Teaching Statement

Jin Ho Kim

Department of Economics, The George Washington University

**Teaching Philosophy**

My training at the George Washington University has provided me with excellent opportunities to develop my teaching philosophy. I have worked as a main instructor of Development Economics for one semester, and as one of the main instructors for math camp for incoming Ph.D. students for two years. Also, I received the CCAS Dean’s Graduate Instructorship scholarship, which is given to only one graduate student enrolled in Columbian College of Arts and Science per semester and I am scheduled to teach Economic Growth for senior undergraduate students in my last semester (Spring 2019). I also have served as a teaching assistant for introductory courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics, leading three discussion sections for principles of economics every week. I also have been serving as a teaching assistant for Advanced Macroeconomics 1 and 2 (Ph.D. core), leading a discussion every week. Through these experiences and interactions with professors and students, I have developed the skill to effectively convey material. If I may select one of my attributes that has helped me become an effective teacher over the years, I would say that my passion for the subject drives me to pursue excellence for teaching and dedicate my time to help students understand the concepts.

In all the classes I taught, I had a mixed group of students in their level of understanding economics; some students had difficulties in grasping basic concepts, and others already had some backgrounds in economics. To maximize my class time to help these mixed groups of students, I try to achieve two main goals in each class: (1) to make complicated materials accessible by expounding fundamental intuitions behind them instead of focusing on the mathematical details and (2) to challenge students to critically assess materials they are already familiar with.

Many students are intimidated by a myriad of economic theories that are hard to grasp. I believe that it is my role to cultivate intuitive understanding in the minds of students. So as to achieve this purpose, I myself strive to understand the concept in the most fundamental way---over the years, I found out that as my understanding of the concepts gets deeper, I was able to express economic theories in intuitive common language without using economic jargon, and relate those to everyday life examples. So, instead of solving problem sets mechanically, I use the problem sets to expound the basic concept during the discussion session. I believe the quality of teaching critically hinges on it.

Some students who have studied economics before have a tendency to take economics theory for granted without critical assessment. I often challenge them to appreciate or ponder what they think they already know. For example, when I teach the supply and demand curve and market price, I introduce historical debate on the meaning of price---whether price represents utility or cost---and Marshall’s contribution to synthesize these two strands of economic thought into the supply and demand curve model. In this way, I challenge students to appreciate the tremendous insight behind the simple supply and demand curve, and help them to appreciate simple economic models. By keeping these two goals---simplifying the difficult concepts and expounding the basic concepts--- in every class I taught, I found out that students are engaged into the subject, and start to reason with themselves about the materials even outside of the class.

Outside of the classroom, I make myself available to students by holding official and unofficial office hours. On the first day of the class, I tell all my students where I sit in the library, and encourage them to come to my spot to discuss any matter. It does motivate students to work harder as they can get the immediate help and they know their teacher cares about them.

Overall, my teaching experience has been incredibly rewarding in my academic life. Though I have been recognized as one of the best instructors in the department of economics and Colombian College of Arts and Science at the George Washington University, I do not get complacent with my current performance. I am still passionate to pursue excellence in my teaching, and do not fail to dedicate a good chunk of my time in this endeavor: I continue to struggle with each material to get a firm grasp of each topic; I keep developing teaching materials and constantly updating my knowledge of new teaching technologies. I always make myself available to students. At the end of this endeavor, I desire to be a great teacher and a mentor to the students, and to see students grow in their knowledge.

**Teaching Interest**

I can teach courses in Principles of Economics, Intermediate Microeconomics and Macroeconomics, Econometrics and Applied Econometrics. For field courses, I can teach Labor Economics, Development and Growth Economics.

**Potential Courses**

Principle of Microeconomics

Principle of Macroeconomics

Intermediate Microeconomics

Intermediate Macroeconomics

Game Theory

Econometrics

Applied Econometrics

Labor Economics

Development Economics

Economics of Growth

Advanced Macroeconomics (Ph.D. level)