

Teaching Statement

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My goal is for students to leave my courses able to think like economists on their own. Three commitments guide how I teach toward that goal: to connect economics to students' own lives, to give them practice in reasoning for themselves, and to test theory against data and research. In the first lecture of Intermediate Microeconomics (Econ 301), I preview the course through situations students already know. When Taylor Swift tickets sell out in minutes and reappear online at several times the price, they are watching what happens when a price is set below the level where supply meets demand. When they get a raise and decide whether to work more hours or fewer, they are weighing a substitution effect against an income effect. When the United States puts a tariff on Canadian steel and they wonder who really pays it, they are asking a question of tax incidence. From the first day, these examples show students that the economics they are about to learn describe their own lives and the world around them.

Seeing economics in everyday life is only the starting point; economics becomes useful once students can use it to reason through their own decisions. Now that AI can produce a polished answer in seconds, that reasoning ability matters more than ever. Acquiring this ability takes practice, so my lectures are interactive, and I use class time to let students work through each idea themselves rather than only follow me. Such practice mattered in Intermediate Microeconomics (Econ 301), a course known among economics students for its difficulty because it introduces many abstract concepts and bridges principles courses and upper-level field courses. I taught it in spring 2025 as two three-hour lectures a week over six weeks, which left students little time to absorb the material outside class. I therefore built short practice into the lectures themselves. After every two or three core concepts, such as the properties of utility functions, I paused for a five-minute problem, then asked for volunteers before calling on others and offered hints rather than answers when a student was stuck. Writing lecture notes by hand set a steady pace that gave students time to think as they wrote their own. Outside lecture, every tutorial problem and assignment returned to the same core concepts, so students met each idea several times before the exam. One student wrote that, even with two lectures and tutorials each week, there was “no waste or compromise in the pacing at all.” Exams test the same concepts in new forms and combine calculation with intuition. For tax incidence, for example, students show in a diagram how elasticities shift the burden rather than only computing it. After each exam, I review the most common mistakes in lecture. Students asked for more frequent low-stakes practice, so I plan to add short quizzes in tutorials, which also show me students' own reasoning now that AI can write a polished answer to any homework problem.

Economics explains the world through simple, elegant models, but students trust a model only once they see it checked against what actually happened. I therefore teach theory alongside the data and research that test it. In two guest lectures on the China Shock for an upper-level international trade course, I briefly reviewed the Ricardian model students already knew, in which trade lets each country specialize by comparative advantage and raises national income. I then asked whether what is true for a country is also true for everyone in it. Because not every student, especially those who grew up outside North America, knew what the China Shock was or why it mattered to American manufacturing workers, I built the lectures around visual evidence: maps of how exposure to

Chinese imports varied across U.S. regions, and news photographs of the factory towns behind the numbers. Drawing on the work of Autor, Dorn, and Hanson, we saw that regions more exposed to Chinese imports suffered larger losses in manufacturing jobs and wages. Finally, we followed the shock into politics, where trade-exposed regions became more polarized. The lectures came weeks before the 2024 U.S. presidential election, so I showed students how the two campaigns' top corporate donors split between traditional industries and technology firms. Students from different cultural and academic backgrounds drove much of the discussion. After seeing these maps, they asked which industries were hit hardest and whether the workers who lost the most had changed how they voted, the same questions the research on trade and politics set out to answer.

I bring these commitments to every course I teach. At the University of Calgary, I taught Econ 301 as the instructor in spring 2025, after grading for the course in 2021 and leading its tutorials in 2024. I have also led tutorials for Engineering Economics (Econ 209) and graded for Monetary Theory (Econ 541) and Behavioral Economics (Econ 481). In my Econ 301 course survey, one student wrote that I am “very good at explaining concepts.” I also use feedback during the term to change what I do. When my teaching assistant reported that partial derivatives were slowing many students down, I added a tutorial on the calculus the course relies on, so that students with less mathematical preparation could keep up with the economics.

Teaching students from economics, finance, engineering, computer science, and psychology in the same classroom has equipped me with the ability to explain abstract ideas in more than one way and to choose examples that make sense to students with different levels of preparation. It has also taught me to fill gaps in background rather than assume them, so that prior preparation does not decide who succeeds in the course. I look forward to teaching microeconomics at the principles and intermediate levels, and international trade and labor economics at the undergraduate level. I would also like to develop an upper-level course on trade shocks and labor markets, which is also the focus of my research. Students would read research papers and reproduce a simple version of a key result with real data, so they see how evidence on trade is built.