

Teaching Statement

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Intellectual growth is essential to success after graduation, so educators must go beyond the syllabus to prepare students to become productive members of society. My goal as a teacher is not only to contribute to the learning process in students' area of expertise but also to provide students with the necessary tools for rational, critical and connective thinking applied to the world outside the classroom.

During my graduate studies at Rutgers University, I taught Intermediate Microeconomics (3 classes) and Industrial Organization (7 classes) at the Department of Economics, and Expository Writing I (4 classes) at the Department of English. In recognition of my efforts, I received the Sidney I. Simon Prize for Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching in May 2013. This award is given once a year "in recognition of outstanding teaching by a graduate student in courses offered by the Department of Economics" and it is based upon the students' official evaluations.

In addition to teaching, I served as a teaching assistant for Economics of Information, Introduction to Microeconomics, International Economics and International Trade. Prior to Rutgers, I taught Mathematical and Statistical Foundations (Graduate Level) at Koc University. Moreover, I was the teaching assistant for Mathematics for Economists (Graduate Level), Industrial Organization and Economic Development at Koc University, and Microeconomic Theory and Introduction to Economics at Middle East Technical University. My teaching interests include, but are not limited to, Microeconomics, Industrial Organization, Antitrust Economics, Game Theory, Economics of Information and Behavioral Economics. With the experience in various universities, disciplines, levels and demographics, I am confident in teaching any undergraduate level economics course.

Helping students achieve economic literacy is my main goal. My students are required to articulate the covered economic theories and concepts. This is only possible with detailed planning, organization and preparation on the instructor's end. I clearly set class objectives at the outset to provide a broader perspective. At the start of each new topic, I explain the concepts intuitively, why they are important and how they are connected to the main aim of the course. I break the topics into more tractable steps and explain how these pieces relate to the whole. Providing extensive problem sets ahead of time gives students the opportunity to practice and develop their analytical skills.

However, a well-delivered and effective lecture should be a blend of theory and application of the analytical skills on real world issues. This is crucial to engaging students and making them enthusiastic about the class. I am clear, precise, and organized so students can focus and understand the structure of the course, developing clear expectations and allocating sufficient time for classwork. At the end of the class, I tie everything together so it makes sense.

Flexibility also plays a crucial role in adapting the course to fit the subject area and students' needs. Each class in economics, just like the students, has its own characteristics so that instructors should adjust their teaching methods appropriately to the subject, class size, semester, and students' backgrounds and interests. For instance, in Intermediate Microeconomics, I prefer frequent short quizzes to less frequent, longer exams since the course material is often dense and abstract. I observed that this makes the material more manageable and make students study regularly. On the other hand, in Industrial Organization, in addition to quizzes, I assign case studies, a term project or a group presentation, depending on the semester and the class size, giving them the opportunity to apply the theory on a real world issue.

Furthermore, constant revision within the semester to respond to the students' specific needs and interests is only possible through effective communication. I genuinely care about my students and I make an effort to learn more about their backgrounds, interests and needs. I adjust the time allocated to the theory and to applications according to their analytical skills. I actively encourage them to participate in the class so that we can spend more

time on their specific subjects of interest. Regardless of their academic backgrounds and interests, students are motivated to do well when their instructor is patient, supportive, and open to their feedback.

Offering availability outside the classroom is an integral to students meeting my high expectations. I make it clear that students should benefit from every meeting to the fullest. Even though I point out the importance of learning the subject in class and not leaving the classroom until everything is clear, I encourage students, especially those who are struggling, to come to my office hours. I adjust my office hours to fit everybody's schedule. Moreover, I maintain and monitor the chat room on the course website so they can communicate with their classmates and me easily. This not only informs me about the topics that the students have difficulty in understanding so that I can address that in class but also facilitates cooperation among students. I often observe that they form study groups or answer each other's questions via chatroom.

In the era of specialization and expertise, critical thinking and connective thinking are crucial. After leaving college, students should be able to apply the knowledge acquired in the classes to all aspects of their life. I urge students to pay attention to the way we handle economic problems in class analytically and try to apply the same type of critical thinking to the topics beyond what is learned in class. I frequently refer to current events and real world issues in class and assign homework or term papers specifically designed to promote application of analytical skills acquired in the course. Moreover, I had the opportunity to teach at the Department of English. This provided me with the opportunity to teach students with different backgrounds, interests and majors, reminding me of the importance of critical and connective thinking. Teaching Expository Writing, a course specifically designed to promote connective thinking and written communication skills, provided me guidance how to improve their analytical skills in a more formalized way.

In conclusion, I am dedicated to working hard as a teacher to make a difference in students' academic and intellectual growth. The following are the selected comments and summary statistics of the last two course evaluations from Industrial Organization and Intermediate Microeconomics, reflecting stability in my teaching performance, and showing consistency of my performance above the department. Copies of the most recent syllabi for each course and full teaching evaluations are available upon request.

Selected Comments:

"I loved that the instructor was very explicit and straightforward about what we were learning, what theories and topics were important, and the extent of which we should understand certain things. I always felt confident that the professor reviewed problems to the extent we would be tested on before entering an exam. Her teaching method allowed me to focus entirely on certain problems and fully understand them than stretching myself to barely understanding everything."

"Professor Uysal is straight forward and to the point. She doesn't waste time in class and effectively teaches the material."

"It is evident that Professor Uysal knows the material she is teaching. What is more impressive is the way she treats and cares for her students. She is willing to go the extra mile for them, no matter what it takes. I thoroughly enjoyed this class due to this professor. I would recommend her to future students."

"Uysal really challenged us to learn and made me work hard in the class. It was tough, and I initially resented her for it, but now I'm glad she motivated me to perform at a high level"

"She is one of the most amazing teachers I've ever had (and I had my share of good teachers). She is kind and very considerate of other people. She really wanted to help people out and will explain it several times if they don't understand. She never seemed frustrated or mad when I asked several questions on topics she discussed before. I am glad to have had her as one of my economic professor. Thanks again professor. You are doing great!!!"

"Every time I walked out of the class, I had a crystal clear idea of what she was talking about! She's amazing - she gives examples, problems and questions about every concept to help us understand the material better. She asks you if you understood everything."

"She explained things very analytically and encouraged us to not just learn how to mechanically solve the problems, but how to think about the problems economically and apply knowledge to real life situations"

Rutgers University uses a 5-point scale for teaching evaluations ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for questions 1 through 8 and ranging from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) for question 9 and 10.

Summary Statistics for Industrial Organization	Summer 2014 (36 Students)		Spring 2014 (85 Students)	
	Course	Department	Course	Department
1. The instructor was prepared for class and presented the material in an organized manner	4.75	4.33	4.65	4.13
2. The instructor responded effectively to student comments and questions	4.63	4.18	4.62	4.01
3. The instructor generated interest in the course material	4.61	3.99	4.51	3.77
4. The instructor had a positive attitude toward assisting all students in understanding course	4.75	4.37	4.51	4.09
5. The instructor assigned grades fairly	4.58	4.38	4.54	4.09
6. The instructional methods encouraged student learning	4.58	3.92	4.49	3.63
7. I learned a great deal in this course	4.13	4.03	4.46	3.77
8. I had a strong prior interest in the subject matter and wanted to take this course	4.58	3.76	4.05	3.62
9. I rate the teaching effectiveness of the instructor as	4.54	3.93	4.59	3.72
10. I rate the overall quality of the course as	4.75	3.87	4.59	3.72

Summary Statistics for Intermediate Microeconomics	Summer 2012 (31 Students)		Spring 2012 (50 Students)	
	Course	Department	Course	Department
1. The instructor was prepared for class and presented the material in an organized manner	4.75	4.30	4.59	4.16
2. The instructor responded effectively to student comments and questions	4.75	4.17	4.49	4.01
3. The instructor generated interest in the course material	4.50	4.03	4.23	3.84
4. The instructor had a positive attitude toward assisting all students in understanding course	4.88	4.28	4.57	4.10
5. The instructor assigned grades fairly	4.75	4.16	4.49	4.08
6. The instructional methods encouraged student learning	4.50	3.88	4.11	3.70
7. I learned a great deal in this course	4.50	4.02	4.29	3.88
8. I had a strong prior interest in the subject matter and wanted to take this course	4.13	3.55	4.11	3.62
9. I rate the teaching effectiveness of the instructor as	4.63	3.96	4.37	3.78
10. I rate the overall quality of the course as	4.50	3.95	4.26	3.78