

## Statement of Teaching Philosophy-Luis Gautier

As a teacher, I strive to help students develop their reasoning skills through the teaching of economics. The overarching goal is thus to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in whatever career path they choose. In my teaching, more specifically, I seek to communicate effectively with students, relate students to the class material by presenting real-world examples, involve students in classroom discussions to encourage class participation, bring out the best of each student regardless of his or her academic background, and develop new ways to present the class material.

To elaborate, effective communication with the students is key in achieving one's teaching objectives. The idea is for both students and teacher to gain from this communication thereby rendering the classroom a two-way discussion forum. Once this communication has been established, the students and teacher may study the subject more effectively. Real-world examples are also a fundamental instrument in achieving my teaching objectives, for it bridges the course material to the real world thus providing a hands-on learning experience to students with different backgrounds and skills.

The teaching strategy to be implemented to achieve these goals depends on the course level, class size, students' skills, among others. Introductory level courses require, in general, a little more effort to establish communication as most students are possibly new to economic concepts. For introductory level courses I like to bring to class current news articles and couple these with the course material as this facilitates the introduction of complex ideas and concepts. At the more advanced level, even though current issues are important to reinforce basic concepts, in-class problem solving sessions are key in evaluating the extent to which students have absorbed and digested the class material, and also a useful tool to encourage classroom discussions.

To illustrate, a class session may start by asking students about current economic news or, alternatively, a news article can be sometimes presented and briefly discussed. Furthermore, a quick review of key concepts could serve as a warm-up exercise and suggestions for additional reading may help start the session. Next, concrete examples on key concepts can be presented and perhaps exercises solved in-class. The way I like to do this is by posing a question or problem and ask students to spend 5-7 minutes to try and understand the problem and then tackle it. I then fully discuss the problem. To complement class lectures, weekly assignments are given whenever possible. The reason for this is to help students reinforce key concepts while working exam-like questions and, concomitantly, offer an incentive to complete the assigned readings.

In terms of the lecture, I like to go at a reasonable pace; this will depend on how well students are comprehending the class material. Teaching aids such as Power Point slides, Blackboard and Internet resources help present the class material in an organized and interesting way. However, I also like to use the board as this offers some flexibility in answering questions. A combination of these allows one to present the subject in an interesting an effective manner.

I believe there are other ways to teach economics effectively. At SIUC I came across a new, different approach to teaching economics. This is based on classroom "experiments" which aim at introducing new concepts through student participation. I found this teaching approach effective, interesting and challenging. I would be willing to further explore this teaching method in the future.