

STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

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Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner's book, *Freakonomics*, explores phenomena of everyday life using the tools of economics. This book stimulates my interest and passion for economics and these aspects continue to hold a fascination for me today. Economics is not just a discipline, but a way to analyze human behavior and to think critically about real-life events. Just as this book inspired me, my goal as an instructor is to engage my students' desire to learn economics, as well as to cultivate their ability to think logically about a variety of topics.

An economics class usually requires students to both learn economic concepts and master problem-solving skills. However, as I have discovered from my teaching experience, students most often focus only on memorizing the computational steps to solve specific problems, paying little attention to the intuition behind the math. Having this in mind, I always try to use everyday examples that are relevant to students in order to explain theoretical models and push them to use "economic intuition". Rather than coaching them to only pass the exams, it is my wish to have them use economic analysis and logical thinking as fundamental tools to help them understand how the world works.

I feel strongly that a good teacher should create a friendly and positive environment for students in order for them to excel in the subject. While I have been both a graduate and an undergraduate classman, as well as my teaching, I have found that warm and caring instructors are best able to build successful connections to students, making them feel more comfortable to speak in class and more willing to actively participate in lively discussions. As a teaching assistant, I have always encouraged my students to ask questions. I respond to all questions by providing support, praise, and feedback. In this work, I have found a direct parallel: effort on my part generates more involvement on their part. In addition, it is important to recognize that every student is on his or her own learning path, so addressing a student's personal needs and struggles is a very important component in my teaching philosophy. I want to ensure that every student can follow the lecture while enjoying the learning process.

Along with a positive class environment, it is clear that excellent preparation is another fundamental element. Good teaching requires the instructor not only to have solid material to work from but also the ability to present the information in a logical and interesting fashion. Therefore, even when teaching classes that I have taught before, I spend time organizing the topics and finding the most up-to-date supplemental materials to round out my discussions.

In addition to mastering the subject, I believe that the classroom is a microcosm of society. In my classes, I expect my student to learn not only the materials covered by the textbooks but also cooperative ethnics, building a solid foundation for their future professional lives. For example, I require team projects in the more advanced classes, because cooperative learning in a competitive environment provides students opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as promotes cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts.

I take teaching very seriously. In my view, teachers play one of the most important roles in enriching a person's personal, educational, and professional development. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing a student demonstrate an understanding of a topic that, before discussing it, they had known nothing about. At the conclusion of the academic year, it is my sincere hope that my students have learned a great deal, not only for the grade on their transcripts, but also something far more fundamental—tools they can use in many different aspects of their lives.