

My relationship with David Lang began even before my enrollment in his Economics of Education class. Intrigued by the Economic of Education's course description to "apply the tools of economic analysis to educational policy and problem solving," I emailed Dave to find out more about the course. Dave's speedy reply included a detailed list of discussion topics and a statement of his excitement to teach an interactive course in which he would cultivate discussion about Human Capital and the Role of Government in Education, Signaling and Screening Models, Rates of Return, and Race and Gender Issues, to name a few. It was to be an innovative approach to learning and one that I was eager to experience.

As a sophomore I entered Dave's class with an open mind and a basic understanding of micro and macroeconomics. Dave used our three hours a week together to encourage and to teach me to apply this knowledge to topics that, prior to enrolling in the course, I had never looked upon through an economist's eyes. In fact, in one essay assignment the class was to write out a procedure to address a statement made by the New York Time's that there is widespread discrimination in the economics profession. This was a task that forced every student to not only evaluate the course material, but to use that evaluation in conjunction with our already formulated beliefs.

Dave's enthusiasm for the subject material and for his position as discussion mediator was contagious. Creating a comfortable, informal atmosphere from the start, Dave supported the students' ideas and thoughts, creating an environment of mutual respect. Students were eager to present the various articles of the course reader in class and to have their own opportunity to lead discussion. Student absence, usually prevalent on college campuses, was a rarity in Economics of Education.

The course reader, an organized collaboration of articles addressing each of the topics to be discussed throughout the semester, was an economic masterpiece. Arranged both by subject matter and by page number, the articles represented every side of an argument in order to give students the opportunity to formulate their own opinions and to evaluate the quality of the article from an economist's perspective.

I found Economics of Education to be both fascinating and enlightening—the class even gave me the chance to do an in-depth research paper on Washington University's tenure policies. I have nothing but good words to say about the course, my experience, and about David Lang. One of the most remarkable aspects of David Lang is that he took an idea for a class that had potential, and he made it a success. His dedication to the course and to his students was a continual presence that I will carry with me for the rest of my college career.