

Lars Lønstrup

Interdisciplinary Centre on Population Dynamics – Four Faculties Affiliates

Email: loe@sam.sdu.dk



Teaching Philosophy

The three keywords of my teaching philosophy are interest, incentives and interactivity.

My view of teaching is influenced by the theory of situated learning. I believe that knowledge is situated to a specific social context, and therefore, to learn economics, students have to learn to think as economists think.

I strongly believe that the interchange of ideas, questions, problems and their solutions, both among students, and between students and their lecturer, is what makes students acquire deep learning. Accordingly, the pedagogical initiatives I have conducted, all aim at engaging the students to be active participants of the course.

Interest and learning

I believe that the most important task for a lecturer is to awaken the curiosity in each student. If the lecturer succeeds on this task, students simply cannot avoid to learn. This, naturally, begs the question: how do I, as a lecturer, make students curious about my course? One common characteristic of inspiring lecturers, who made me fascinated and curious, was that they, themselves, were fascinated and curious about the topic. In a nutshell, a lecturer should strive to transmit his/her fascination of the topic in an enthusiastic way. To do that, I always begin each course, and even each lecture, by telling why I am fascinated about the topic and why it matter and what questions it triggered in my mind. I believe that the most important factor for fostering such engagement in my teaching is to teach courses that are (at least vaguely) based on my own research. Thus, while other initiatives can all stimulate learning, the curiosity of the students is, in my opinion, instrumental for deep learning.

Incentives and learning

Unfortunately, it is only in an ideal world that every student becomes fascinated in the courses I am teaching. In reality, some students do not share your fascination about the topic. This tendency is strengthened by the emergence of the mass university with more students and, as a consequence, more variety among students in their qualifications. This tendency implies that more students only have a single incentive to study: to pass the exam. In my opinion, this makes the exam the most important part of building an incentive structure that maximizes learning for each individual student. Accordingly, the exam has to be constructed such that the questions comprise enough variation in the level of difficulty that allows a grading that rewards hard work and therefore reflects the variety in performance among students. This makes the course description a valuable tool since it provides a formalized specification of learning goals for each grade.

Interactivity and learning

Interactivity between students and the lecturer is, in my perspective, the crucial mechanism that creates deep learning. In the first part of a course, I try to set the stage. I show not only the solution to a problem, but also how I think about the problem and the approaches economists use to solve such problems. After some time, when they begin to learn the “language”, the goal is to open up for interactivity. This gives me valuable information about the progress of the students, and gives the students feedback and more information about how I think that they should think about a problem. To stimulate interactivity, I think it is crucial to treat students with respect and take their ideas and comments and questions seriously. In doing this, I try to create a safe learning environment where students are not afraid, but rather encouraged, to ask critical questions during class.

Teaching CV

2018 Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, Econ, SDU), Methods for Economic Dynamics (BA, Econ, SDU),
Advanced Macroeconomics (Master, Econ, SDU)

2017 Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, ECON, SDU), Methods for Economic Dynamics (BA, Econ, SDU),
Advanced Macroeconomics (Master, Econ, SDU)

2016 Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, ECON, SDU), Methods for Economic Dynamics (BA, Econ, SDU),
Advanced Macroeconomics (Master, Econ, SDU)

2015 Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, ECON, SDU), Methods for Economic Dynamics (BA, Econ, SDU),

2014 Advanced Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, Econ, SDU), Intermediate Macroeconomics (BA, Econ, SDU)

2013 Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, Econ, SDU), Advanced Macroeconomic Analysis (BA, Econ, SDU),

2011 Financial Risk Management (BA, Business Econ, SDU)

2009 Intermediate Microeconomics (BA, Econ, SDU)

2008 Intermediate Microeconomics (BA, Econ, SDU)