

Teaching Statement

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I first decided to study economics as an undergraduate because of a deeply inspiring and passionate economics teacher I had in high school. I later got involved in research and went on to graduate school, again, because of a dedicated and supportive undergraduate professor. I finally chose to do a PhD in economics because of the inspiring professors I interacted with in graduate school. I feel strongly that teaching is at the core of the economics and business profession, as this is one of the channels we can have the most impact on society — via our students. Whether they become academic colleagues or practitioners, a positive impact during school years can shape choices and interactions later in life.

I have extensive experience in teaching and have always been passionate about my role as an educator. Through my experience in the policy research environment, I have the relevant tools to discuss examples as well as the theoretical underpinnings of economics and business concepts. The more the students are able to relate the concepts to real world events and policies, the easier they will be able to absorb new ideas. I started tutoring students while I was still in high school, but my first experience at the university level was as a graduate student at the University of Toronto in 2010-2011. I was the teaching assistant for two courses: second year undergraduate econometrics and third year economics of income distribution. As a PhD student in Oxford I also taught a variety of courses for undergraduates and graduates, across three departments: the Department of Economics, Department of International Development and the Blavatnik School of Government. Each department and level required a different style and approach, which was challenging as a teacher but also exciting.

For undergraduate students, I taught econometrics (quantitative economics). Oxford has a very unique system where teaching assistants meet weekly with small groups of at most 4 students to discuss the lecture material and review assignments. I set the assignments and

graded them each week, and ensured the students were engaged during the tutorial time. To make the tutorials more interesting, I routinely sent them newspaper clips (from The Economist or similar publications) and asked them to critically assess whether the statistics in the articles were presented appropriately, and what sort of questions they might have of the analysis. This was a successful strategy to engage the students beyond the core math-heavy material and show them how the relatively abstract topics they were exposed to in the assignments had real-life applications.

For graduate students, as a teaching assistant between 2013-2015 I taught quantitative research methods in groups of about 10 students, economics for public policy in groups of 7 to 10 and applied policy evaluation methods in groups of 8. As a lecturer in 2016 and 2017, I taught the main lectures to groups of around 70 students. I also wrote exam questions for the 2016-17 Economics for Public Policy final exam and participated in setting the course syllabus and class plan for 2016-16 and 2017-18. I have also participated in a number of teaching courses at the Department of Economics in Oxford and with the UK Economics Network.

Although Oxford does not have a structured student feedback system for undergraduates and is only now introducing a system for graduates, I created my own student feedback forms and asked students in my courses to fill them out online to help me look for areas of weakness and strength. The responses were extremely useful in adjusting the pace and content of later seminars and lectures. In all, I very much enjoy teaching. I find myself energized when students tell me they feel like they can be active participants in discussions about economic and business policies, or when they start seeing the world in a different way (as a homo economicus!).

I teach because I strongly believe economics and business are subjects of core importance for life in general, not only for the specific subject matter. These subjects have important lessons about the world, how we work and how we live. I also teach because I derive a deep joy in seeing students understand and master a topic they might have found challenging before, and most of all, I teach because — as cliché as it sounds — my life has been transformed at critical points because of inspiring teachers, and I aspire to be as inspiring to students as my mentors were to me.