

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

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Economics is an “apparatus of the mind” – a lens with which to view the world in an ordered way. As a teacher, my goal is to provide students with tools they can apply in their lives. Our world is complex and multidimensional, and I believe economics can help us examine these complexities in a more systematic way. Above all, teaching economics has taught me that each individual comes from a unique background equipped with a unique set of skills as well as gaps.

During my time at the University of Utah, I was employed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) as a student-athlete tutor, where I led review sessions in mathematics, statistics, and econometrics. My students taught me a lot about the unique pedagogical needs of individuals from various backgrounds. I apply these lessons to the classroom, approaching course material from a multi-cultural perspective to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment. As an educator, I feel personally responsible for the student learning experience.

As a graduate instructor at the University of Oregon, I have found there is no replacement for an engaging and relevant curriculum. In April 2020, I began our antitrust course with a news article that detailed Covidien’s “killer acquisition” of a rival ventilator company. This motivated the curriculum by connecting the most recent advances in the empirical antitrust literature to COVID-19 and our national shortage of ventilators. I have also found that examples from my research can deepen students’ involvement by depicting the power and application of the tools we cover in class. For instance, while introducing how regulatory agencies evaluate mergers and acquisitions, I asked students to define a relevant market for the Starwood-Marriott hotel merger. I then reminded the class of the rapid expansion and growth of short-term rentals such as Airbnb and asked the students if they believe Airbnb should be included in the relevant market.

Students are challenged to question assumptions and extend their tools to address real-world issues. They can satisfy exam questions using a mix of economic principles, precedent, and their personal view on how we can design more equitable markets. I find this to be the most rewarding part of teaching, as students extend economic tools to analyze policy through their own lenses.