

I have had the privilege of serving as an instructor at the University of Notre Dame for five years. This document outlines the evolution of my involvement with the university in three sections reflecting my primary job responsibilities: teaching, advising, and service. When I arrived, I was immediately put in a position to succeed by my direct supervisors: the chair of the department, Bill Evans, and the director of undergraduate studies, Mary Flannery.

Initially, my core responsibility was to teach three sections of principles of microeconomics and I was shielded from a large amount of advising and service responsibilities. As my time with the university has grown, I have become more efficient at my core job responsibilities, allowing me to maintain my initial responsibilities and also expand them. Because of this gradual expansion, it is easiest to present each section as a timeline.

Teaching

This section outlines i) teaching I have done within the economics department, ii) teaching I have done for the university outside of the economics department, iii) teaching I have done outside of the university, and iv) a brief summary of professional development, my teaching philosophy, and selected student feedback.

In my first semester at the university, I was asked to teach three sections of principles of microeconomics (75% of my contract is related to teaching; the other 25% is related to advising). These sections were large relative to the average class size on campus – 132 students across three sections – but small relative to the typical principles of microeconomics course enrollment (approximately 100 students per section). As mentioned above, I was immediately put in a position to succeed. I had the entire summer following the completion of my Ph.D. to prepare one course.

Over the past five years, I have been able to build off of that foundation. Across eight semesters I have taught 1,589 students principles of microeconomics in 20 separate sections. As I have had the opportunity to enrich and expand the course materials, enrollments have also expanded. I am scheduled to teach two sections with approximately 130 students each in the fall of 2020.

In my fourth semester at the university, I replaced one section of principles of microeconomics with the international economics senior research project course. The international economics major is relatively small – 15-30 graduating students on average – and one requirement for completion of the major is a one semester independent research project. In this course, I supervise these projects. This involves weekly two and a half hour group meetings and half hour individual meetings with each student (8-12 per semester). In the spring of 2021 I am also

scheduled to replace Mary Flannery as the co-instructor of the one credit hour exploring international economics course.

In my fifth semester, I replaced one section of principles of microeconomics with intermediate microeconomic theory: a required course that follows principles of microeconomics. Across four semesters I have taught 377 students in this course in six separate sections. I am currently scheduled to teach a section of intermediate microeconomic theory with approximately 80 students in the fall of 2020.

These three courses comprise my core teaching responsibilities for the economics department. My primary teaching responsibilities for the university outside of the economics department – teaching at Westville Correctional Facility, with Notre Dame International, and with the Moreau First Year Experience – are outlined next.

The Moreau College Initiative is a collaboration between the University of Notre Dame and Holy Cross College that offers Holy Cross two- and four-year degrees to inmates at Westville Correctional Facility: a state-run prison approximately 45 miles to the west of South Bend. During the spring 2018 semester, I taught a principles of macroeconomics course for 12 inmates. Prior to the current crisis, courses were held in person at the facility for three hours once a week. This was followed by principles of microeconomics in spring 2019 and introduction to statistics in spring 2020. I will be teaching principles of microeconomics remotely in the fall of 2020 in a manner similar to what occurred in the middle of the spring 2020 semester after the facility went into lockdown.

During 2016, 2018, and 2019, I taught for Notre Dame International's iLED and iESR summer programs. These are opportunities for international high school students to come to Notre Dame for 2-3 weeks and learn about leadership, entrepreneurship, and social responsibility.

In the fall of 2019 I began teaching with the Moreau First Year Experience (from here on referred to simply as Moreau). This one credit hour course meets once a week for 50 minutes and covers a variety of topics related to the university's history and vision, as well as issues that are important to the transition to college life. I was inspired to join this program based on examples set by other members of the university community. One of the features of Notre Dame that has made the largest impression on me is a general commitment to excellence by members of the community. I have heard a wide variety of positive and negative experiences from students related to Moreau. Given that we have committed to this program (which has significantly improved and evolved over the past five years), I feel that we have a responsibility to do it well. I believe I am in a position to help this program succeed and have done my best to contribute. I again taught Moreau in the spring of 2020 and will continue to be involved with this program in the future.

These opportunities provided by the university have allowed me to represent the university's mission to different populations (Westville, ND International) and in ways not directly related to economics (Moreau). More generally, I am incredibly

fortunate to teach a wide range of undergraduate students – from first semester freshmen in Moreau and principles of micro, to sophomores and juniors in intermediate microeconomic theory, to seniors in the international economics senior research project, to non-traditional students at Westville Correctional Facility. Seeing students at every arc of their undergraduate education is one of the great joys afforded to me by the university in my current position.

In addition to my teaching responsibilities at the University of Notre Dame, I have had the privilege to teach students around the world. In 2017 I taught a global markets and institutions course for the cross-continent MBA program in Duke's Fuqua School of Business as well as an introductory statistics course for their Master of Data Analytics program. In 2019, I was a visiting professor at the Universidad de Concepción and co-taught a graduate course on estimating models of consumer demand. Also in 2019, I taught principles of microeconomics and principles of macroeconomics at the Dongbei University of Finance and Economics. In 2020, I taught two principles of microeconomics courses to high school students through a program offered through Saint Louis University. These opportunities have helped me both develop professionally and represent and spread the university's mission to a broader range of students.

To conclude this section on teaching, I will discuss professional development I have undertaken beyond what is outlined above, my teaching philosophy, and student feedback I have received.

I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to serve as a faculty fellow for the Kaneb Center starting in 2019. I have had a relationship with members of this center since arriving at Notre Dame. Kevin Barry, the senior director of ND Learning, worked with me in the fall of 2015 as a peer evaluator. Since then, I have received and implemented advice from him and other members of the Kaneb Center. I received the Prochaska grant in 2017 to attend the Wakonse Teaching Conference. I am currently participating in the strategic digital initiative over the summer of 2020 to design video materials and modify course content to best serve students as we adjust to teaching in person with a portion of students participating remotely. In addition to working with the Kaneb Center, I have worked to continue to develop professionally with resources available outside the university. For example, I was selected to participate in the two week Duke History of Political Economy Summer Institute in 2017.

In terms of my personal teaching philosophy, I would prefer to let student feedback shed light on my teaching rather than provide the cliché platitudes that typically patch these documents together. In my third year at the university I was awarded the Madden Award, which recognizes impact on first year students. I am extremely proud of this achievement because I believe it acknowledges my effort to provide more than just an education of the mind. In the award nomination, I was asked to share selected student comments from CIFs. I will share one that I believe exemplifies the experience I strive to provide all students:

Holy Moly, Professor Spence, you are one of the greatest professors I have ever had! Your method of teaching is clear, your diction is understandable, you're funny, you make a class of 90 feel like a class of 9. You introduced micro to us as a concept but then also seamlessly showed both its implementation in the real world and the benefit it provides society from a very clear adherence to Moreau's mandate "the mind shall not be educated at the expense of the heart". You have an amazing gift for teaching and I enjoyed every moment of class with you. Thank you so very much.

I work incredibly hard to honor each of the five pillars of a Holy Cross Education and to serve as a role model for students; I believe the student feedback I have received while at Notre Dame is the best evidence of this.

Advising

In the same regards as teaching, I was put in a position to succeed in my undergraduate advising responsibilities from the beginning of my time at Notre Dame. During the first year, I shadowed Mary Flannery and Eva Dziadula. Both of these individuals were incredibly generous with their time and patient as I learned the minutiae related to managing our undergraduate major in the context of the broader operations of the university. Initially, beyond learning the ropes, my job responsibilities were minimal: processing graduation checks, attending undergraduate major events, and administering PINs.

Over the course of five years, these job responsibilities have significantly expanded. Without going into unnecessarily tedious detail, the following is a list of my primary job responsibilities related to advising: managing daily eForm submissions for major and minor changes, add/drop requests, transfer course approvals, and part-time student requests, distributing PINs and hosting PIN meetings for undergraduate majors, creating advising videos for email and website distribution, reserving 4-6 hours a week for drop-in and scheduled advising hours, approving student study abroad requests, participating in majors night and admitted students A&L orientation, managing course overrides, meeting with fellow members of the undergraduate studies committee, managing the major's peer tutoring program, coordinating departmental exams and finals, and organizing and writing applications for new core curriculum course attributes (e.g., WRIT and WKSS).

I have found these advising responsibilities to be surprisingly rewarding. They have allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of how the undergraduate program runs, provide my own suggestions and feedback, and stay in touch with former students. As Mary Flannery moves to the Arts and Letters dean's office, the responsibilities listed above and others will now be managed by myself, Eva Dziadula, and the incoming director of undergraduate studies Timothy Dunne.

Service

Beyond the student feedback shown on my CIFs, I believe the best evidence of my commitment to student engagement is outlined in this section. The following section outlines my service involvement with i) one-on-one engagements with students, ii) student organizations and dorms, iii) the economics department, and iv) various other university organizations.:

During my time at the university I have counseled numerous students on decisions related to graduate school, and taught or advised the following one-on-one student-centered projects:

- 7 students doing independent lab research: a 1-3 credit hour course focused on an independent research project
- 3 students doing directed readings: a 1 credit hour course centered around a book and set of articles
- 3 students completing an international economics senior research project in the fall (outside of the students I direct in the spring)
- 1 student completing a Glynn honors thesis
- 1 student completing an economics senior honors thesis

I have also had the privilege of being involved with a number of student organizations and dorms over the past five years. By far, the most time intensive of these is a student club named the Federal Reserve and Fiscal Challenge Club (from here on referred to as FFC). This club was established in 2016 by myself, a member of Mendoza's finance department Jason Reed, and (at the time) a sophomore named Adam Kulam. The primary goal of the club is to compete in inter-university competitions related to monetary policy (Fed Challenge) in the fall and fiscal policy (Fiscal Challenge) in the spring.

Our first competition took place in the spring of 2017 and the five-member team was composed of the only members of the club at the time. Our team was selected out of 20+ universities as one of the four finalists in the Fiscal Challenge. The finals took place in Washington D.C. and the seven of us flew to D.C. for the weekend and took first place, with Harvard University finishing second. We have continued to have success in this competition: finishing either first or second place overall in each year since 2017.

The club has expanded to over thirty active members as of the end of the spring of 2020. This is likely the steady state number of members, as getting thirty members involved is already difficult when only five students can take part in the official competition. We meet weekly during the school year for two hours each Sunday and meet weekly over the summer for an hour each Saturday. The students involved appreciate being able to take the theoretical work they do in their course work and apply it to real time problems related to monetary and fiscal policy. It is

also a joy for me to work with students who - already overworked - put in countless hours simply because they are intrinsically motivated to learn more about macroeconomic issues and enjoy competition. We have become a very tight knit group and supplement our regular meetings revolving around the competition with additional events: hosting mock competitions with faculty from the economics department and Mendoza, traveling to D.C. and Chicago for competitions, holding end of semester dinners at the faculty advisors' homes, hosting additional events such as UpToUs and bringing guests to campus such as the vice president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. Jason and I are currently applying to team teach a two-credit course in the spring of 2021 as service with the goal of training students to be a part of the Fed Challenge in future semesters. In addition to being involved with the FFC, I have also at various times been the faculty advisor for NDSpeaks, the Notre Dame Libertarian Club (despite telling them that I'm not a libertarian), and the Notre Dame Curling Club.

I have been honored to be invited to give a number of talks on campus and engage with students in my home. In 2017, I hosted a number of students for an Arts & Letters Den Dialog. In 2018, I gave talks for Keenan Hall on the U.S. / China trade war, for Duncan Hall's Man of Character lecture series, and for the N.D. Economics Club. In 2019 I was the keynote speaker for Dunne Hall's annual feast. I also gave a talk on economics as the dismal science for an Arts & Letters Junior Parent Weekend event in 2020.

In addition to talks, I have been involved with other extracurricular events. I have had the unenviable job of dressing up as Santa for a charity event on campus a number of times. In 2019, my wife and I served mocktails with Fr. Pete for the Junior Class Council's Snow Dance. I also had the dubious honor of finishing second in the voting for a pie your professor event.

Within the department, I have been able to contribute in terms of service in a number of ways. The most time-intensive of these has been working with the graduate student instructors of the statistics for economics course. Prior to the 2019-2020 academic year, the department decided to make improving this course a point of emphasis. I volunteered to lead this effort and mentored four fourth-year Ph.D. students starting in the fall of 2019. This involved weekly meetings and the creation of a number of shared materials: a syllabus, problem sets, video solutions, practice exams, and lecture templates. This collaboration generated a richer and more uniform experience for students, exposed the graduate students to strong pedagogical practices including the use of technologies such as Explain Everything (for the creation of video content) and response cards (or "clickers"), and also allowed the graduate students to benefit from sharing teaching materials with each other. In addition to this I have conducted peer evaluations for graduate students and faculty members, held mock job interviews, met with job market candidates, and co-hosted a number of economics department social events.

I have made similar contributions outside of the department. These include mentoring a Hesburgh-Yusko Scholar student, participating in six mock interviews for Rhodes, Fulbright, and Marshall scholarships, having meals with job market candidates in German and ND Learning, and participating in job market workshops for ND learning.

Conclusion

I would like to reiterate how fortunate I have been in this position. I was immediately put in a position to succeed and given the freedom to slowly take on additional job responsibilities in areas where I can make the largest impact. Although Bill Evans and Mary Flannery are moving out of positions as chair and DUS, I am grateful that they are being replaced by Eric Sims and Timothy Dunne: two men whom I have great confidence in and respect for. I believe that I will continue to be able to grow professionally and expand my responsibilities under their leadership.

To conclude, I would like to share an experience I had in the summer of 2019. I received my Ph.D. from UNC-Chapel Hill and still feel very connected to the area (near my family) and university. I was offered a position as a lecturer in UNC's economics department. Previously, this had been what I had thought of as my dream job. In fact, I had tried to take exactly this position during my fifth year of graduate school before my advisor ultimately sank it (with the good intentions of protecting my ability to get a tenure track position in the future). Although tenure track offers at R1 universities ultimately did come, at that point I had confidence that Notre Dame offered me the position that was the best fit for my preferences and skill set. Despite challenges and outside opportunities, I have never wavered from that belief. When UNC offered me what I had previously thought was my dream job, I was elated not because I had the offer, but that I didn't give it a moment of serious consideration. At the risk of sounding cliché, I will end by saying that this made me realize I already have my dream job. I hope the University of Notre Dame will allow me to continue to be a member of this community for the rest of my career.