

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Jacob Thompson

May 2025

My Teaching Philosophy

I bring nearly a decade of teaching experience in economics, beginning as a tutor in 2015 and serving as an independent instructor since 2019. This sustained engagement across course levels and formats has shaped a teaching philosophy grounded in clarity, structure, and purpose. My goal is not just to teach economic content, but to transform how students think—helping them apply economic reasoning to the full range of decisions they face, especially those outside the usual domains of markets and money.

At the heart of my approach is a backwards design philosophy. I begin each course by asking: what kind of thinker should students become? The answer is consistent: someone who can use economics to make sense of choices in everyday life—decisions about health, education, relationships, crime, and personal values—not just those involving GDP or inflation. I work backward from this goal to build lectures, assignments, and assessments that emphasize application and transfer of knowledge.

In the classroom, I rely on direct instruction paired with structured practice and worked examples. I make extensive use of platforms like Canvas, Cengage's MindTap, and Squarecap to reinforce concepts, track understanding, and provide timely feedback. A recent example of my teaching style can be seen in my recorded lecture on the economics of fairness and redistribution, available [here](#). The video illustrates my use of analogies, scaffolding, and visual cues to convey core concepts in a memorable and accessible way.

Across courses like Principles of Microeconomics and Macroeconomics, Public Economics, and Intermediate Macroeconomics, I've learned to tailor instruction to diverse student backgrounds. My assignments focus on economic reasoning, not recall—rewarding students for applying core tools like marginal analysis and opportunity cost to issues they care about. Whether we're analyzing housing policy, dating apps, or behavioral nudges, I challenge students to think critically and creatively using economic logic.

Ultimately, I see teaching as a transformational process. If students leave my course seeing trade-offs in a personal decision, incentives in a social issue, or

unintended consequences in a policy debate, then I know they've gained not just knowledge, but a lifelong analytical framework.