

## Teaching Statement

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I have strived to integrate my dual responsibilities as a teacher and researcher. I believe that effectiveness in mentorship and research can go hand in hand, and this philosophy has guided my interaction with students. I also believe that instruction should not only teach the fundamental building blocks of economic theory and statistics, but also inspire students to apply these methods to ask their own questions. In my mentorship, I have recruited over 15 students as research assistants, with a team that is diverse in gender, nationality, and academic major. This statement will illustrate how I have implemented my teaching philosophy through my interactions with two students.

Over the last two years, I have had an opportunity to mentor Bailey Kraus and Michael Duarte, two undergraduate students at Columbia University. They have developed both as research assistants and independent scholars under my supervision. I first served as their direct research supervisor and then guided completion of their independent undergraduate theses, making me familiar with their academic works. In early 2021, I posted an advertisement seeking to recruit students interested in assisting with research in labor economics. I was studying how non-compete agreements affect worker outcomes and sought to collaborate with undergraduate students seeking to gain experience with the nuts and bolts of academic research.<sup>1</sup> Bailey and Michael eagerly reached out, both with a curiosity on how to transform a research question into a concrete paper.

Academic economists must be comfortable with reading published literature, so I started the mentorship process by asking Bailey and Michael to become familiar with related literature. They read and neatly summarized papers related to monopsony power – how the ability of firms to set wages affects employment and job mobility decisions. These summaries were compartmentalized into sections that described the research question, data used, empirical strategy, conclusions, and strengths and weaknesses. The organized structure of the review ensured that I could review the material years later if needed. By providing a detailed rubric, my students were able to focus on the content most pertinent to understanding the paper's main concepts. This example provides one illustration of how I've attempted to harmonize my roles as a teacher and researcher.

Empirically minded economists must also have a mastery of working with data. To make progress on my dissertation and to develop my students' research skills, I asked Bailey and Michael to perform statistical analysis using the Stata programming language. My study used publicly available data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, and I asked my students to present descriptive statistics. At the time, Bailey and Michael were unfamiliar with statistical programming, so I directed them to the appropriate online resources. They absorbed the material

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<sup>1</sup> Non-compete clauses are provisions within employment contracts that prevent workers from joining competing firms.

quickly, learning how to code for-loops, while-statements, and manage large datasets. After establishing a foundation in statistical programming, I asked Bailey and Michael to run multivariate regressions. They found that after controlling for tenure and potential experience, non-compete signers have higher wages than those without such agreements. Through this experience, my students gained exposure in applying statistical techniques and resulted in output that I'm integrating in a working paper. It also developed them with the skills required to conduct independent research.

When Bailey and Michael entered their senior year, I encouraged them to write an undergraduate thesis. By that time, they both had clearly expressed an interest in pursuing higher studies. I mentioned that one of the best ways to gain research experience and prepare a strong application for graduate school is to conduct independent research. Since both students had already gained familiarity with the NLSY data, I suggested they choose a topic that could be answered using the data source. That way they could quickly write their senior thesis while continuing to provide excellent work as research assistants.

Under my supervision, Bailey and Michael successfully completed their undergraduate theses and developed the skills required to perform independent research. Bailey linked the NLSY79 and NLSY97 datasets to study whether maternal sports participation has a causal impact on children's sports participation. He uses Title IX legislation from the 1970s as an instrument for maternal sports participation and finds minimal impacts. Similarly, Michael used the NLSY97 to study the effects of a 2007 federal reform that increased minimum wages. He tracks the outcomes of workers who earned below the minimum wage prior to the policy and shows that the workers remaining employed earned higher wages after the policy. Both students became invaluable research assistants, and Michael earned departmental honors for his senior thesis.

These mentorship experiences were not only academically productive, but also emotionally rewarding. They provided continued motivation for me to finish my research and have inspired Bailey and Michael to pursue a PhD in economics. In preparation, Bailey is currently working as a full-time staff member at the New York Federal Reserve and Michael as a full-time research assistant under David Weinstein at Columbia University. Overall, my experiences of guiding Bailey and Michael illustrate my philosophy of integrating teaching and research. In teaching, I provide clear objectives and expect my students to develop creative ideas. In the two semesters I have taught, I have received excellent reviews and recruited multiple students as research assistants. As a faculty member, I will continue pursuing research excellence while making the profession accessible to a broad audience.