

Teaching Statement

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In an Intermediate Micro class, I asked students how they would improve dating apps. They suggested making more user information “verified.” We used their idea to arrive at signaling: verification can make a claim more credible precisely because it takes effort to obtain. Students supplied the intuition before I introduced the formal model. This is the kind of learning I aim to make possible: students commit to an idea, test it against others’ reasoning, and use familiar questions to make economic concepts visible. My role is to connect abstract tools to questions students recognize and make difficult material clear enough to work with.

In Principles, many students were first- and second-year students who were not economics majors. I began with choices and questions that mattered to them. When Labubu collectibles were attracting attention, I used the craze to discuss demand, and students brought their own figures into the conversation. I connected topics to the larger picture, using the circular flow to show how households and firms fit together. To make cost curves concrete, I plotted a cost function live in a spreadsheet so students could compare the resulting curves and see why they took different shapes. In another class, a double auction let them place bids and see a market move toward equilibrium in real time. These activities gave students concrete settings in which to use economic ideas, whether they were economics majors or encountering the discipline for the first time. Familiar contexts helped invite students in without lowering the analytical demands of the course.

I built regular opportunities for students to work through ideas themselves. In the final minutes of class, I handed out “Sheets”—short paper activities completed by hand, applying a concept from that day, such as calculating marginal benefit or drawing cost curves. The Sheets were the class participation activity: students earned participation points by completing and submitting them in class, so attendance was necessary to participate. I described the points as an incentive, a live example of a course concept. This rewarded participation without requiring every student to speak publicly. The brief, repeated practice also asked students to retrieve and apply an idea before moving on. Students said the Sheets helped them stay engaged and apply concepts; one said the combination of slides, whiteboard, Sheets, and questions helped check their understanding.

Feedback also showed me when my materials were getting in the way. I had tried fill-in-the-blank slides, but students mistook the incomplete slides for errors, even though I posted the complete versions after class. Because the two versions caused confusion, I stopped using that format in Intermediate Micro. I wanted the materials to focus students on the economics, not leave them wondering whether a slide was correct.

I tried to make it easier for students to contribute aloud. I did not cold-call individuals; when the room was quiet, I sometimes invited a response from a group, such as someone in the last two rows or wearing a hat or sweatshirt. When a student offered an incorrect answer, I followed their reasoning with them and asked questions to help them find the contradiction and revise their answer. This kept the intellectual work with the student while showing how an incomplete answer could move the class toward understanding.

In Intermediate Micro, a central challenge was helping students see how the many objects in the syllabus fit together, from preferences and utility through consumer choice and demand, from firms’ production decisions to supply, and finally to market equilibrium. At the beginning of multiple lectures, I drew a flowchart on the whiteboard, rebuilding the sequence from the previous class: “Last class, we did this; before that, we did this.” As I added boxes and arrows, students could retrace how we had arrived at the

current topic. I then previewed that day's material and what we would study next, so the class could see the longer path toward understanding both sides of a market. This recap and preview helped students place technical details in the course's larger structure. I also sometimes opened with a short educational video or relevant news clip to set context—for example, a video about adverse selection in dating apps after studying the market for lemons, or one about price discrimination. I used videos in only 20–25 percent of lectures, as a brief introduction to a question we then analyzed.

I also tried to make expectations clear early. A math review quiz helped students gauge the course's mathematical demands and identify gaps before they were far into the semester. In assessments, I paired technical problems—finding an optimum, equilibrium, or strategy—with interpretation questions, so students practiced calculating results and explaining what they meant.

I adjusted my teaching in response to students. When some struggled to submit the Sheets on time, I extended future deadlines. When an exam showed that many had missed an important idea, I revisited it if it was needed for the rest of the course. I treated student work as information about where to focus next. In a technical course, students arrived with different levels of mathematical preparation and confidence. I clarified expectations early, connected formal ideas to familiar examples, and offered multiple ways to demonstrate understanding.

Before exams, I held review sessions to work through practice problems by hand, step by step, and posted completed examples for students to revisit as they prepared. One Principles problem asked them to infer whether goods were substitutes or complements from cross-price elasticities, then predict how a supply or demand shock in one market would affect the other. It brought together several chapters. Solving it on the document camera forced me to slow down and make each step visible, while giving students a chance to ask questions and practice explaining why a method applied.

Teaching also meant helping students find their next questions. One student came to office hours to discuss research and next steps; our conversations helped them connect with the department's Undergraduate RA program. Other students asked which courses to take next, and I asked what they had found most interesting to help identify a direction.

I also shared teaching tools with colleagues. After I demonstrated Gradescope with a faculty colleague, at least one professor adopted it for exams and said it made grading much easier. The platform had helped me grade the Sheets efficiently and provide useful feedback, so I valued sharing it. Looking ahead, I would be glad to teach an undergraduate Labor Economics elective, drawing on my research on unions and labor markets. I especially enjoy teaching students from different majors. I hope to build classrooms where students take difficult ideas seriously, contribute meaningfully, and leave more confident about what they might study next. An instructor cannot replace individualized explanations students can find elsewhere; I can create a shared setting where they test ideas, discover their interests, and see themselves continuing in economics.