

I decided to study economics at the undergraduate level because of a deeply inspiring high school economics teacher. I later got involved in research and went on to graduate school, again, because of a dedicated and supportive professor at the University of Toronto (Gustavo Bobonis). I eventually chose to do a PhD in Economics because of the inspiring professors I interacted with at U of T and Stanford. **Having been shaped by inspiring professors, I strongly feel that teaching is one of the channels we can have the most impact on society — via our students.** Whether they become academic colleagues or practitioners, a positive impact during school years can shape choices and interactions later in life.

I have extensive experience in teaching and have always seen my role as an educator as a privilege. Through my experience in both public and private sector settings, I have the relevant tools to discuss examples as well as the theoretical underpinnings of economics and business strategy. **I have found that the more students are able to relate the theoretical concepts discussed in class to real world events and policies, the easier it is for them to absorb new ideas.** I have taught students across all university levels: undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and across Economics and International Development departments, as well as Business and Public Policy schools. Each department and level required a different style and approach, which was challenging as an educator but also exciting.

My teaching approach is to have interactive lectures, engaging students in the topic discussed and promoting a positive space for discussion and joint learning. In the main course I teach at Dyson, Strategy (AEM2601), I want my students to practice engaging in **critical thinking** and feeling comfortable with changing their mind when presented with new information or a new point of view. I generally time each lecture to have a maximum of 5 minutes of me continuously talking at any time, and intersperse core material with class discussions, media (videos or in-class short article readings) and breakout groups. I have always learned everyone's names, and within the first few weeks I noted who would thrive on cold-calling (the extroverts) and who might benefit from chats during the small group sessions instead (so they knew I would not call on them "in the open" but could still check-in on the learning activities).

In March 2020, as a result of the sudden closures as a result of the pandemic, I faced the challenge of pivoting my class online in my first year of teaching at Dyson. Along with my co-instructor, we embraced the challenge and built an interactive online course for our students. We **re-organized the structure** of the lectures and built **new learning tools** to allow students a level of flexibility in absorbing the material while still engaging with their classmates and with us. In subsequent years, following the return to in-class instruction, we have **maintained the best tools** (such as Slack and review videos) and introduced new ones (such as interactive in-class polling via Poll Everywhere). We have a thorough Canvas website, syllabus and generally well-organized course. Still, as every cohort of students is slightly different, we like to check in with mid-semester anonymous surveys to ensure the structures we have set are working for the current year. I have been heartened by the feedback, and **I was happy to see my students' satisfaction reflected in my teaching**

evaluation scores and multiple email and Slack direct messages.

I deeply care about diversity, equity and inclusion. In AEM2601 Strategy, we have built in a number of structures to ensure this is clear to all students and the teaching team (including course assistants). For example, the total number of points in the class are distributed across **different types of assignments** to allow for all types of learning and testing abilities. We have two assignments that require “long form” critical thinking in response to a case reading (“strategic issue memos”), two multiple choice tests, and a final assignment that is a creative group project including a pitch presentation. **Participation** is an important component of the final score, but students have **multiple avenues**: those who feel comfortable speaking in class can voice their opinions “live”, but those who are less extroverted can participate on Slack, via office hours, and via the weekly reading surveys. To encourage those who might want to participate but feel the classroom can be intimidating, I often pick good comments from the reading surveys and showcase them in class either anonymously, or, with permission, attributed to the student. I have also found sending quick **email notes** to students who participate for the first time increases subsequent participation in later classes, **especially for minority and first-generation students.** Finally, we make sure that our case studies and examples in class come from **diverse authors and contexts** and invite students who have knowledge of these backgrounds to help provide context during discussions. Again, we do this both via requesting input in surveys as well as in live engagement.

In all, I very much enjoy teaching. I find myself energized when students tell me they feel like they can be active participants in discussions about economic and business policies, or when they start seeing the world in a different way. I believe economics and strategy is an important subject for life in general, not only for the specific course-related matter. It holds important lessons and ways of thinking and seeing the world, how we work and how we live. I also teach because I derive a deep joy in seeing students understand and master a topic they might have found challenging before, and most of all, I teach because — as cliché as it sounds — my life has been transformed at critical points because of inspiring teachers, and I aspire to be as inspiring to students as my mentors were to me.