Teaching Statement

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The opportunity to become a successful, effective teacher in a variety of formats is one of my life goals. The experience I have acquired working at the University of Oregon, Blackburn College and Tucson High Magnet School has equipped me well to meet this goal. I have gained experience teaching mathematics and economics courses as well as upper division courses such as labor economics and econometrics. This gives me the breadth to teach a wide variety of courses.

**Teaching Experience Overview**

From 2015 to 2017, I designed and administered courses on mathematics in Geometry and College Algebra at Tucson High Magnet School. This was a good experience for me because I experienced the rigors of classroom management along with the responsibilities of teaching and developing new courses. It also was helpful because it added to the different audiences that I have taught. These audiences now include high school students, college students and working professionals.

**Teaching Philosophy**

**I believe that every human being is unique**

I believe that each person brings a unique perspective to life and community and that we fundamentally learn in community. In community, we weigh the cost and benefits of decisions and determine courses of action; in community, we approach problems and develop answers and solutions that affect each person involved. I have a vision of a community in which solutions and actions reflect goodness and result in genuine human transformation, intellectually, socially, and spiritually.

**I believe in a balanced approach to teaching.**

The great privilege of the mathematics teacher is the opportunity to develop the intellectual and analytical skills of students so that they can pursue a variety of options in college and career. Every teacher is uniquely gifted on the rote/creativity and individual/group activity scales. Lessons must involve a balance between rote and creative problems and between individual and group activity. Lessons must also be relevant to the problems of life, provide applications that illustrate the usefulness of concepts, and involve relative frequent repetition of important principles. The great task of the teacher is the opportunity to develop a style that promotes understanding and mastery of content so that students are ready for the next step in their lives and gain understanding of their gifts and talents. This occurs through positive behavior reinforcement.

**Transformation is the end of learning.** Transformation begins with self-awareness and skill building and contemplates change both from an individual point of view and a community-wide point of view. Transformation assesses the distinction between genuine knowledge and mere whim, and ponders the end of truth and actions. Who is capable of engendering transformation? We are all learners in the play of life. Nevertheless, as teacher and learner, we are called to treasure each individual, to assess the learning process for each person and for the community as a whole, and to incorporate the demographics of the community into our teaching.

**I believe in the active outline.** Transformation is connected with memory. The interrelationship between transformation, past experience, and future hope affect how we learn as human beings. As a teacher, you participate in a community where you face time constraints with every group of students you encounter. By yourself, you have a limited impact for a brief period of time. One mitigating factor for the brief duration of a course is to develop an active lesson plan for each time that revisits main points and their implications for living and for community. I want to know, ever increasingly, how what students are learning connects to the big picture of their lives.

**Course Development**

The most challenging and important part of developing an effective course is to develop interesting, rewarding problems that engage students and match the ability and background they have in economics. Developing good problems with tractable answers that can be evaluated and that clearly show what students are expected to accomplish will promote learning as much as any new medium or new textbook.

To accomplish this, I formulate a series of problems which students attempt to solve as the course proceeds. In particular, students review reading material and then pose questions in a collaborative fashion, seeking potential solutions. I encourage students not to be bound by feeling they have to have an answer, but to come up with answers that makes sense to them. In this way, I can better match my presentation to the background and understanding of the students.