Teaching Statement

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Teaching Philosophy

Teaching, to me, is more than transmitting knowledge—it is about cultivating curiosity, critical thinking, and the ability to connect economic theory to the real world. I view teaching economics as an opportunity to equip students with both analytical tools and an appreciation for the complexity of policy and human behavior. Over the past several years, as an instructor and teaching assistant at Toronto Metropolitan University, I have developed a teaching philosophy centered on three principles: **clarity and intuition in economic reasoning**, **active learning and inclusivity**, and **connecting macroeconomic theory to data and real-world issues**.

1. Clarity and Intuition in Economic Reasoning

Economics can be mathematically rigorous, but the underlying logic should always be accessible. My goal is to make abstract ideas intuitive before they become formal. In teaching *Intermediate Macroeconomics*, I begin each topic by framing a relatable question—"Why do people save?" or "Why do recessions persist?"—and then gradually introduce models that formalize those intuitions.

I emphasize visual and verbal intuition before algebraic derivation. Diagrams, flowcharts, and simulations illustrate core ideas clearly. For instance, when teaching dynamic consumption models, I use graphical representations of the Euler equation to show how changes in patience or uncertainty shift optimal behavior. Students consistently note that this approach made macroeconomic models "click" for them.

I also use real-time polls and discussion prompts to check understanding. Small scenarios ("What happens to equilibrium output if savings rise?") encourage quick collaboration and help gauge comprehension. Clarity, I've learned, comes from listening as much as explaining—an insight that continually shapes my teaching.

2. Active and Inclusive Learning

Students learn best when they actively participate in discovery. I create an interactive environment where they question, critique, and apply what they learn. In my *Introductory Macroeconomics* course, I simulate policy changes—adjusting interest rates or taxes—and ask students to predict outcomes before analyzing them formally. I then present empirical data from the Bank of Canada or FRED to validate or challenge their reasoning. This approach makes theory tangible and engages students as co-investigators.

Inclusivity is another cornerstone. My classrooms include students with diverse preparation levels and perspectives. To ensure everyone can engage, I integrate multiple entry points into lessons: graphical intuition for visual learners, algebraic detail for analytical thinkers, and policy discussions for applied learners. During office hours, I encourage peer explanation—a simple but powerful tool for confidence and mastery.

I also employ low-stakes reflection assignments instead of frequent quizzes. Students briefly connect macroeconomic concepts—like inflation or fiscal policy—to personal experiences. These reflections encourage critical thinking without stress and help me identify misconceptions early.

3. Bridging Theory and Data

My research in macroeconomics and health economics—particularly on heterogeneous-agent models and policy evaluation—deeply informs my teaching. I emphasize that economics gains strength when theory and data inform one another.

In *Economic Issues in Globalization*, I design modules combining theory and data exploration. For example, when discussing trade and inequality, students work with World Bank data to observe how tariff reductions or migration flows affect outcomes. They then interpret findings using standard trade models and critique their assumptions. This strengthens both technical and conceptual understanding.

In *Intermediate Macroeconomics*, I connect theoretical models with policy debates such as fiscal stimulus or demographic aging. Using the Solow model, I compare long-run growth across Canada, Japan, and the United States, incorporating visualizations in Stata or Python to estimate the model's implications. Students learn that models are not abstract ends but tools for reasoning about policy and welfare.

4. Mentorship and Pedagogical Growth

Mentorship is an integral part of teaching. As a Graduate Teaching Assistant for *Macroeconomic Theory (EF9902)*, I've guided master's students in shaping research ideas and empirical projects. I encourage students to express their question in plain language before formalizing it, which clarifies their argument and improves technical writing.

Many students in economics face self-doubt with quantitative material. I share my own learning process—how I once found dynamic programming challenging but approached it systematically. This empathy reassures students that expertise develops through persistence. Teaching, for me, is both intellectual and relational; effective educators teach with patience and humility.

I refine my pedagogy through reflection and feedback. After each course, I review evaluations and adjust one or two elements. When students noted dense slides, I redesigned them with more diagrams and concise text. When they wanted applied examples, I introduced case studies on inflation or monetary policy. Like research, teaching evolves through iteration and evidence-based improvement.

5. Future Teaching Vision

Looking ahead, I plan to develop courses integrating macroeconomic modeling, data analysis, and policy evaluation. One idea is an upper-level elective, *Health and Macroeconomics*, inspired by my research on survival functions and health spending. The course would examine how health outcomes influence labor supply, savings, and welfare—topics of growing relevance in the post-pandemic world.

I also aim to embed computational tools into intermediate courses. Short coding exercises in Python or Stata can help students simulate household savings or fiscal shocks, building computational literacy alongside theoretical understanding. Such integration prepares students for graduate study or policy analysis, where quantitative reasoning is essential.

Ultimately, my goal is for students to leave my classroom thinking like economists—questioning, reasoning, and applying knowledge thoughtfully. The most rewarding moments are when they tell me the course changed how they read the news or understand inequality. That curiosity is the true mark of learning.

Conclusion

My teaching philosophy rests on clarity, engagement, and relevance. By combining theory with data, structure with dialogue, and rigor with empathy, I strive to cultivate independent thinkers who approach economic issues with both precision and compassion. Teaching continues to be one of the most meaningful aspects of my academic career, and I am committed to lifelong growth as an educator and mentor.