

# Teaching Philosophy

I believe it is important to state that my teaching philosophy is not independent of my personal philosophy. More so, I treat my teaching philosophy as a sub-component of my personal philosophy. Thus, I then must incorporate the pursuit of meaning into my methods and the goals of my students. The following are three core focuses I've extracted that I believe will not only spark meaning in myself but also my students: expand and build upon the concept of learning how to learn, exploring a breadth of intellectual perspectives, and applying concepts practically.

Learning to learn isn't something we aren't taught explicitly in today's world. Yet, it is a skill that must be developed and applied to almost all aspects of life, one that we also never stop using or needing. Maybe no one teacher can completely convey the idea of a "learning philosophy" but each teacher can help build and influence a students' learning philosophy, whether the students or the teacher are conscious or unconscious of what is happening. Thus, I hold myself responsible for not only conveying my material but to convey it in a manner that helps build on each students understanding of the concept and their learning philosophy.

It's not only my responsibility to allow students to think, question, and develop novel ideas but to provide examples of thinking, questioning, and developing novel ideas. I would be a fool to think that I am the only one in the class room that can convey the material or learning philosophy as well. Every class room is full of minds that each perceive a topic from a unique perspective. Allowing the students to collaborate and explore each individuals perspective of topic or idea will also build upon every students' knowledge base and learning philosophy. I'm not the only person teaching my subjects as well. This means there is a wide verity of lectures, readings, videos, and people that can provide additional perspectives on a topic that might assist students. I believe it is my responsibility to then direct students towards these additional resources as valid material to learn from.

At the end of the day even with a perfectly executed teaching methodology a vast majority of the responsibility falls onto the students to take responsibility for their own learning. This does not mean students can not be motivated to learn. Providing practical and passionate application of a particular topic can be enough to spark interest. Thus, I try to take responsibility for sparking any latent interest within

students while providing already interested students with the knowledge and materials to further themselves.

How do these abstract ideas amalgamate into practice? Like many things, the answer is simple yet complex to apply. I don't believe that there is any one teaching style or method that can fully encompass these aforementioned ideas. Yet, only through a combination of lectures, active learning, and inquiry-based learning can I begin to concretize the abstract. Of course, I am not limited to only combining these three learning methods. An adaptive approach to teaching each class, and maybe one day each student, should be taken. Applying a one size fits all to teaching every semester is not my goal, but providing individualized learning is also not fully realizable as of yet. Meaning, if a class one semester responds well to traditional lectures then I should tend towards focusing on lectures. Likewise, if a class another semester excels at learning through interactive and practical activities then the focus should be shifted towards an active learning setting. Adaptive teaching should be applied with your toolkit being different teaching styles. Of course, acknowledging this adaptive idea is a simple task. The complexity is introduced when implementing, discovering a classes learning style, and developing the required material for each teaching tool.

While my personal experience is my main source to draw upon for my teaching methods supplemental research will always be required. No one person can approach a problem, such as teaching, from all perspectives. Thus, even if there is research that doesn't relate to my personal teaching toolkit it is ever crucial to continuously read and explore teaching from differing empirical and anecdotal perspectives. Students influence on teaching methods should not be overlooked as well, seen as they are the direct beneficiaries of any teaching method. Consistent polling and, more importantly, conversations are needed to extract improvements that can be made to each teaching tool.

To return to the abstract, my overall teaching goal is to help students grasp concepts and, in some cases find meaning within these topics, not solely through my teaching abilities or even the concepts themselves. Rather, through the understanding and expansion of their own learning philosophy, drawing connections and developing practical experience, and exploring a breadth of perspectives.