Teaching Statement

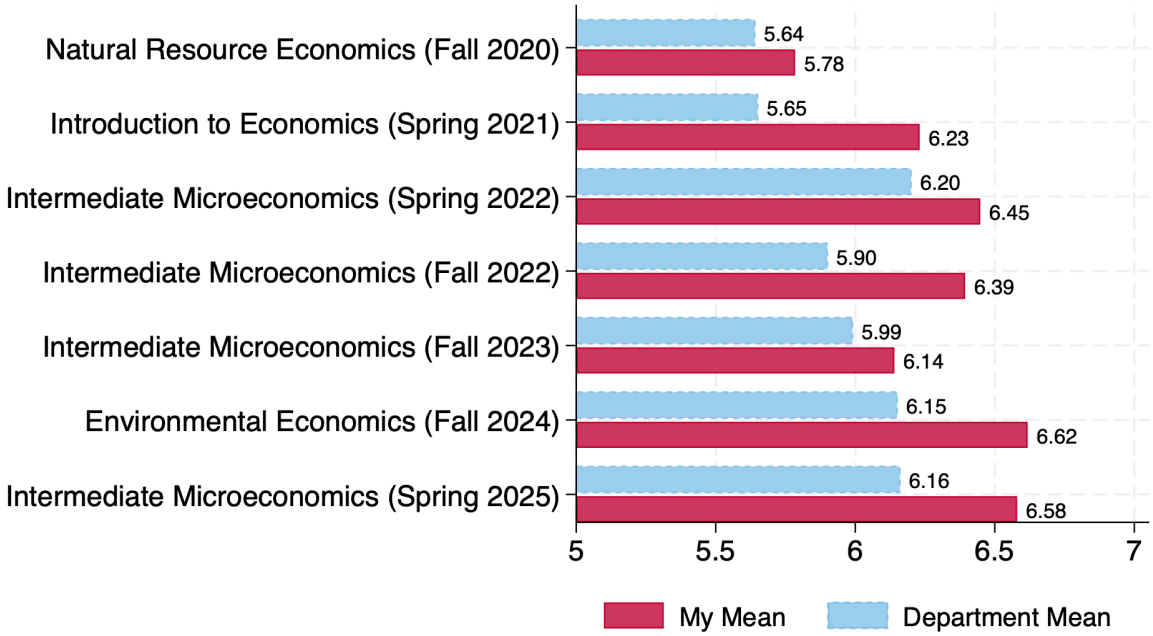
Chiman Cheung

Courses Taught: Introduction to Economics (Undergrad), Intermediate Microeconomics (Undergrad), Environmental Economics (Undergrad), Natural Resource Economics (Undergrad), Data and Decision (Fall 2025, MBA)

Courses Available to Teach at the Graduate Level: Development Economics, Political Economy, Microeconomics, Applied Econometrics, Survey Design and Policy Evaluation, Data and Decisions

Courses Available to Teach at the Undergraduate Level: All

Teaching Evaluations - Overall Summary (Out of 7)



1. My median evaluation was 6 in my first two semesters and has been 7 for the five subsequent semesters since 2022.
2. The full course title for 'Intermediate Microeconomics' is 'Intermediate Microeconomics with Applications to Sustainability'.

Teaching Training: Teaching Pedagogy Course, Teaching Workshop: "How Students Learn", Graduate Remote Instruction Innovation Fellowship Program

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is built on three core pillars: conceptual clarity, adaptive pedagogy, and supportive mentorship. This statement details (1) my commitment to making economics a cohesive and intuitive subject, (2) the structured, feedback-driven approach I use to manage diverse classrooms, and (3) how I cultivate a respectful learning environment. Following each section, I have included supporting comments from my student evaluations. The full set of evaluation reports is available on my teaching page: https://chimancheung.github.io/teaching/.

The central appeal of economics, and the essence of what I convey to my students, is its capacity to provide powerful analytical tools for studying human behavior, utilizing both established theory and rigorous data. My primary teaching goal is to demonstrate that economics constitutes a clear, cohesive knowledge system, rather than a mere collection of separate topics. To achieve this, I focus on seamlessly linking the mathematical framework of a model to its foundational economic intuition, reinforced with graphs whenever possible. This pedagogical approach ensures that students move beyond rote problem-solving to grasp the full conceptual landscape. Ultimately, I aim to empower every student to critically evaluate evidence, synthesize seemingly disparate concepts, and acquire the technical proficiency necessary to defend their own data-driven conclusions.

> “ He is very clear about the whole knowledge system. He knows how to interpret well for us and is very patient at answering any questions. ”

> “ Really passionate and driven to his work! Helped a lot with mathematical concepts and connecting them to previous econ knowledge and intuition. ”

> “ He is good at covering content quickly and concisely and makes good use of graphs and visuals to represent concepts. ”

My teaching experience at UC Berkeley has included instructing diverse cohorts across both the undergraduate and MBA programs, engaging students who possess a wide spectrum of prior academic preparation. I turn the pedagogical challenge of diverse student preparation into a strength by implementing a structured, feedback-driven approach that I expect to continue and improve on as a faculty member. My structured steps include: (1) inspecting past course reviews to understand course weaknesses; (2) obtaining early-semester formal student feedback on baseline knowledge and learning goals; (3) updating section structure and material to emphasize critical analysis and reasoning; (4) designing assignments with questions of varying difficulty to

challenge all students; (5) prioritizing in-class interactions and assignments that relied on group learning, engaging more advanced students while supporting struggling ones; (6) obtaining mid-semester feedback on suggestions for improvement. The goal of this process is to create a dynamic lesson that identifies and fills knowledge gaps, rather than simply "going through the motions."

> “ I appreciated how he focused the class’s work on section exercises on the most challenging problems so we could spend the most of our limited time on gaining the deepest possible understanding. ”

> “ Chiman never just goes through the motions of a worksheet and instead picks out the concepts we need to learn and teaches us those concepts. The ability to create a mini-lesson and identify what students actually do and don’t know is the mark of an incredible teacher. ”

A key component of my pedagogy is to interact with students with humility and respect, as I believe the majority of their learning happens outside the classroom. I strive to make office hours a non-judgmental and collaborative space where students feel comfortable articulating their concerns and we can make a plan for their success. I am committed to being a supportive mentor, especially for students who may feel discouraged. This means creating a space where students feel safe to participate, interrupt with questions, and be met with patience, showing them that I genuinely care about their success as individuals.

> “ Chiman was the most supportive GSI I have had... I came to him during office hours to explain my concerns... and Chiman helped me make a plan to succeed. ... Although I started off without a strong economics background, Chiman was never discouraging and actively rooted for my success. ”

> “ He encouraged us to interrupt him whenever we had questions in class and answered all of them effectively. His section was very helpful in helping me understand the course material. ”

> “ I really appreciate how patient he is when answering questions during class and OH, and in general, he’s very welcoming and kind to talk to... it’s clear he really cares about the students. ”

> “ Chiman has been the best GSI I have ever had – and I have had pretty good ones in the past... You can tell he really cares about the students’ understanding and wants us to feel as prepared and stress–free as possible. ”

Mentorship and Professional Development

I view mentoring as one of my most important responsibilities, driven by the guidance I have received from my own incredible mentors. This commitment extends beyond the classroom and into structured research training programs.

My mentorship experience focuses on empowering rising scholars to translate local knowledge into rigorous, policy-relevant research:

- **Academic Mentorship (Undergraduate):** I have had the privilege of mentoring three undergraduate students through UC Berkeley's Social Science Research Pathway Program. I tailored data analysis tasks to their skill levels and guided them toward external resources for self-study and skill development, helping them gain hands-on exposure to academic research.
- **International Research Mentorship (CEGA):** I served as a research mentor for the CEGA Research Fellowship Program, working weekly with a scholar from The Gambia. I guided her on the formulation and design of a randomized controlled trial on early childhood education, helping her position the study within the broader literature so that its insights extend beyond the context of her home country.
- **Field Team Training:** During my time working in Ghana, I led and managed large teams of enumerators and research assistants. I developed and delivered over five technical trainings on impact evaluation and research best practices.

Supporting these rising economists is something I genuinely enjoy and excel at. I continue to offer support by consulting on application materials and writing letters of recommendation for former students and team members pursuing further education, helping them advance their careers.