

Ralph A. Ciancio Award for Excellence in Teaching

Rodrigo Schneider

Assistant Professor, Economics Department

Rodrigo Schneider has an exemplary record of teaching at Skidmore, and this brief citation can only touch on some of its many highlights.

Since his arrival in 2018, Rodrigo's teaching has had a profound impact on his students in the Economics Department. He has taught at every level within the department, and enthusiastically petitioned to teach the challenging Introduction to Economics, a class that can be populated by students simply trying to fulfill a requirement. Rodrigo's passion for the material and its significance to students' lives is infectious. His students clearly recognize this and are moved to invest fully in the content.

Rodrigo deftly balances rigor with kindness. His upper level courses are deemed extremely demanding by colleagues and students alike, while often being the first to fill during registration. Students respond to the challenging nature of his coursework and attest to Rodrigo's continual readiness to help them meet his high expectations.

Rodrigo has created new courses focused on marginalized populations, and challenges students to view subject matter through a variety of lenses. His Economics of Latin America course bridges topics related to international affairs and political science, while drawing comparisons to the American experience. Faculty observing this class – held outdoors in a tent during Covid restrictions – were fascinated by the students' level of involvement, their ability to make complex connections within course materials, and how they related new content back to coursework done earlier in the semester. Rodrigo's Scribner Seminar on the Costs and Benefits of the Seven Deadly Sins approaches the moral life through theological and philosophical analysis, literary depiction, and political and sociological considerations. Students move from Dante and St. Thomas Aquinas to the Gini coefficient and data analysis of dating apps like Tinder. It is a wondrously innovative and demanding course that demonstrates the vitality and ambition of a liberal arts education.

Colleagues in the Economics Department have been outspoken in their praise of Rodrigo's teaching ability, his contagious enthusiasm, and his willingness to stop whatever he's doing to help a student. As one colleague put it when asked to comment on his teaching, Rodrigo is "simply a natural". Faculty have been vocal in their appreciation for "his ability to offer extremely rigorous courses at every level with all the support a student could hope for." Rodrigo demonstrates "not just a willingness but a true passion to help all students..."

Colleagues and students alike are impressed by the impact that Rodrigo has had on his department, his students and our college. In addition, he is an extremely prolific researcher, publishing twelve papers over the past four years, and offers a splendid example of the teacher-scholar model.

We are honored and proud to have Rodrigo in our community. From the Faculty Development Committee and the entire Skidmore community, thank you for your dedication to our students and their education, and our heartfelt congratulations!