

My teaching philosophy is informed by my experiences as an economics student at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as my work as a teaching assistant for six undergraduate economics classes at UCLA. While my teaching style continues to evolve, it remains grounded in three beliefs:

1. That economics can be applied to any student's interests, either academic or personal;
2. That students learn best through a variety of pedagogical methods; and,
3. That an understanding of basic economic principles is essential for being an informed and productive citizen.

My belief in the applicability of economics to every student was formed through an early collegiate experience. As an undergraduate, one of my favorite classes was introductory biostatistics with Professor Liam O'Brien. In this class, Professor O'Brien asked students to develop independent research projects which would utilize newly learned statistical methods in answering a health-related question of our choosing. This exercise was one of the first opportunities that I had to directly apply theoretical tools to practical issues. I was well trained in rote memorization and regurgitating facts on written examinations, but this assignment allowed me to employ my academic skills creatively and draw on material from other health sciences classes. I continued to enroll in Professor O'Brien's courses because of this engaging assignment; I worked with him as a research assistant, and under his direction I completed an independent statistics honors research project that explored the determinants of suicidal ideation among teenagers in Maine. I credit this early academic experience with sparking my enthusiasm for applied analysis and my pursuit of a health economics research agenda. As an economics professor I would attempt to replicate this transformative experience for my students by linking the economics they are learning to their individual areas of interest.

Professor O'Brien's class presented me with the chance to apply my academic training to an issue I was passionate about, and I believe that every applied economics course should provide students with a similar opportunity. As both a student and teaching assistant, I have seen this effectively accomplished through several techniques. While it may not always be possible to assign students open-ended research projects, asking students for practical examples on examinations requires that they connect economic concepts to real-world issues as part of their studies. Another way to emphasize the application of economics to individual student interests is to create short homework assignments that require students to describe how the previous week's material can be employed to answer a topical question from recent world events. Contextualizing the course material with content from outside the classroom, or from other subjects, is a great tool for solidifying student understanding and maintaining engagement with the material. This is especially true for students who are new to economics and are often intimidated by the mathematical

articulation of economic principles. These teaching practices can also be used to help students contextualize new material within the topics covered in previous economics courses. Using these methods to facilitate connections between economic principles and students' own interests can enhance their passion for economics and spark their own research interests.

To effectively teach applied econometric techniques, I believe that it is important to present the material using multiple methods in order to accommodate the widest range of learning styles, and I have successfully employed several approaches for accomplishing this goal. First, sharing the findings from my own research in health and development economics has been a great way to illustrate for students how economic tools can be applied to the study of a wide range of human behaviors, providing them with diverse examples beyond what can be found in their textbooks. Second, varying the types of evaluation through assignments that require both independent problem solving and collaborative learning engages students from different academic backgrounds. Providing students with the opportunity to learn from the lecture notes and from their classmates develops different skill sets and helps students with different learning styles find their optimal way to understand the material. Another mechanism for varying the medium of instruction is to provide students with typed lecture notes as well as optional readings in alternative textbooks and popular nonfiction books. Finally, I have found students to be very appreciative of the efforts I have made to be available and approachable. Individual interactions with students enable me to provide the most customized form of instruction, and are another great way to share the passion for research that I developed as an undergraduate.

My belief that economics is an essential ingredient for building informed and productive citizens is what motivates me to reach each student through the aforementioned teaching techniques. Through introductory economics and econometrics courses, I believe that any student can and should acquire the tools necessary for analyzing current political issues and proposed policies. For example, a basic understanding of marginal costs and benefits is crucial to appreciating the changes in physicians' incentives induced under managed care versus fee-for-service insurance plan types available under the Affordable Care Act. Economic principles such as adverse selection and moral hazard are valuable in debating the merits of the health insurance mandate, and fixed versus variable costs help to explain how different forms of regulation impact medical innovation. Finally, the elasticity of supply and demand and the degree of economic competition in the pharmaceuticals market are essential concepts for describing the recent variability in drug prices. In addition to fueling more effective civic engagement, the rapidly increasing use of data to inform business decisions and government policy has made the study of quantitative methods and applied economics invaluable for students' careers. I have enjoyed teaching students at UCLA these skills, and their positive feedback helps fuel my enthusiastic pursuit of a faculty appointment for the fall of 2017.