

## Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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It is my privilege and obligation to my students to equip them with tools that help them better understand and critically analyze the world around them. I provide my students with an essential tool for their analytical tool belts—the economic way of thinking. For most of my students, my course is the last economics class they will ever take. As such, it is imperative that I not only open their eyes to the insights that economic reasoning can provide them, but that I also show them how exciting and rewarding these insights can be to their professional and personal lives.

My primary experience teaching thus far has been as a full instructor of an upper-level course in Applied Business Economics at Texas Tech University. This class is set up to help business majors apply the concepts they have learned in principles in order to thrive in their future professional endeavors. Even though this class is focused on managerial applications, my techniques and goals for this class are relevant and applicable to all students in all disciplines. I emphasize fundamental economic concepts: incentives matter, decisions are made on the margin, opportunity cost is ever-present, and institutions (or the rules of the game) directly impact how people make decisions. Whether we are discussing an employee's decision to always leave work fifteen minutes early, a manager's decision to increase production, or a policymaker's decision to vote for a bill, all of these economic concepts are powerful explanatory aids.

My lectures are structured around theory, examples, and applications. I utilize presentation slides and handouts to help guide the students' note-taking and to present them with the theoretical material. Too often students spend their time furiously scribbling down definitions and facts to later memorize instead of focusing their attention on the discussion of how to apply the concepts. Providing students with these materials ahead of time allows them to be more attentive and to engage the material more critically. After presenting the theory, I immediately introduce examples of these concepts in action. As often as possible, I use current events and real-time business decisions to reemphasize to students that economic theory is a tool to view the world around them.

Simply lecturing on economic theory and showing examples, however, is not enough. Students need to practice applying these theoretical concepts to realistic scenarios such that they can make mistakes and learn to correct them before they have to apply these tools to real-life problems that have real-life consequences. To promote individual learning, application practice, and concept retention, I utilize case study assignments. The primary benefit of case study assignments and other applied writing projects is that they help students form realistic expectations about the amount of information that will be available to them when they work on projects in their future jobs. Real-life experiences are not such that the answer to a problem is always obvious. I emphasize that the student's role as an analyst is to cut through noisy information to find the relevant facts, and then apply critical thinking tools to make sense of those facts. Through these projects, my students learn that the economic way of thinking allows them to take otherwise random bits of data and bring them together to tell a cohesive story and make an informed decision. These assignments also help students cultivate analytical and concise writing skills—a necessity in all occupations.

This semester I have also implemented a “mid-semester check-in” to get formal feedback from my students. This has been a valuable exercise for me because it not only helps me take their diverse backgrounds in economic education into account, but it provides me with greater insights into how they are preparing for exams and assignments such that I can give them better guidance and feedback. My students have also appreciated feeling like their voices are heard and knowing that their instructor is interested in hearing their feedback. As I expand my portfolio to include more courses, I hope to discover new ways of implementing my “theory, examples, and applications” approach, as well as other methods, to better facilitate student learning. Through this approach and emphasizing the basic components of the economic way of thinking, I believe that I have not only better prepared my students for their future jobs, but I have prepared them to be more responsible citizens and better critical thinkers.