

Teaching Statement

“Better to illuminate than merely to shine, to deliver to others contemplated truths than merely to contemplate” ~St. Thomas Aquinas

I owe my passion for learning to those instructors who demanded my best. An instructor truly interested in students’ learning process demands the best of them and wants to awaken students’ curiosity. My approach to teaching is based on the discussion of problems that focus on fundamentals, rather than on merely illustrations of the material. Nevertheless, such discussions are left on the abstract plane if they are not based on concrete real-world problems the students can relate to. Thus, I believe my experience in the financial industry is valuable in the classroom. Working for Algorithmics, a financial software and consulting firm, has not only exposed me to concrete real-world problems that need practical, yet theoretically sound, solutions but it has also given me opportunities to work with clients from major financial institutions and major technology firms. In each case, I needed to explain our solutions to a wide range of individuals with different backgrounds and interests. I believe my real-world industrial and consulting experience will allow me to bring to life the concepts and models taught in financial engineering courses and will enrich the classroom experience for students at all levels, from undergraduate to professional masters to doctoral.

From my extensive experience as a teaching assistant at Northwestern I learned that the important challenge in the classroom is to connect to your audience and awaken students’ curiosity. Practical team projects is an effective resource to motivate the discussion among students since it creates a sense of responsibility to actively contribute in the team’s project. Similarly, challenging homework problems are helpful to keep the student’s focus on the subject while providing constructive feedback on students’ work is important to encourage and motivate students. I have assisted and substituted for the instructors in the following courses: Introduction to Financial Engineering (undergraduate level), Financial Engineering (graduate level), and Organizational Behavior (undergraduate level). This coming Spring I am appointed to teach an undergraduate course IEMS 326 Economics and Finance for Engineers at Northwestern. I am looking forward to this opportunity to teach at Northwestern and I believe this experience will help me with teaching assignments next year as a new faculty member.

I am interested in teaching courses in financial engineering, credit markets, risk management, derivative securities, engineering economics, stochastic modeling, probability, and statistics.