

Teaching Portfolio

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Pedagogical idea

My teaching goal is to inspire students about economics and to provide them with the fundamental concepts and analytical tools that are required to understand what economics is all about. As Winston Churchill said "I am always ready to learn although I do not always like being taught." Inspiring students is a crucial and difficult step which I try to accomplish by following the golden rule in economics: people respond to incentives. Students are more willing to learn if they understand why a topic is important, interesting and fun to study.

At University of Southern Denmark, I have taught as an Instructor a variety of courses, such as Development Economics, Macroeconomics, and Applied Economics with a focus on Economic History at the bachelor level and graduate level. Students often enter these courses with hesitation as they find it difficult to relate how "Economic Growth and Development" or "Economic History" classes can be aligned with their career goals. Having that in mind, one key objective is to overcome these barriers and trigger students' interest in my classes. One key ingredient for that interest is enthusiasm. I believe a teacher's enthusiasm for the subject is contagious and can provide the motivation for students to engage in class and learn the material. I often discuss with my students recent newspaper articles, for example, from the Economist, the Guardian, or the New York Times that are closely related to the material covered in class, such as the consequences of economic inequality. I believe this helps students to understand that these topics are of general importance – journalists write about it – and they are actually relevant for them.

In my courses, my approach is to stimulate students' interests by open questions, using in-class exercises, and student presentations to make students familiar with the main economic concepts taught in class, and to interact actively to get timely feedback from students. In general, I consider variety in teaching methodology as very important. What are the best teaching methods depends on the content of the course. Students' academic abilities, background, and learning styles vary such that different methods are most effective for different students. This is why I introduced in my graduate level course a learning concept that evaluates students based on different tasks and skills: (i) a written essay (referee report) to demonstrate student's skills of discussing and evaluating the quality of articles at the research frontier in the field in a written form; (ii) a presentation to demonstrate their oral skills in communicating the main ideas and concept of relevant articles; (iii) class participation where students apply their knowledge to discuss and evaluate articles presented in class with their peers.

I believe that the purpose of an economics education is not simply to memorize a set of facts or a series of models but to use critical thinking and analytic reasoning to think as an economist. Students are required to prepare for each class with background reading assignments which I believe makes the best use of classroom time for reasoning. In many of my lectures I ask students at the beginning of the class to summarize the reading and give a brief review of what they have learned in the previous class. In my graduate level courses, students are required to read a lot of further articles in addition to the main course material covered in class, which I believe tends to sharpen students' reasoning skills. I consistently challenge students to do their best, this is why I emphasize class-participation by asking many questions

during my lecture, and let students review class material by letting them present in front of their classmates as alternative concepts of learning in all my lectures. I also believe that these methods significantly contribute to develop self-confidence of students.

Enthusiasm and a variety of teaching methods have limited effects if the students seldom see you outside of class. I try to maintain as much contact with my students outside of class as possible. To encourage questions students can write me an email or drop by my office when it is convenient for them. For each of my classes I maintain on "blackboard" an active, frequently updated website with announcement, links to other blogs and newspapers, lecture notes, exercises and student presentations. While the course website on blackboard is not interactive it is another tool to communicate with my students outside of class.

My long-term goals are to investigate the further effective use of modern learning methods, to evaluate whether students are better learners with or without their laptops, and to read more books and journals about teaching.

Pedagogical competences

2014-15: Lecturer Training Program at University of Southern Denmark, Odense

Teaching and supervision

Courses at University of Southern Denmark:

Applied Economics (University of Southern Denmark, B.Sc. Economics), Fall 2018

Macroeconomics (University of Southern Denmark, BSc. Economics and Business Administration), Fall 2016, 2017, 2018; Spring 2017

Development Economics (University of Southern Denmark, B.Sc. Economics, B.Sc. Market and Management Anthropology), Spring 2014, 2015

Long-run Determinants of Economic Outcomes (University of Southern Denmark, M.Sc. Economics), Spring 2014, 2015

Courses at other Universities:

Comparative Historical Economic Development (Harvard University, Ph.D. Economics), Spring 2018: Responsibility: Co-Lecturer (including co-supervision of Teaching Assistant)

The Economic History of Europe (University of Copenhagen, BSc. and Msc program in Economics, joint with Paul R. Sharp) Summer 2017, 2018

Supervision

Phd students:

External examiner for Lena Lindbjerg Sperling (CBS), 2018

Master students:

Alexander Jorgensen Kressner: "Is the resource curse resource conditional?", 2015

Bachelor students:

Isabel Friis: "FDI as a mean to reduce production cost", 2014