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Teaching Statement

Through my experience as a teaching assistant and research supervisor at UCLA, I gained invaluable experience teaching advanced undergraduate econometrics, strategy, and game theory, as well as masters-level empirical industrial organization. My goals for teaching are to foster economic intuition, develop students' reasoning and analysis skills, and engender an interest in the economic and social scientific research method.

Teaching philosophy

My first goal of teaching economics, and microeconomics in particular, is to foster a strong economic intuition. I hope that students not only come away from coursework with coding knowledge or solution techniques, but for an appreciation of what these techniques allow us to understand about the world. When teaching econometrics, this looks like using real-world examples of threats to identification and how modern causal inference techniques can help us identify outcomes of interest. When teaching game theory, this includes connecting each solution concept to real world scenarios in market competition or international conflict, for example, that the concept helps us analyze. When teaching graduate industrial organization, I emphasized features of economic environments each addition to a demand system allowed us to solve that a simpler model would not.

To develop students' reasoning skills, I emphasize repetition of technical skills and approaching problems from multiple angles to ensure understanding. This is especially important for students who come from a variety of backgrounds and levels of preparation. In game theory, for example, to study an equilibrium concept, I would solve several examples and try to connect equilibrium concepts to the real world. For example, when trying to explain the importance of specifying off-path equilibrium actions in a dynamic game strategy, I would encourage students to think of themselves as a manager submitting a complete plan of action to her employees that specifies the correct action to take under any market condition. For more advanced students, I spent time after class or in my office hours sketching proofs about given equilibria or uniqueness results. In strategy, I would encourage students working on a case study to think of several paths forward for a firm and analyze their pros and cons before settling on one.

Finally, I seek to provide a supportive learning environment. When students feel unsupported or like a class isn't tailored to their interests, this can hinder learning. To help students feel supported, I attempted to provide a variety of support methods – staying after class to answer questions, hosting online review sessions before exams to maximize flexibility. For all methods classes, my fellow teaching assistants and I would hold extra review sessions before key exams to help students review material. I also attempted to connect course material with students' interests. When teaching advanced statistics courses, I worked to help students find questions and data sources tailored to their interests, teaching them to use official statistics, Kaggle, and other resources. When helping students think about case studies for a strategy course, I encouraged them to choose firms and industries that they were interested in, such as the autonomous vehicles industry or the eBook industry.

Teaching interests

I am keen to teach courses on game theory, microeconomic theory, or strategy at the advanced undergraduate levels. These courses would combine rigorous reasoning, emphasize problem solving, and encourage students to apply economic reasoning to real world topics. I am especially excited to create projects, such as case studies or writing down and solving a game, that emphasize applying economic reasoning to real-world issues.

I would also like to teach courses in industrial organization, at the undergraduate and graduate level. At the undergraduate level, I would emphasize applying microeconomic skills to real-world industries, emphasizing strategic thinking and problem solving. At the graduate level, I would emphasize the development of modern empirical methods, especially in productivity, demand estimation, and solving of dynamic games.

Finally, I am interested in developing and teaching a course on the economics of IT and AI. Given the rapid advances in generative AI, along with concomitant hopes and fears, I hope to use the course to help students think carefully and critically about the economic and social impacts of these general-purpose technologies.

Mentoring

Finally, I hope to communicate to students an appreciation for economics research and research methods. As someone without a family background in academia or research, I benefitted enormously from my undergraduate research supervisors on the path to a Ph.D. I hope to provide a similar source of mentorship to students from a variety of backgrounds. In each class I teach for, I encourage students to ask me any questions about pursuing a research career and have met with several students over coffee to discuss their own plans. In addition, I have served as a research supervisor for two undergraduates through UCLA's Student Research Program, helping them produce their own research in the economics of ICT.

I hope to create opportunities that expose students to research. At the undergraduate level, I will draw on my past success obtaining grants to hire students as research assistants. At the graduate level, I plan organize seminars and workshops to promote spillovers from the sharing and discussion of research.