Teaching Statement
Victoria Wenxin Xie

Teaching Philosophy

Learning economics should be intellectually rigorous, fun and empowering. As a teacher, I'm excited to share the curiosity and powerful analytical tools which drive me as a researcher with my students. Economics offers unique frameworks and insights to anyone who wants to deeply understand the world. I have four main goals for teaching. First, I would like students to acquire the necessary analytical frameworks to critically think about basic economics issues. Second, students would learn to tell stories with data and view old debates with fresh eyes and scientific clarity. Third, my ideal classroom is a safe environment where students could make mistakes, fail, explore and have fun. Finally, learning should be inclusive and empowering, where students of diverse backgrounds are encouraged to speak up, interact, and bring in their unique perspectives.

- My first goal of teaching is to empower students to acquire the necessary analytical frameworks to critically think about basic economics issues. This means students by the end of the class should have a clear understanding not only about economic theory, but be able to apply them to form their own independent judgement about current affairs and policy debates. In addition to designing problem sets and exams on the mathematical foundations embedded in economic theory, I incorporate readings from news and policy columns appropriate to the level of the class. To make the class more interactive, I design discussion sessions which encourage students to apply their recently acquired theoretical frameworks to analyze simple issues they see in news and other popular writings.

- Second, students would learn to work with data and view old debates with fresh eyes. The integrity and strength of a democracy relies on informed citizens who think independently. Many important contemporary issues such as environmental policy, international trade, the labor market and automation are polarized. The "big data" revolution today offers exciting opportunities for researchers as well as for the classroom. Instead of relying on pre-existing assumptions or believing in their favorite news source, I would like to encourage students get their hands dirty and acquire the necessary data to form their own opinions. For example, in an environmental economics course, I assign students to choose a real world question related to environmental externality or policy they are interested in, find and analyze data sources, and finally make a presentation on their findings. I create guideposts along the way to help students locate relevant data sources, and assign simple tutorials for coding issues.

- Third, learning economics could be fun. My ideal classroom is a safe and intellectually stimulating environment where students nurture their curiosity and sense of exploration. Students should feel comfortable with making mistakes and be guided to explore their passions. As a student, I'm always grateful for my teachers who believe "there are no stupid questions". I commit to being sensitive about the learning atmosphere in my classroom and encourage students to interact with me and with each other to clarify their confusions as much as possible.

- Fourth, students benefit from their diverse background and learn as much from each other as they do from books and lectures. I make sure students of all ethnicity, personality, and genders are empowered to speak up their mind and bring in their unique perspectives. In group projects, I aim to assign students from different cultural and technical backgrounds to work together. In addition to promoting diversity in classroom settings, I hope to provide mentoring particularly for traditionally under-represented students. During my graduate studies at UC San Diego, I served as a small group leader for the *Women in Economics* initiative connecting female Ph.D. students with female faculty. The mentoring and support I received from coffee gatherings and informal dinners was instrumental in helping me navigate the experience of being a female researcher. As I teacher, I'm committed to being sensitive about the challenges facing students of different races, genders, sexual orientation, and cultural backgrounds, offering help and encouraging open discussions whenever possible.

As a teaching assistant at UC San Diego, I had experience teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate level, in different fields. As an environmental and trade economist, my research makes use of theoretical production and trade theory and econometric techniques with microdata, focusing on topics interacting with labor and development economics. My teaching interests are diverse. At the graduate-level, I will be very interested to teach **international economics, the economics of climate change, environmental policy** and **quantitative methods for microdata analysis.** At the undergraduate level, other than courses in international trade and environmental externality, I will also be delighted to teach **intermediate microeconomics, macroeconomics** and **econometrics.**

Reviews by past students:

Economics of the Environment (Undergraduate-level):

"Good at teaching, helpful during review session 2"

"shows care for students' learning"

"Wenxin is a very kind, caring TA. I went to her office hours before the second midterm and she was very eager to help and answer my questions."

"Nice and great TA!"

International Economics (Master-level):

"Clear explanation of the mathematic component of the course"

"She did a great job, and was personable and funny. She also seemed very knowledgeable."

"Good at explaining concepts and problems with a clear logic."

"Kind and patient"

"She's very clear and know the material well."

Teaching experience and evaluations

Table 1. Share of students who agree or strongly agree with the following statement

2018.Winter	**Economics of the Environment (Undergraduate)**	**2017.Spring**	**International Economics (Master)**
I would recommend this Instructional Assistant to other students.	82%	I would recommend this Instructional Assistant to other students.	94%
The Instructional Assistant's assistance during office hours was well-informed, clearly presented and valuable.	89%	The Instructional Assistant helped develop my thinking skills on the subject.	94%
The Instructional Assistant presented course material clearly and answered questions accurately at discussion sections	94%	The Instructional Assistant presented course material clearly and answered questions accurately in class	94%
The Instructional Assistant presented course material clearly and answered questions accurately at exam reviews.	95%	The Instructional Assistant effectively connected the section/lab exercises with the material covered in lecture.	94%
The Instructional Assistant was approachable, courteous and showed interest and concern for students' learning and understanding.	95%	The Instructional Assistant was genuinely interested in and enthusiastic about teaching.	100%
Total	22	Total	18