Ignacio Maria Ojea Quintana was my teaching assistant for Phil V3551, Philosophy of Science, at Columbia University in the spring semester of the 2015/2016 academic year.

What sort of job did he do?

As far as the students were concerned, he did an excellent job. His mean score on the standard student course evaluation was 4.63 out of a possible 5. This suggests to me that the parts of his contribution to the course which I didn't personally witness – helping students with specific questions during his office hours, etc. - were of the same high quality as the ones I did. Individual students told me he'd been quite helpful, without any particular prompting on my part.

The portions of his contribution that I did actually see were also very good. He gave one lecture, on one of the economics-related topics we covered (Knightian uncertainty.) I though the lecture was excellent. It was clear, well organized, and interesting. I also thought that it was didactically effective; talking to students, later, it seemed to me that they had, in fact, gotten a good grasp of this rather complex idea as a result of hearing his account of it.

The rest of his contribution to the job of teaching the course was equally satisfactory. He worked hard on the grading tasks, and had useful and insightful comments on particular papers. Having him available to discuss some of the topics and how to approach them before giving the lectures was also very helpful. Columbia has a long tradition of being interested in the philosophy of economics, epitomized by people like John Elster. So we're very lucky to have graduate students like Ignacio, people who are interested in and competent with game theory and the other tools of modern economics, to help carry the tradition forward.

 My overall evaluation of Ignacio's performance is basically the same as the students'. I wish that I always had someone as effective as he was to help with teaching every course, and I have no doubt at all that he could do a very good job on a course of his own.

Sincerely,

Daniel Cloud
May 15, 2016