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Teaching Statement

Throughout my Ph.D. journey, teaching has been one of the most fulfilling aspects of my academic career. My teaching philosophy centers on two core principles: connecting economic theory to real-world phenomena, and creating an inclusive learning environment that recognizes each student learns differently and at their own pace. My dedication to this philosophy has been recognized with the Ernest Liu Family Outstanding Teaching Award in the 2023-2024 academic year, and is reflected in my consistently strong teaching evaluations, which have averaged 4.56 out of 5.00 across six semesters.

Economics provides powerful tools for understanding the world, but the connection between classroom theory and real-world applications is not always obvious to students. From my own undergraduate experience, I know that when this connection feels abstract, students can lose interest in the subject. As an instructor, I actively work to bridge this gap by bringing current events and tangible examples into the classroom. When teaching intermediate macroeconomics in Spring 2022, for instance, my discussion section covered how the Federal Reserve adjusts the discount rate and reserve requirements—topics that coincided with the Fed's aggressive response to post-pandemic inflation. Rather than treating this as purely theoretical, I started the section by showing a CNBC article documenting the Federal Open Market Committee's recent decisions and a graph of interest rate changes during and after COVID-19. Seeing the actual tools the Fed deployed immediately sparked their interest, and questions shifted from "what is the model's prediction on interest rate?" to "is the Fed doing the right thing, and why is this the right tool to curb inflation?" Two students even asked me for more readings on modeling monetary policy after this section. Throughout my teaching experience, actively finding such real-world linkages has been a consistent effort—one I believe is tremendously important for making economics come alive for students.

Capturing students' interest through relevant examples is an important first step, but effective teaching also requires creating an environment where students feel supported as individuals, with access to personalized help when they struggle. This is where I believe I particularly excel. I make myself available through regular office hours, but I also actively encourage one-on-one meetings outside of scheduled times, especially around exams. Creating a safe, private space where students feel comfortable sharing their difficulties has proven invaluable, and this commitment to accessibility is reflected consistently in my teaching evaluations. One student noted, "Quite literally the best TA I have ever had here at Cornell. Went above and beyond to help students." The phrase "above and beyond" appears frequently in my evaluations, and I take pride in this—it reflects my conviction that teaching is not just about content delivery, but about genuine care for student success. Across all my teaching evaluations, I have consistently received the highest scores on questions related to willingness to help students and accessibility through office hours, including a perfect 5.00 out of 5.00 rating in Spring 2024.

Supporting students with different learning styles also means designing materials that present concepts through multiple modalities. I believe that combining mathematical formulations, textual descriptions, and visual representations is essential, particularly for undergraduate students who may be encountering economic concepts for the first time. Students have noted that my slides are "extremely detailed" and "wonderfully organized and clear," with one commenting that "it was clear that he put in a lot of effort to explain concepts visually and verbally to help students look at things from multiple perspectives." My approach to discussion sections balances reinforcement of lecture content with problem-solving practice. I typically begin with concise "re-lectures" that recap the week's material, helping students consolidate their understanding before diving into practice problems. One student described this as "a magnificent job balancing the re-explanation of the week's lecture materials while also reviewing and tackling practice questions," noting that this balance made the section "as good as any, if not better, than any discussion section that I have been enrolled in at Cornell." To facilitate engagement, teamwork, and active learning, I incorporate interactive poll questions during class to gauge understanding in real-time and adjust my teaching accordingly. This structure ensures that students leave section with both conceptual clarity and practical skills.

My commitment to supporting students extends beyond individual classrooms to broader community-building efforts. As president of the Graduate Student Association for students in Economics (GSAFE) at Cornell, I have organized our mentorship program, which pairs incoming doctoral students with higher-year students. PhD study is challenging, and having guidance has proven invaluable to our graduate student community. Through GSAFE, I have also coordinated professional development workshops, facilitated peer feedback sessions for job market candidates, and worked to build a more inclusive and supportive departmental culture. These experiences have strengthened my ability to foster inclusive learning environments, coordinate collaborative teaching efforts, and understand the diverse challenges students face—skills that directly enhance my effectiveness in the classroom.

As an assistant professor, I am excited to teach courses that align with both my training and research expertise. At the undergraduate level, I am prepared to teach introductory and intermediate microeconomics and macroeconomics, as well as specialized courses in environmental economics, international trade, and applied econometrics. My six semesters of teaching experience at Cornell, spanning both introductory and intermediate levels, have prepared me to effectively communicate economic concepts to students at various stages of their learning. At the graduate level, I would be eager to develop courses in environmental economics, empirical industrial organization, innovation and firm dynamics, and applied econometrics. My vision for these courses has been shaped both by my research experience and by the excellent teaching I observed during my doctoral training. During my time at Cornell, I was fortunate to take graduate field courses in environmental economics with Todd Gerarden and Ivan Rudik, and in trade and firm dynamics with Ezra Oberfield. These courses combined intriguing empirical patterns with theoretical frameworks, working through different seminal papers' settings. The experience of working through replication packages and doing descriptive analysis on field-specific data was extremely valuable, and I hope to learn from my teachers' techniques and bring them to my own teaching.

Throughout my teaching at any level, I will continue to prioritize the two principles that have guided my work as a teaching assistant: making economic thinking relevant to real-world issues, and supporting each student's individual learning journey in an inclusive environment. The most gratifying feedback I receive is that students feel seen, supported, and better equipped to think like economists. That is the standard I hold myself to, and I look forward to bringing this philosophy to my classroom as an assistant professor.