck and presented their policy brief analysis in a short, professional self-recorded video.

In my Principles of Macroeconomics course, I focus on developing critical analytical skills by challenging students to interpret aggregated macroeconomic indicators. I have been using an assignment where students access the FRED St. Louis website to replicate time series graphs of key indicators (e.g. GDP, Inflation). After creating their graphs, they answer a series of analytical questions. This exercise has proven highly effective, as over 85% of students have correctly answered similar graph-based questions on exams. Moreover, I structured the first two assignments

around mastery learning principles, allowing students to revise their work through iterative feedback until they achieved at least 95% accuracy on the assignment and a flawless 100% on the graph. During the feedback process, I provided scaffolded tutorials featuring alternative examples to further enhance students' understanding. This blend of interactive, practical exercises with iterative, supportive learning offers more opportunities for students to connect with the content in different ways, solidifying their understanding of theory and its applications.

Over the past few years, I have taught at public universities in Brazil and as a Ph.D. student in the United States, delivering a diverse range of courses, including Economic Geography, Spatial Economics, Principles of Macroeconomics, Urban Economics and Business and Economics Statistics. These experiences, which have engaged students from various disciplines such as Geography, Business, and Economics, have honed my ability to translate complex economic concepts into accessible ideas tailored to different audiences. I have adopted both synchronous and asynchronous teaching methods and experimented techniques like discussion groups, pair-sharing activities, and the use of open-source software. For instance, I have employed R and Excel to teach urban economics and Business and Economics Statistics, equipping students with practical tools to analyze geo-economic data. The results have been rewarding, not only in boosting student engagement but also in fostering a more inclusive and dynamic classroom environment.

I am committed to staying current with effective teaching practices. While pursuing my Ph.D., I completed a certificate in university teaching, and I regularly participate in workshops focused on pedagogical innovation. For example, I attended the WVU Teaching Workshop hosted by the Economics Department, which featured Dr. Dirk Mateer and Dr. Wayne Geerling presenting engaging techniques for teaching economics courses. These included using pop culture references to make economic concepts more relatable, integrating technological tools like Kahoot, Google Forms, and in-class experiments to increase participation and retention.

Technology plays an important role in my teaching, but I integrate it with intention and care. My goal is always to enhance student learning, not to overwhelm or distract from it. I include a clear policy in my syllabus outlining the appropriate use of technology and AI-related tools, ensuring they are used responsibly and in ways that support academic integrity. I also believe that incorporating open-source technologies can make education more interactive, inclusive, and accessible, empowering students to engage more deeply with course material.

At the heart of my teaching philosophy is a deep commitment to the student experience, both inside and outside the classroom. I strive to create a welcoming and flexible environment where students feel supported, challenged, and empowered to grow. I adapt my teaching based on student feedback and mental models, believing that learning is a two-way street built on open communication and mutual respect. I also care deeply about my students' well-being, encouraging balance, mindfulness, and healthy habits while modeling these values in my own life. Ultimately, my goal is to inspire curiosity, promote critical thinking, and support each student as they realize their potential. Teaching is a powerful opportunity to make a lasting difference, and I am grateful for the chance to share my passion for economics while continuing to learn from my students every day.