

My Philosophy of Teaching

I believe that just as we cannot exist without oxygen flowing through our bodies, faith is the essential spiritual component that allows us to identify and communicate with our creator. Central to my pedagogy is an intentional focus on the specific needs of my students. My military education and experience exposed me to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and the concept of "scaffolding" as a key pedagogical tool to ensure that I tap into the power of collective knowledge in any given class. My intent is that by creating an environment supportive to collaboration we will collectively gain access to a greater range of skill and knowledge. I view that we can be most productive when instructor and students collectively work through content that is challenging.

Understanding that there is power in numbers, I also embrace a constructivist pedagogy that emphasizes hands on learning on the part of my students. The preponderance of my coursework is designed to have students learning through doing. While I like to see students enjoying themselves and developing their social and professional networks, I expect student to come prepared and ready to focus on the course work during class.

I believe students learn best when they are intrinsically motivated. I therefore focus on a classroom that is engaging, information that speaks to my student's daily living, and that propels to active discovery. My ideal classroom environment is one where students are empowered to make decisions for themselves while taking into consideration the collective knowledge of the whole. This results in greater self-confidence and development and/or refinement of their thinking and problem-solving skills. Experiential learning is fundamentally impactful, and to support this I seek to create new experiences

in the classroom derived from real world examples from history, current events, research and the therapeutic couch. Given the electronically connected world we live in and the modes of communication often preferred by our students, supervisees, and their prospective patients and/or clients, developing knowledge and skills commensurate with today's environment is essential to their success. I encourage students to learn from, research and engage with the world around them. The internet and its many platforms are excellent pedagogical tools and enable us to access resources that assist in today's students learning. I have a core belief that human beings will rise to the level of expectations. To this end, I have high expectations and I take pleasure in helping each student strive to meet their unique individual goals, while supporting our collective goals.

As a teacher I am a life-long learner and see my interaction with each student not just in terms of stimulating learning and providing new experiences for my students but also an opportunity for self-growth and exploration. I am passionate about the classroom and work hard to motivate my students to develop and express their passions. I believe that a meaningful life is within reach of each of us, but that it requires intentionality to identify, articulate and pursue those roles and goals that make getting up each morning a full-filling exercise. I believe that teaching and mentoring future generations is in the top one percent of professions in the world because it impacts the very essence of who we are and who we become for generations to come. This is why I am profoundly dedicated to doing my small part in helping produce critical thinkers and ethical leaders that will help shape generations to come.

References

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