

# Teaching Statement

Riley League

PhD Candidate in Economics, Duke University

September 2022

As a graduate of a small, liberal arts college, I have a deep appreciation for teaching and learning. In my time at Davidson and Duke, I have had the opportunity to teach a wide variety of classes to rich diversity of students across multiple modalities. I have served as a teaching assistant for undergraduate, MBA, executive master's, and PhD level courses and single-handedly developed and delivered recorded materials for a preparatory course for an executive master's program. Teaching this wide range of students both in-person and virtually, synchronously and asynchronously has prepared me well for shepherding students of all kinds along their educational journey and helped me develop a teaching philosophy grounded in careful planning, intentional openness, and caring support.

Developing pre-recorded materials for Fuqua's Master's in Science in Quantitative Management program taught me the importance of preparation, polish, and professionalism. Before recording the course materials in the business school's studio, planning was paramount. Beyond developing dynamic slide shows and a compelling script, I practiced for the recordings by perfecting my delivery, tone, inflections, and body language to ensure that the recordings would convey the excitement I wanted the students to feel at learning the material while remaining clear, easy to understand, and forthright. As unnatural as it felt speaking to a hidden camera in an empty room, I understood that fostering an engaging presence was crucial to maintaining the attention of students who would be consuming the content in a similar state of isolation.

In addition to the importance of preparedness, my teaching philosophy emphasizes compassion, understanding, and openness. When serving as a teaching assistant for the first-year economics PhD microeconomics sequence, I made it clear to the students that the material was genuinely difficult and that I had struggled in the course as well. By being open about the challenges I had faced, I was able to foster a community of openness and help-seeking among the students. Students were willing and eager to attend TA sessions, come to office hours, and schedule additional time to go over the material. Importantly, I fully embraced this hunger for additional help, prioritizing being available to meet my students' needs. My belief in the importance of a welcoming classroom environment was further strengthened in the Teaching Diverse Learners course I took in my time at Duke. This course taught me several tangible actions to take and methods to employ to foster an open community where engagement and risk-taking were encouraged, from crafting an inclusive syllabus to structuring small and large group discussions to ensure all voices are heard. These tools have further equipped me to implement my philosophy of maximal support for students.

My wide variety of teaching experiences have prepared me well to continue implementing my teaching philosophy and to be an effective instructor and mentor to all students. I am confident and eager to apply my skills in my next position.