Teaching Statement
Elif Burcu Dilden

I have been the primary instructor for nine economics courses while a graduate student at Kansas State University. I have taught in a variety of different teaching settings - including first-year seminar, honors, and distance (online) classes - with sizes ranging from six to ninety-nine students. My main goals as an instructor are to **1) create a diverse, inclusive and supportive environment, 2) use active learning techniques, and 3) establish a productive learning environment.**

I have been successful in achieving my first goal as evidenced by my high TEVAL scores for "interest in helping students learn" (4.6/5 for the most recent course) and "willingness to help outside of class" (4.8/5 for the most recent course). As additional evidence of my commitment to creating a diverse, inclusive and supportive environment, I helped organize a Women in Economics networking event through my role as President of Women in Economics. Through completing both the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Professional Development Series (offered by the Teaching and Learning Center) and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) Certificate in Effective Teaching Practices, I have learned about and implemented many active learning techniques which have improved student engagement. Due to my teaching strengths, I have been awarded the Department of Economics Teaching Award for excellence in undergraduate-level teaching in 2020.

Goal 1: Create a diverse, inclusive and supportive learning environment
Starting in the first week of class, I memorize student names and encourage student participation by having think-pair-share activities in class. I support students by being willing and able to help students outside of class by appointment or by hosting more office hours than required. Hence students have easy access to help, which encourages them to achieve in class. Giving students opportunities for group discussions and presentations allows them to exchange their ideas with their peers and creates an academic bond. This way, the classroom is not only a place to come and go, but an environment that promotes effort and enthusiasm. The Women in Economics Networking event also seeks to get more female students interested in and retained in economics. In addition to providing students with an opportunity to meet and get to know each other, the event allows them to get to know graduate student instructors and faculty members.

Goal 2: Active learning techniques
I integrate real-life examples to get students more actively engaged in their learning. For example, I use podcasts from Planet Money, NY Times, or EconTalk, video-clips, and case studies during class. Additionally, I use live polls and give low stakes but frequent quizzes with feedback right after introducing a new topic to engage students in the new learning material. To emphasize the critical elements of the material covered, each of my class starts and ends with a summary using interactive technology. Students like these reviews because these live discussions allow anonymous answers, which makes the class fun and alleviate the fear of making mistakes.

Goal 3: Create a productive learning environment
I clearly state the learning objectives, provide an organized course structure, and make the necessary materials available online to help students meet and exceed their expectations. When I notice a student is falling behind, I proactively reach out to ensure that it does not lead to disengagement. When students offer an incorrect answer, I ask them to explain their logic so that I can work with them towards the correct answer. After exams, I use a post-exam reaction survey to give students a chance to react to their exam performance and the effectiveness of their exam preparation. This survey also allows me to receive feedback about my teaching and identify the points that need to be improved to adjust their learning environment.