

## **Teaching Philosophy**

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The main goal of teaching is to foster and encourage learning. In order for that to occur, it is imperative to create a relaxing, nurturing environment where students don't feel intimidated, but rather inspired and motivated. This atmosphere should also accommodate all learning styles, providing knowledge through a variety of methods and techniques. I believe that for a good learning experience to occur, the teacher needs to conduct a thorough searching and preparation, therefore, I spend a great deal of time preparing for the class materials.

In my teaching experience, I aim to not only teach the students about the fundamentals of the course, but also to help them acquire a number of other skills and talents. In an effort to foster and instill higher thinking processes, I constantly encourage students to critically think about the many concepts they are being introduced to, and how are they or how can they be applied in the real world. Moreover, as a part of the class work, I require some assignments that are intentionally designed to help the students to explore and be open about their own perspectives.

I want my students to gain mastery over the materials we discuss; yet, I don't want them to acquire that through memorization. Students should strongly comprehend and analyze what they learn, and for that to happen I find group discussion to be an excellent tool that enables students to reach that level of understanding. In class discussions, I highly emphasize the importance of respecting each other's opinions and stress that we should refrain from being judgmental toward one another. When lecturing, students are more engaged and captivated if the lectures are being presented in a story-like manner, if students are being exposed to various examples and illustrations, and finally if the relations of concepts to real-life settings are being explored.

Moreover, I encourage students to go beyond the classroom lectures and expand their knowledge through reading extra articles and research that I provide to them during the course of the term. I also believe that team working is an important life-long skill, thus, I train my students in this area by asking them to do collaborative projects.

In order to gain the students' feedback and evaluate the amount of knowledge and skills they have obtained, I develop my own evaluation forms that allow the students to freely reflect on their learning experience and point out which aspects of the class they liked the most and what areas they believe are in need for further improvement. Furthermore, I design the assignments in a way that will not only allow students the opportunity to practice what they have learned, but also will help me in evaluating the methods and techniques I use in explaining and teaching.

In regard to the student-teacher relationship, I believe that it shouldn't be built on fear; instead it should be based on trust, respect, and friendship. For trust and respect to be established, the instructor should demonstrate interest and passion for the subject, only then will the students show desire for learning. This respecting relationship will also instill in students the importance of respecting others. Moreover, calling students by name communicates that they are respected and that their presence and contribution in the classroom is vital.

Teaching is very rewarding. The fact that I can play a role in inspiring and developing enthusiasm in students is very meaningful. I believe that teaching is a mutual learning process. For me, this learning process motivates me to continuously improve myself, expand my knowledge, and experiment other methods of presenting information and assessing students' learning outcomes.