

STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

As a career student, I have had the pleasure of learning from a variety of teachers and teaching styles. Successful teachers have a number of characteristics in common: they are well prepared; they set clear expectations for their students; and they are masters of their subject matter. What separates a great teacher from the rest, however, is his or her ability to actively engage students and bring the course material to life. A great teacher allows students to take ownership of the material by posing questions, exploring all sides of an issue, and encouraging students to participate in the discussion.

This is especially true in economics. The principles of economics provide a general framework for decision making which can be applied to nearly any topic. Rather than teaching students *what* to think through memorization of terms and facts, I believe economics courses should be geared toward teaching students *how* to think. As an economics instructor my goal is to develop these economic reasoning skills in my students.

My experience as a student and instructor suggests that the most effective way to learn economic reasoning is through application. After introducing each key economic concept and discussing its implications in the abstract, I demonstrate how the concept may be applied through the use of compelling real world examples. I present the examples in a narrative style where students can envision themselves as the decision maker in the problem, and I ask probing questions to help students arrive at the correct answers on their own. This style makes the theory more accessible to students and keeps them involved in the class. Where appropriate, we develop key concepts through active learning strategies allowing students to gain additional experience in applying the material on their own. For example, my statistics students gathered data in a class experiment and used the data to answer questions related to sampling distributions and hypothesis testing.

Because students tend to focus their efforts on what they are evaluated on, class assignments and examinations are designed to further develop students' ability to apply the concepts they learn in class. Homework problems give students a chance to practice problem solving skills and hone their intuitive ability to use economic reasoning. Examinations evaluate students on these skills. I have also found writing assignments to be an important tool for learning. A clearly written, coherent essay demonstrates that a student has command of the subject matter.

Because economic reasoning does not come naturally to every student, it is crucial to offer support outside the classroom. My class is encouraged to visit during office hours or by appointment, and I enjoy working individually with students to guide them toward a better understanding of the material. This personal interaction is one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching and I take great pleasure in mentoring my current and former students.

I have had a number of wonderful teachers and mentors during my academic career. These individuals have played an important role in my intellectual development by challenging me to think critically and independently, and to communicate my ideas clearly and concisely. The lasting impact they have had on me is precisely what attracted me to a career in teaching. I hope to influence my students in a similar way.

TEACHING SUMMARY

TEACHING INTERESTS Microeconomic Theory, Statistics/Econometrics, Introduction to Economics, Labor Economics, Health Economics, Economics of Aging

TEACHING EXPERIENCE **INDEPENDENT SECTIONS¹**
Intermediate Microeconomic Theory Fall 2007
 Consumer Theory, Production & Cost Theory, and Market Structure

Economic Statistics Summer 2007
 Descriptive Statistics, Probability, Sampling Distributions, Hypothesis Testing, and Regression

• Summary of Student Course Evaluations, Economic Statistics²:

Question	Mean Score	Econ Dept. Average
Overall...this course was excellent	3.9	3.9
Overall...this instructor was an effective teacher	4.3	4.2
Average of all course/instructor questions	4.2	4.2
The instructor was one of the best I have had at UNC, fully deserving of a teaching award	4 "yes" out of 9	-

HEAD TEACHING ASSISTANT
Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory (Art Benavie) Spring 2005
 Economic Theory and Government Policy

TEACHING ASSISTANT
Introduction to Economics (David Schwartz) Fall 2004
 Economic Principles including Scarcity, Opportunity Cost, Resource Allocation, Unemployment, and Inflation

Intermediate Microeconomic Theory (Sergio Parrerias) Fall 2003, Spring 2004
 Consumer Theory, Production & Cost Theory, and Market Structure

OTHER
Global Implementation Specialist, United Airlines 2000 to 2001
 Conducted weeklong classroom sessions to teach over 30 employees worldwide how to use a new cargo pricing software system

TRAINING *Teacher Training Program Certificate*, UNC – Chapel Hill Fall 2004
 This program outlined strategies for class preparation, active learning methods, and test writing, and provided observation and feedback on teaching performance.

TEACHING REFERENCE Dr. Helen Tauchen, Department of Economics, UNC – Chapel Hill, 107 Gardner Hall, CB 3305, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599. e-mail: tauchen@unc.edu ; phone: 919-966-2383

¹ Course websites with syllabi, homework assignments, and exams are available at: <http://www.unc.edu/~rmgoodst/teaching.htm>

² Scores are on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 = "Strongly Disagree"; 2 = "Disagree"; 3 = "Neither Agree nor Disagree"; 4 = "Agree"; 5 = "Strongly Agree"