

Yangbo (Darcy) SONG

UCLA Economics Department, 8283 Bunche Hall, Los Angeles, CA 90095, USA

+1 424-298-0463, darcy07@ucla.edu, yangbosong@gmail.com

<http://yangbosong.weebly.com>

Teaching Statement

In the past four years at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), I have been a Teaching Assistant for various undergraduate courses such as Microeconomic Theory, Macroeconomic Theory and Statistics, a Teaching Assistant for Graduate Game Theory to Ph.D. students, and an Instructor for Pricing and Strategy, an upper-division course at the undergraduate level. I have benefited from and enjoyed teaching each class. Teaching Pricing and Strategy has been a welcome challenge, since it attracts students with very different backgrounds. The major of attending students varies from mathematics to business economics, and the year from sophomore to senior.

I believe that there are two key challenges in teaching this class. On one hand, as an upper-division course in economics it requires good balance between theory and applications. This is especially important since a successful completion of the course requires students to be able to solve mathematical models as well as to apply the implications to practical examples. I believe to have succeeded in balancing the two aspects by first motivating problems via real-life scenarios such as auctions, student discount, merger and acquisition, etc., and then providing an in-depth theoretical analysis. On the other hand, it is of my great concern that students from different academic backgrounds can keep up with the pace and difficulty level of the course. To achieve this goal, I have strived to make the material more accessible to students with relatively weak statistical and mathematics background, and to introduce more straight forward and systematic methodologies in lectures. In addition, I have provided a number of numerical exercises for every theoretical model, and encouraged in-class discussions for more advanced problems.

Besides helping students achieve good academic performance, one of my major objectives is to encourage communication among a diverse student body and promote learning in the context of cultural differences. In class, I tried my best to inspire students to analyze an economic problem based on their own background and experience. For instance, in a discussion section on macroeconomics, I would raise the general question of what may cause inflation, and ask students to share opinions by inspecting the economy of the country of their origin. To my amazement, from time to time students provided such in-depth answers that totally reshaped others' perspectives on their own country. Discussions like this turned out to be a valuable learning experience for everyone. In the future, I plan to mentor students

in undergraduate research on cultural differences or underrepresented groups. I look forward to helping establish a more diverse faculty, staff and student body that achieves both academic excellence and cultural richness.