

I began my career as an electrical and computer engineer. I designed protections and controls systems for a power utility, supported new product development for electric vehicle products, and designed products for a new motor starter line. Despite the exhilarating technical challenges of my roles and the opportunity to work towards a better future in a green industry, I was struggling to find purpose and happiness in my work. The only source of fulfillment I felt was in an additional role that I sought out and created as Senior Design Program Coordinator. In this role, I developed project ideas, applied for funding, managed projects, and mentored students. Under my direction, five projects were successfully executed providing meaningful experience to the students and valuable contributions to the company. In reflecting upon these experiences, it dawned on me. Teaching would be the perfect combination of my abilities, aspirations, and passion. Through teaching, I could empower the next generation to solve the problems they see in the world around them. After this revelation, I decided to leave industry and pursue a career in education.

An essential tenet of my mission in education is to make it more accessible to all. Diversity is critical to the vigor and prosperity of engineering. Having STEM professionals with different backgrounds and experiences allows the scientific community to approach problems from a variety of perspectives. If we do not take the extra strides to reach out to marginalized people, the world pays a price. Many talented people fall through the cracks because there is no one in the field who shares their experiences and the information is not taught in a way that is relatable to them. I, along with several others, founded an all-volunteer non-profit that pools community resources, repairs bicycles, and teaches maintenance skills to enable access to safe, reliable, self-sufficient transportation for those within the homeless and at-risk-of-homelessness population. On a regular basis, I interact with people whom the system has failed. It has made me more driven to enact change and approach education in a way that ensures everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

To foster a more inclusive learning environment, I utilize an interactive lecture style and project-based approach. By engaging in dynamic, hands-on activities, the students are able to interact more with the material and make very abstract and hard-to-visualize concepts come to life. These activities also provide students with practical problem-solving experience, developing their creative and critical thinking skills. By structuring the courses in this way, I am entrusting students with more responsibility. They feel more ownership over their own education. As a result, the students are more confident in their abilities and more invested in their work. This environment also ensures that students collaborate and learn from each other as much as they learn from me. As a cis, white, male, my experiences and perspectives dominate the world of STEM. By cultivating a more interactive classroom and ensuring that underrepresented students are given the opportunity to speak, everyone gains exposure to new viewpoints from the multitude of voices in the classroom and obtains a more well-rounded knowledge of the concepts. Because of this collaborative atmosphere over which they feel invested, students feel proud in their demonstrable mastery of the concepts and confident in their abilities to tackle new challenges when they leave my classroom.

Employing a dynamic learning environment can have its downsides. By allowing students more autonomy in the classroom, I struggled at first to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Students would choose projects not in line with the course objectives, we would dive too deep into a certain topic, or we would spend too long on a tangential concept. These circumstances would lead to uneven learning experiences amongst students or a reduced course scope. Despite these struggles, I never abandoned this style. I knew its potential and strengths from research. Through study, practice, and

preparation, I learned how to more successfully scaffold and mold the course behind the scenes. I would talk with students about their interests. Together, we would carefully craft projects that met the intended learning outcomes and roused their passion. I also recognized the importance of indulging in tangents. Throughout the lessons, students would become incredibly interested in a related topic. I did not want to eliminate curiosity from the classroom for the sake of achieving goals. Instead, I built time into my lessons. At the beginning of each class, we have a warm-up activity in which we discuss a topic of interest, current event, fun application, and other curiosities. These activities foster an environment of inquisitiveness and ready students for the day's lesson. Despite the immense amount of effort required to manage this type of learning environment, the results of uniting students' passions and course material in this way are self-evident.

In my teaching career, I strive to bring more of a focus to ethics. STEM professionals, like elected officials, are a small group responsible for making important decisions that affect everyone. In this age where any technology we dream up is well within grasp, the question is no longer "Can we do this?" but "Should we do this?" New technologies and developments do a lot to benefit society, but oftentimes can have latent, adverse consequences. I attended a session at a recent conference in hopes of learning about the battery recycling process, but I left dismayed. Despite batteries' ubiquity and importance for renewable energy adoption, the industry is far behind understanding how to handle recycling the sheer volume of lithium-ion batteries in the market leaving us with an almost unimaginable amount of waste. To encourage more creative problem-solving and more critical thought about the role of engineers in society, we examine exemplars in the field and the study the NAE's Grand Challenges for Engineering in the 21st century. I want to teach the next generation of engineers the authority of their role in society to help them make decisions that do not sacrifice future generations' vitality for the sake of convenience.

In order to continually confirm I am exceeding the students' expectations and achieving the learning objectives, I try to tear down any barriers to having a responsive, open feedback loop between myself and the students. Instead of relying upon a summative assessment, I perform on-going, low-stakes assessments. The goal in these formative assessments is not to penalize students but to ensure that I am effectively conveying the concepts to all students. I can track individualized student progress on a daily basis to see whether I need to modify my methodology for that student. I foster an open and communicative environment by having class-wide dialogues about course progress in addition to one-on-one meetings. If the students do not feel comfortable speaking up in these settings, I give them the opportunity to provide regular, written feedback about the course, which can be anonymous if they wish. I use the results of the assessments and the feedback from the surveys to tune my teaching methods to better suit the diverse makeup of students in that particular class.

I encourage an active learning environment to ensure I am teaching *to* students and not just teaching *at* them. I am an educator because I want to help produce a more diverse coalition of engineers who tackle the imminent problems facing our society rather than developing "better" and increasingly disposable tech gadgets that proliferate the issues we see in the world. I work to combine my technical abilities, industry experience, teaching experience, and passion to educate a future generation of scientists and engineers that is more diverse, compassionate, and empathetic. When my students think of the future, they should not feel pessimism but the opportunity and the ability to act.