Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Lucrezio Figurelli

During my years at Boston College, I gained extensive experience in helping students approaching for the first time the study of Economics. I served as a Teaching Assistant for large courses of both Principles of Microeconomics and Principles of Macroeconomics, teaching three sections of Microeconomics in the Fall of 2010 and 2011, and three sections of Macroeconomics in the Spring of 2011 and 2012. I also served as Teaching Assistant for Intermediate Microeconomics in the Spring and Fall semesters of 2009, and have both supported student and faculty research and held a seminar on optimization methods while working for Research Services at Boston College (January 2010 to present).

My main goal in teaching economics is to help all my students become critical thinkers and achieve a clear understanding of the material covered in class. To accomplish this goal, I realized that feeding them with too much information, leaves them with nothing. Instead, I find that committing to fix some key ideas, and using them in explaining simple facts of life that are a little counterintuitive, is a more rewarding strategy, as students will be able to master those ideas by the end of the course. A major challenge perhaps, is to make sure every single student understands and is engaged regardless of ability. Not everybody understands things better when they are put in mathematical terms and many students initially consider economics to be difficult or dull. I acknowledge that some students prefer a more intuitive explanation, while others like to have real world examples to relate to; by bringing up whenever possible, real life examples and current events, I try to mix the use calculus techniques to a more intuitive explanation.
I find teaching a very rewarding experience, as it gives me the opportunity to share with students my passion for this subject that has applications in virtually any field, and not only helps us understand the world around us, but can also help to inform a wide array of current public policy issues. Over the years at Boston College, I have used feedback from course instructors and students evaluations to improve myself as a teacher. I deem as extremely important to try to connect with students, and stimulate their interest in the subject, by showing enthusiasm and making them actively participate to the discussions. I think a good teacher should always be well-prepared and organized, and try to address the students’ specific needs at his best.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my teaching experiences as a Ph.D. student, and I look forward to continue to improve as an instructor. I am interested in teaching Industrial Organization both at the graduate and undergraduate levels. I am also excited and open to teaching introductory and intermediate Microeconomics, Public Economics, Statistics and Econometrics to undergraduates.