

“He is a very good teacher explained things well which made the complex topics simpler and easier understood.”

–A student from Principle of Macroeconomics

“He was very helpful concerned about student learning.

–A student from Principle of Macroeconomics

“Weiwei was great at explaining topics making sure the class understood before move on.”

– A student from Money, Banking and Financial Markets

All of the above are some real comments from my students. In the last five years, I have tried the roles of being a teaching assistant, a head teaching assistant, and an independent instructor. All these experience helped me accumulate invaluable teaching knowledge and skills. Working as a teaching assistant for multiple courses and several professors gave me the opportunity to learn different teaching skills from different professors. Also, thanks to holding office hours, I learned how to efficiently deliver materials to students of different linguistic/cultural backgrounds. The experience of being a head teaching assistant provide me a great opportunity to handle challenges from large scale lectures and coordinate a group of 5-7 teaching assistants. Most importantly, being an independent instructor is a great chance of putting accumulated teaching knowledge and skills into practice, started with making my own syllabus, ended by grading the final exam. Besides getting experience from teaching responsibilities, I also successfully completed all courses offered that were aimed at improving the teaching skills of teaching assistants.

My efforts on improving teaching skills have been proof by the upward trend in the teaching evaluation from students, and by winning the Harry Gunnison Brown Graduate Student Teaching Award, which is the highest award for graduate instructors in our departments.

According to all my experiences on teaching, I realize that teaching style should vary by the course levels and students. For entry-level courses, like Principles of Microeconomics (Macroeconomics), Introduction to Econometrics, the overview idea and intuition is more important than underline mathematical theories. We should help students to build their interests on economics by showing more real life applications instead of scaring them with tons of calculations. On the other hand, more advanced courses, like Intermediate Microeconomics, Intermediate Macroeconomics, and all graduate courses, should be taught at quantitative level. Mathematical calculations can help students to have future understanding on economics theories. For graduate students, besides the solid foundations of all economic theories at quantitative level, they should be encouraged to apply critical thinking on all new materials.

To be a good teacher, we should realize that students have their own characteristics. More attention should be paid to individual needs, like encouraging students to visit our offices, making flexible office hours, and building good relationships with students. Once we know the real needs of the students, we can help them to learn more efficiently. Paying attention to individual needs require more efforts than regular teaching, but I believe that there is no such thing as a bad student, only a bad teacher. All our efforts put on students would be paid off by students future achievements.

In short, I want to help students develop their own economic perspective and tools with which to confidently and humbly engage their lives and the world. I feel a sense of fulfillment when my students tell me they started seeing the importance of economics in everyday life or became more interested in studying economics from my class. I would continue paying efforts on teaching and strive for self-improvement.