

Teaching Packet

for

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Includes

- Teaching philosophy
- Summary of teaching evaluations
- Example SUSSAI teaching evaluation report

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Teaching Philosophy

My approach to teaching begins with the simple idea that learning should be enjoyable and engaging. When developing a course and each time I enter into the classroom, I recognize that students come into the class with expectations of learning some amount of material. My goal for the duration of the course, applied each day, is that they leave with more knowledge than they expected and for less effort than they expected. If a task is enjoyable, then it always takes less effort to accomplish this task. If students are engaged, then they will find the task enjoyable.

Engaging the students begins with personalizing the learning experience of the students. At the beginning of each semester, I survey the class with note cards that they fill out with their particular interests (i.e. favorite movies, sports teams, career ambitions). These preferences are then incorporated into classroom examples and “take home” practice questions. Students recognize when their interests have been incorporated into examples, and they are more likely to be engaged in learning the concept that the example is addressing. This tool also makes it clear to the students that I value them individually.

Another useful tool to engage students is the use of classroom and online experiments. Many concepts of economics can seem abstract to students at first. The use of experiments demonstrates how the concepts are embedded into their decisions, and it makes a memorable reference point for students to refer back to. As an example, one can divide the class into buyers and sellers and have them trade in a bid/ask market with induced values and costs obtained from playing cards. This experiment quickly results in the equilibrium price prediction. Afterwards, the concept is reinforced as I graph out the values that the buyers were given for the demand curve and vice versa for the sellers and the supply curve. The equilibrium price prediction is no longer only thought of as the “intersection of the two curves”. Students realize how it actually occurs in a real market. In addition, to preserve class time, there are experiments where students make decisions outside of the classroom, and the results are then discussed in class.

An instructor must realize that all students have different learning styles. In light of this, I strive to provide different opportunities for learning the same concept. Classroom and online experiments, mentioned above, are one type of method. Secondly, I always post online notes, give lecture notes in class, and will choose textbooks that appropriately match the key concepts of the course. In addition, I have an “open door/open email” policy to accommodate students that need individualized attention. If an approach is not working for a particular student, it is necessary to adapt and understand their thought process and why they are not able to grasp a concept.

An instructor also must realize that all students have different comfort levels with asking questions and interaction. Accommodating these differences has become much easier with new technology, as students are no longer limited to classroom and office time for interaction with the instructor and other students. In each class, I have an anonymous online posting board for the students to communicate with each other about general questions and topics. Given the emergence of social networking sites, many students are quite comfortable in online social settings and they often utilize this board. This facilitates the group interaction experience for all students. They are informed that I do not monitor this chat room for questions, and another board is created for topic questions, which I do monitor. I encourage students to answer the questions themselves, as teaching others is an outstanding way to reinforce your own understanding of a concept. If a question is unanswered or answered incorrectly, then I answer it. Keeping in mind that the posts are anonymous, students are not uncomfortable answering questions or having an incorrect answer corrected.

Students that are engaged enjoy learning. Economics is an exciting and interesting field, and a charismatic teacher should be able to stimulate excitement in students through the applicability of economics to their lives. I use a sense of humor and my passion for economics to engage the students, and hopefully leave them looking to learn more.

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Summary of Teaching Evaluations

Below is a summary of my evaluations based on the State University System Student Assessment of Instruction (SUSSAI) method for Florida State University. Ratings are based on a 5-point scale, with 1 being the highest ranking and 5 being the lowest.

Overall Assessment of Instructor Ratings from various reports

| Course | # Students | Mean | Median | Dept. Mean |
|---|-------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Introduction to Economics (2007)* | 57 | 1.20 | 1 | 2.00 |
| Principles of Macroeconomics (2006)* | 68 | 1.28 | 1 | 1.76 |
| Principles of Microeconomics (2004) | 41 | 1.97 | 2 | 1.91 |

*Averaged over 2 sections

To save space, some of the more detailed information from the SUSSAI evaluation forms has been omitted. I would be glad to send anyone interested a full copy of those full results and have enclosed a copy of an example report.

Center for Assessment & Testing - Florida State University - Report Created:01/11/2007 - Semester/Year: Fall 2006

Student Perception of Teaching

Instructor: Krista Jabs
 Department: Economics
 Course: ECO2013 (PRIN OF MACROECON)
 Forms Ordered: 42 Responses: 23 (55%)

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Response Scale | | Response Scale | |
| SA = Strongly Agree | = 1 | E = Excellent | = 1 |
| A = Agree | = 2 | VG = Very Good | = 2 |
| N = Neutral | = 3 | G = Good | = 3 |
| D = Disagree | = 4 | F = Fair | = 4 |
| SD = Strongly Disagree | = 5 | P = Poor | = 5 |

Section A Student Information

| | 1st year | Sophomore | Junior | Senior | Grad/Other |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. What is your year in school? | 12 52% | 2 9% | 7 30% | 0 0% | 2 9% |
| | 1.99 or less | 2.0 - 2.49 | 2.5 - 2.99 | 3.0 - 3.49 | 3.5 - 4.0 |
| 2. What is your overall cumulative GPA? | 0 0% | 2 9% | 3 14% | 6 27% | 11 50% |
| | A | B | C | D | F |
| 3. What grade do you expect to receive in this course? | 16 70% | 6 26% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% |
| | yes | no | | | |
| 4. Is this a required course for you? | 20 87% | 3 13% | | | |

Section B Course & Instructor Details

| | SA | A | N | D | SD | (N) | Median | IQR |
|---|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|---------|-----|--------|-----|
| 1. This course challenged me to think deeply about the subject matter. | 12 52% | 11 48% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 2. The course materials (e.g., textbooks, coursepack) helped me better understand the subject matter. | 9 39% | 11 48% | 2 9% | 0 0% | 1 4% | 23 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. The course assignments helped me better understand the subject matter. | 11 48% | 9 39% | 3 13% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. The instructional techniques engaged me with the subject matter. | 14 61% | 8 35% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 5. The instructor was concerned about whether the students learned the subject matter. | 19 83% | 4 17% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 6. The instructor was enthusiastic about the subject matter in the course. | 20 87% | 3 13% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 7. The instructor was enthusiastic about teaching this class. | 19 83% | 4 17% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 8. The instructor clearly communicated what was expected in this class. | 19 83% | 4 17% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 9. The instructor expressed ideas clearly. | 17 74% | 5 22% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |

| Section B Course & Instructor Details (continue) | SA | A | N | D | SD | (N) | Median | IQR |
|---|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
| 10. The instructor provided helpful feedback on my performance. | 14 61% | 8 35% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 11. The instructor evaluated my work fairly. | 18 78% | 5 22% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 12. The instructor treated students with respect. | 19 83% | 4 17% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 13. Students were able to get individual help. | 17 74% | 5 22% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| Section C Overall Course & Instructor Assessment | SA | A | N | D | SD | (N) | Median | IQR |
| 1. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course. | 11 48% | 11 48% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. If a friend were taking this course, I would recommend this instructor. | 16 70% | 7 30% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 3. If I were taking another course in this subject area, I would choose this instructor again. | 16 70% | 6 26% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| | E | VG | G | F | P | (N) | Median | IQR |
| 4. Overall, considering its content, design, and structure, this course was | 8 35% | 12 52% | 3 13% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Overall, considering the constraints and opportunities inherent in the subject matter, this instructor was | 15 65% | 8 35% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| Section D SUSSAI (State University System Student Assessment of Instruction) | E | VG | G | F | P | (N) | Median | IQR |
| 1. Description of course objectives and assignments | 14 61% | 7 30% | 2 9% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 2. Communication of ideas and information | 15 65% | 6 26% | 2 9% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 3. Expression of expectations for performance in class | 13 57% | 7 30% | 3 13% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 4. Availability to assist students in or out of class | 17 74% | 4 17% | 2 9% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 5. Respect and concern for students | 18 78% | 5 22% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 0 |
| 6. Stimulation of interest in the course. | 16 70% | 6 26% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 7. Facilitation of learning. | 14 61% | 6 26% | 3 13% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |
| 8. Overall assessment of instructor. | 17 74% | 5 22% | 1 4% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 23 | 1 | 1 |

(No responses for other sections.)