Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Through teaching introductory economics, and subsequent advanced theory and topics courses, I have learned to interlace theory and data to assist students in developing a powerful analytical toolkit. My experiences equip me to teach introductory and intermediate theory, as well as graduate-level public; labor; and macroeconomics. By developing economics as a blend of storytelling and science, my teaching philosophy emphasizes three facets to help students cultivate their own analytical framework that will translate fruitfully into any career path:

1. **Reinforcement of the economic framework of incentives that drive behavior**

I have found that introductory economics students appreciate our discipline’s many thought-provoking insights, ranging from deadweight loss to comparative advantage, but they truly develop their ability to critically evaluate these insights when rooted in the context of incentives. My initial lectures sometimes accelerated toward critical analyses at the expense of reiterating the fundamental incentives that drive these insights. After meeting with each student individually, I found that while they enjoyed discussions about nuance, they were better able to engage in those discussions when consistently embedded in baseline supply and demand illustrations. As a result, I now introduce each new topic by carefully delineating incentives through a supply and demand graph to reinforce the core contribution of economic theory – a consistent framework with transparent assumptions to tell stories about decision-making. This framework has enhanced policy discussions across all my courses, ranging from fiscal stimulus in intermediate macroeconomics to affirmative action and net neutrality in topics courses.

2. **Strategic use of data visualization to teach students how to test predictions about behavior**

Economics students truly grasp key theoretical insights with reference to real-world data. After my introductory economics students’ first midterm, I noticed that they were adept at analyzing familiar problems, but sometimes struggled to apply similar reasoning to new situations (e.g. switching from taxes to tariffs). To begin the next lecture, I displayed a graph depicting U.S. GDP and the average income tax rate moving together over time. I asked students if the graph “proved” that higher taxes cause higher GDP despite our earlier discussions suggesting that taxation may distort economic activity, inciting a lively discussion about how we may test the economic theories that often does not come up until much later in econometrics courses. Using these short illustrative introductions has motivated my students to work harder beyond memorizing results to uncover the mechanisms driving predictions, thereby convincing me that simultaneously incorporating theory and data while teaching economics, much like our research process, projects us closer toward better understanding real-world phenomena.

3. **Emphasis on clearly communicating analytical insights to improve behavioral outcomes**

In each subsequent course, I have continued to introduce new topics through supply and demand, review possible challenges by presenting real-world data, and investigate new ways to actively engage students. For example, I have asked students to volunteer to present graphs that I provide or even choose their own data to present in front of their peers. These short presentations have introduced students to the process of interpreting and presenting empirical results, a critical skill for any member of the future workforce. Ultimately, I have enjoyed developing my own teaching and research productivity together in much the same way that I have encouraged my students to learn economics: develop, test, seek feedback, and repeat.
Teaching Evaluations

The following document contains an overview of my teaching evaluations for courses that I have taught during my Ph.D. studies. Further evaluations are available by request. This document contains the following items:

1. Summary statistics on evaluations and representative student feedback
2. Recent raw evaluation scores (Econ 1017: Libertarian Economic Policy, Fall 2017)
3. Recent raw qualitative student response feedback

Teaching at Harvard

The chart below shows my overall evaluation ratings (on an increasing scale of 1-5) for the courses for which I was a TA (also known as a Teaching Fellow or TF) at Harvard University. My scores have consistently exceeded the overall benchmarks provided for the Economics Department and the broader Social Sciences division at Harvard.

Students for each course have also been invited to voluntarily leave qualitative feedback. I present representative excerpts for each course, along with the full set of comments for Econ1017, for which I served as the Head Teaching Assistant.

Econ 10: Introductory Economics

“Sanjay was an awesome TF. He is incredibly accessible outside of class. He is also a great teacher - he made many of the more difficult concepts in the course incredibly clear through his explanations.”
“Sanjay is clearly committed to the class and enjoys teaching. His explanations are quite good and often push students to think about the material in new ways.”

Econ 1017: Libertarian Economic Policy
“Sanjay is top-notch at explaining concepts and encouraging students to connect with the ideas we think about in class.”

“Sanjay is one of the best out there. His enthusiasm and passion for the material are contagious, and he is a brilliant teacher.”

Econ 1011B: Intermediate Macroeconomics
“Sanjay is the man! He was always available to help. He was super approachable, friendly, and knowledgeable. His sections were clear and I learned a ton in his office hours each week.”

“Sanjay is a GREAT TF. Without his sections and office hours, I would not have been able to understand the course material as well as I have this semester. He is excellent at explaining economics in simple and concise ways. His connections between the mathematical busy-work of this course and the real world implications through economic intuition have really helped me understand the importance of the material taught in Ec1011b. His sections and office hours sessions were packed for good reason!”
# ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

**Fall 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section Leader / TF Overall</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>19%</td>
<td>71%</td>
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<td>93</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Lectures or Presentations</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
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<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<table>
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<th>Accessible Outside Class</th>
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<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<th>Mean Score</th>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<td>78</td>
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<table>
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<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
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<tr>
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<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gives Useful Feedback</th>
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<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<td>81%</td>
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<table>
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<th>Returns Assignments in Timely Fashion</th>
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<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
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<th>Number of Respondents</th>
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<td>11%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

Details for Section Leader / TF Overall Question

Full Text of Question: Evaluate your Section Leader overall.

Mean for this Course/Section
Benchmark for Fall 2017
Benchmark for Three years prior to and including Fall 2017

Distribution of Responses

1 = unsatisfactory
2 = fair
3 = good
4 = very good
5 = excellent

Means by Students' Gender:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th># Respondents</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.61
### Means by Students' Year In School:

Sorry, this demographic data cannot be displayed for privacy reasons. One or more of the demographic categories had between 1 and 4 respondents.

### Means by Students' Academic Division:

Sorry, this demographic data cannot be displayed for privacy reasons. One or more of the demographic categories had between 1 and 4 respondents.

### Means by Students' Reason for Taking Course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Taking Course</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration or Department Requirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Field or Language Citation Requirement</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Core or General Education Requirement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

Fall 2017

Enrollment: 243  Evaluations: 203  Response Rate: 83.54%

Sanjay Misra

<< Back

Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

Sort responses by overall course rating given: 1 to 5  5 to 1  sort by rating

Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:
-- none --  filter by reason

This guy is awesome. Great teacher.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

I really loved Sanjay. He was always willing to discuss topics and he was quickly able to establish an inviting atmosphere in section.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Sanjay was an amazing TF
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Only TF in this course who was amazing, accessible, understanding, and fair.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

great guy overall, loved his sections
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

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Sort responses by overall course rating given: 1 to 5  5 to 1
Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:
-- none --

Great!
* [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
* [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Misra is awesome. Not only does he do a great job making the section material interesting, but he is cognizant to engage all members of the section and make sure that the material is understood.
* [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
* [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

He's awesome and made section fun.
* [Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)]
* [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 4 (very good)]

Sanjay Misra ran the best sections by far, and he also held very helpful office hours that helped me prepare for the final. Great teacher and also kept a relaxed section atmosphere. Huge fan
* [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
* [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

very helpful in explaining concepts
* [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
* [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

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Greatest TF ever - passionate, knowledgeable, makes everyone feel excited about the material, and really helpful.
- [Evaluate the course overall: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

Great guy, chiller
- [Evaluate the course overall: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

GRRRRRREAT.
- [Evaluate the course overall: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

Makes section quite enjoyable and relevant to students.
- [Evaluate the course overall: 3 (good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 3 (good)]

great!
- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 4 (very good)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy  
Fall 2017  

Sanjay Misra  

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Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.  

Sort responses by overall course rating given:  
1 to 5  
5 to 1  

Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:  
-- none --  

Mr. Misra was an extraordinary TF for this course, and stood well above his peers in that regard. I looked forward to Mr. Misra's sections, and always came away from them with a funny story, as well as increased understanding of the material.  

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]  
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]  

Fantastic, somehow it feels like we cover more material with more depth in like 1/2 the time of the other course TFs.  

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]  
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]  

Misra is literally the best. Lays out concepts plainly and simply, and happy to help with any topic in office hours.  

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)]  
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]  

Amazing TF  

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)]  
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]  

Sanjay is the best. Bar none.  

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]  
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

Fall 2017

Sanjay Misra

Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

Sort responses by overall course rating given: 1 to 5  5 to 1  sort by rating
Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:  -- none --  filter by reason

Absolute bro.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Amazing! And really funny!
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Super engaging guy, helps kids learn in the best way—he makes it enjoyable. His sections were fun and informative. He's super smart but explains things in a really easy-to-grasp way
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Great TF
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

I love Sanjay. Amazing TF. Doesn't take himself too seriously, but possesses a casual, accessible, extreme understanding of the subject matter. He clarified confusing parts of the class he wasn't even responsible for helping with and gave the genuine sense that he wanted us to succeed. He was so great, clear, and helpful. He picked great topics to talk about as well.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

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Sanjay Misra

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Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

Sort responses by overall course rating given: □ 1 to 5  □ 5 to 1  sort by rating

Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:
-- none --  filter by reason

Enthusiastic and energetic.
- [Evaluate the course overall: 3 (good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 4 (very good)]

Best sections by far
- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 3 (good)]

I only evaluated Sanjay because I thought he was awesome, and the other two TFs were neither bad nor good, I sort of just went to their sections and sat there for an hour. Overall, I thought the section component of this class was pretty bad. I think it would be more effective to make students go to section once a week rather than the whole sign up thing.
- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

Sanjay is a great TF. He's honest and fair with both students and the material.
- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

Very understanding and accommodating TF. Definitely my favorite TF I have had to date at this school and I have had some pretty cool TFs!
- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 4 (very good)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

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Sanjay Misra

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Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

Sort responses by overall course rating given:  
1 to 5  5 to 1  sort by rating

Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:
-- none --  filter by reason

He was the most enthusiastic TF. He also made class fun with his easy going attitude.

- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 3 (good)]

Sanjay is really good at engaging students and explaining concepts in a straightforward way.

- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

Sanjay was a wonderful Section Leader. I thought that he helped prepare us for the exams quite well, and I also thought that he generated enthusiasm for the subject matter he taught.

- [Evaluate the course overall: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

Sanjay's sections were always my favorites! He presented the material in a useful and fun manner. He did a great job encouraging class participation. His office hours before the exam were also super helpful.

- [Evaluate the course overall: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]

awesome job

- [Evaluate the course overall: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall: 5 (excellent)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

Fall 2017

Sanjay Misra

Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

Sort responses by overall course rating given: 1 to 5  5 to 1 sort by rating
Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:  -- none --  filter by reason

Amazing
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Obviously chill guy, makes material interesting.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Sanjay knows what he's doing and he is a very effective TF. He is straight to the point with his lectures and his energy generates much enthusiasm for the material. His office hours were really helpful in clarifying material even outside his assigned topics. I was having trouble in the beginning but he was willing to help me devise a better study plan moving forward- he not only teaches the material but he also invests time in helping people succeed in the class, which is unlike most of my TFs at Harvard.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Amazing, so chill and knowledgable. Really helpful and one of the only good things about this class
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

Sanjay was by far the most helpful TF. He knew his material very well and taught very clearly. I appreciated his straightforwardness.
- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]
ECON 1017: A Libertarian Perspective on Economic and Social Policy

Fall 2017

Enrollment: 243   Evaluations: 203   Response Rate: 83.54%

Sanjay Misra

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Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

Sort responses by overall course rating given:  
- 1 to 5  
- 5 to 1  

Filter responses by students' reason for taking this course:
- -- none --  

--- GoodGuy_PresentedMaterial ---

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

--- HeIsTheMan ---

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

--- AmazingTeacher ---

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

--- ProbablyBestTF ---

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]

--- SanjayIsAGod ---

- [Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)]
- [Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: 5 (excellent)]