

# Teaching Portfolio

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# 1 Teaching Philosophy

In the age of smartphones and social media, the alternatives to a professor reciting facts and filling the board with equations are growing more numerous convenient every day. Students today have the sum of all human knowledge at their fingertips in the form of Wikipedia, the Khan Academy and innumerable websites devoted to every field. It is my job as a professor to adapt to the wants and needs of the modern consumer, to fully utilize the unique advantages that the classroom lecture have to maximize learning and student's value in terms of both time and money.

I am personally fortunate that I learn quite well from a professor writing definitions on a chalk board and giving a verbal overview of how the definitions and equations were applied. However my time in class and tutoring showed me that other students struggled with this learning style, and needed different medium or presentation styles to fully understand a topic. This taught me two lessons - first, to teach an entire class requires more than one approach to the lecture. Second, that in many cases the best teaching aides available are the students themselves.

The classic lecture format is excellent for providing raw information to the students, so I often use it to introduce a topic and build a foundation for further discussion. I always try to relate the topic to how it could be used in the real world, giving multiple examples for different majors so that as many people as possible can see the utility of the skills or information I am presenting. I have also found that analogies are excellent rhetorical tools, comparing a complicated economic interaction to something within most people's life experience.

My tone during these lectures is conversational and relaxed, to encourage questions and interaction. It also allows me to easily segue into group discussions in in-class worksheets, which lets me interact with students on a more personal level where they don't feel as though they are interrupting me. The best questions tend to come from these interactions, which allows me to identify where the class as a whole is struggling with a particular topic.

This is also important in allowing students to learn from each other. Students relate to each other and their shared experiences far better than I can, and so I find that lessons tend to stick in memory best when the students are explaining topics to one another.

There are those however for whom group interaction is not the best learning strategy. For those that work well on their own or who prefer a more structured note-taking style I have co-written a work booklet for principles of macroeconomics with Dr. Alejandro Dellachiesa, and I am working on a similar booklet for econometrics. For those who learn more visually I have a selection of videos and animations available online to cover specific topics to present to them. Presenting the information in multiple ways is essential for keeping students engaged with the material.

Ultimately, the core idea of my teaching philosophy is to be adaptable to students needs on an individual level and as a class. There is no single solution, and so I try to prepare multiple solutions and strategies to make sure I can accommodate as many learning styles as reasonably possible. I also try to incorporate the latest advancements and literature such as those presented at the annual University of Kentucky Teaching Workshops, adjusting my materials and lessons to provide the best value to students that I can.

This value is both in the form of preparing them for further classes on the same topic as well as providing skills and knowledge which will benefit them in their careers. The spark of understanding when I see that a student has grasped a concept is one of the greatest rewards that I can receive as a teacher, second only to those students who come to me later and say that my lessons have helped them in their lives. I have enjoyed teaching my entire life for that reason - my nickname from elementary school on has always been ‘professor’ and there is no better feeling than knowing that I am helping someone.

## 2 Teaching Evaluations

Table 1: Teaching Evaluation Summary

	Class Size	Response Rate	Evaluation	
			Course	Teaching
ECO 201 (Fall 2015)	53	0.47	3.58/4	3.63/4
ECO 201 (Spring 2016)	39	0.53	3.24/4	3.31/4
ECO 391-001 (Fall 2016)	40	0.53	4.15/5	4.24/5
ECO 391-002 (Fall 2016)	43	0.33	3.64/5	3.86/5
ECO 402 (Summer 2016)	16	0.50	4.6/5	4.25/5
ECO 202-004 (Spring 2017)	52	0.48	4.39/5	4.55/5
ECO 202-006 (Spring 2017)	52	0.63	4.44/5	4.54/5
ECO 402 (Summer 2017)	8	0.75	4.64/5	4.81/5
ECO 391-009 (Fall 2018)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
ECO 391-010 (Fall 2018)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Full teaching evaluations are available upon request.

## 3 Course Descriptions

### – ECO 201: Principles of Eco I (Microeconomics)

The study of the allocation of scarce resources from the viewpoint of individual economic units. Topics include household and firm behavior, competitive pricing of goods and resources, and monopoly power.

### – ECO 202: Principles of Eco II (Macroeconomics)

A study of how societies needs are satisfied with the limited resources available. Topics include contemporary issues such as inflation, unemployment, economic growth, international dependencies, and how public policy deals with them. A critical understanding of the U.S. and global economies will enhance your value as a manager or executive of a business (whether for-profit or non-profit), as a family member dealing with jobs and

financial decisions, and as a voter in a democracy. The course will allow you to become knowledgeable of, and able to critically think about, the major macroeconomic issues of unemployment, jobs, recessions, economic growth, inflation, deflation, oil prices, monetary policy, the Federal Reserve, fiscal policy, budget deficits, the national debt, international trade, international finance, and the financial system. Prereq: ECO 201.

– **ECO 391: Economics and Business Statistics**

A survey of statistical techniques relevant to modern economics and business, with major emphasis on correlation and regression, Bayesian decision theory, index numbers, time series analysis, and forecasting models.

– **ECO 402: Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory**

National income concepts, the determination of aggregate income and employment, the theory of money and inflation and problems of economic growth.

## 4 Select Student Comments

- He is a great storyteller, for that he made understanding of the material much easier, giving excellent examples in class for needed clarity. He was always understanding of conflicts, since it is a summer class, which allowed me to better prepare for the class given my very busy work schedule.
- He explains things in ways that are easily understood by students, rather than talking to us as if we are already professionals. He relates topics to real world scenarios, and it makes understanding and applying concepts far easier.
- when he explain something he make sure that everyone in class understand the material before he proceed to the next one. On top of that, always offer help to anyone that needed. GREAT LECTURER
- Mr. Allen is an outstanding economics teacher. I have taken econ courses before and have never had someone break it down and make the concepts so relative. It is easy to learn and understand when he makes comparisons.
- Best teacher I have had at UK.
- Awesome TA! Very easy to understand and makes class enjoyable for a late night class. He's funny and interacts with the students.
- His entire style is extremely entertaining with the material. People actually want to come to class because we feel like we actually learn something when he teaches. He does not require us to learn the entire subject on our own. His level of respect, expectations of the students, and teaching style are something that I wish more of my professors had.

- He is always very friendly to help. I like asking him questions.
- He was a nice guy that used many examples from his personal life to help convey the material. This helped to remember some of the things being taught. He was always up to talk about economics, and I would have him again.
- Good guy, cares about his students, makes a clear effort to promote actual understanding over rote memorization.
- I wouldn't. I have yet to have a professor that was so engaged, and had such a depth of knowledge with the ability to teach it on an underclassman level. [In response to "Which aspects of the course would you change? How and Why?"]
- I wouldn't change anything. He's a great, young, and professional professor
- he keeps things interesting and relates examples to things like Taylor Swift and things that we, as students, might be interested in. He's also very good at coming up with additional examples for certain new material.
- Great lectures! Really good real life examples. Love the way he teaches. wonderful exam reviews that were really helpful. Cares that the students understand the material and always willing to slow down if people need help.
- Nothing the man is a G [In response to "Which aspects of the instructor would you change? How and Why?"]