

Teaching Statement

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I have had numerous and diverse teaching experiences through which I developed a teaching style that has proven to be highly effective in terms of student learning. I have been both a Teaching Assistant and a Lecturer of graduate and undergraduate courses at UCLA. Before, in Argentina, I had taught at three prestigious research institutions in Argentina: Universidad Catolica Argentina (UCA), Universidad Torcuato di Tella (UTDT) and Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento (UNGS). In terms of content, I have taught both graduate and undergraduate courses in Game Theory, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics and General Equilibrium Theory.

Teaching Philosophy

The goal that drives my teaching style is to keep the student motivated and engaged with the material. I strongly believe that the best way to keep students stimulated is by making sure that they understand the relevance of what is being taught.

I usually start my lectures by motivating the topic through an example. I then continue by presenting the theory behind the problem, and finish the session by applying the theory to the example. I have found that this method keeps students focused and helps them in linking theory and the real world. I have had very good student evaluations, and was awarded a Certificate of Excellence for outstanding performance as a teaching assistant by the Department of Economics at UCLA.

I try to use all of the tools available to teachers to ensure that both course content and themes are communicated clearly and effectively. For example, while I was teaching undergraduate Game Theory at UCLA in the Summer of 2006, I realized that students had a hard time grasping the concept of mixed strategies. Since the Soccer World Cup was being held during that Summer, I gave the students a project. I encouraged them to review all matches with penalty shootouts (which were available on Youtube) and to classify both the shooter's and the goalkeeper's actions as choosing left, middle or right. We later pooled the data and explained the player's behavior in the light of the predictions of a mixed strategy Nash equilibrium.

A very rewarding experience as a teacher started in the Summer of 2005, when I was chosen to be a Lecturer for the course "Introduction to Game Theory" after a rigorous competitive process. This course was not usually taught during the Summer, and presented the challenge of compressing a great wealth of material into a short fast-paced 6 week course. I was given the liberty to design this course from scratch and ended up implementing it twice: in 2005 and 2006 with great success in terms of student evaluations. The summer sessions had very high rates of attendance, and helped me to better understand the challenges of teaching large classes.

On a private level, I have also tutored for economics classes to students attending UCLA Anderson School of Management and MIT Sloan School of Management. This has allowed me to assess the differences between programs within Business Schools and Departments of Economics.

More information on the courses I have taught, as well as freely distributable teaching materials, are available on my web page at <http://rolf.bol.ucla.edu/>