

Teaching Statement

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As an academic who studies barriers to higher education for underprivileged and underrepresented groups, I find teaching to be extremely complementary to my research. Teaching not only encourages me to think of ways to present ostensibly complex ideas in the clearest and simplest manner but it also reminds me of the importance of making my research policy-relevant.

I have been fortunate to have many opportunities to teach. During my time at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I served as the main instructor for two courses, Economics of the Workplace and Employee Wages and Compensation, in place of Professor Yuanyuan Sun. Professor Sun led the first three weeks of class before starting her semester long maternity leave. The students were at the junior, senior, and master's level. Using professor Sun's syllabus as a guide, I prepared all the lecture materials and taught two 400 level economics courses for 13 weeks. In those weeks I taught concepts ranging from organizational structures to different pay models and regression analyses to determine wages for a given job. The topic I found to be most exciting for students, and therefore spent more time on, was the process of wage determination. I taught students how to understand job descriptions and how to use them to create metrics that would then be used in a regression to determine wages. Additionally, in my time as instructor, I had creative liberties and used that as an opportunity to introduce students to my research on wage bargaining and gave them glimpses of how to read and understand economic research. One difficulty was ensuring that my lectures were understood by students at different levels of their academic careers. I received high ratings for both courses. More importantly (and most rewarding), I was contacted by several students a semester later inquiring about resources from course material that was relevant to their jobs.

I furthermore served as a teaching assistant for the introductory Principal of Microeconomics course taught by Professor Isaac DiIanni. The students are from many disciplines, including but not limited to animal science, engineering, English, and business. The format I used in my classes varies based on (i) the difficulty and nature of the material, and (ii) what I believed the students needed at the time. In general, I alternate between group discussion where students would attempt to solve problems together in groups, and more traditional instruction followed by individual (or group) practice.

As a professor, I am prepared, and would be delighted to teach at the graduate and undergraduate level. While I welcome the challenge of teaching classes outside my fields, I bring special knowledge to courses on labor economics, education economics, gender economics, econometrics and microeconomics. I would be particularly interested in teaching a course on gender economics exploring gender gaps in K-12 education, higher education, and the labor market. In addition, I would also be interested in teaching a personnel economics focused course, studying classic labor economic theory through a personnel economics lens, at the graduate level.