

Jacob Townson
Mathematics 693
Dr. Riedel

Teaching Philosophy

The purpose of education in mathematics is to help the student learn a skill, or in some cases a tool, for future use that is indeed used in everyday life. In general, the student comes first, whether it has to do with mathematics, or if they come to me asking for help on a more personal matter. Granted, this most certainly does not mean that we should wait on them hand and foot. That is not our job. Instead, we should be there for them in both an educational and also a more personal basis. We are human. Too often, students think of their teachers as vampires who simply live in the school building. We can show our humanity by being there for them in more ways than one.

I want to teach mathematics because I care about the subject. I want people to appreciate mathematics, even if they are not mathematically inclined. If they are more skilled, I want to strengthen their skills and help them gain a greater appreciation for what they do in the subject. I want them to see the fun of solving a puzzle, and realize that just because everyone makes mathematics out to be big and scary, that it actually is not all that bad. I hope to accomplish this by being with the student every step of the way. I will show them the bare basics, as well as hopefully show the applications and more entertaining parts of the subject. For example, I explained how some of the methods we use in a Contemporary Mathematics class can apply to things such as Chemistry and other subjects as well, not just in our classroom.

I also care about kids. By kids here I mean the broadest form of the word. I care about people who are growing up, and I know the difficulties of growing up intellectually because I had a hard time trying to do it myself. In the end, I don't believe that I am finished yet either. My goal is to be there for the students on a more personal level, more than just a lecturer, but hopefully a sort of role model.

There were teachers in my life who most certainly shaped who I am today, and I can only hope that I can do something similar for my students whose lives I come in contact with.

I believe students learn best by doing. Too often teachers will simply stand in front of a class and lecture. As a teacher, I try my hardest to keep the class involved and participating. I try to learn names so that I can call people up to the board so that they can try to teach the class. To motivate them to do this, I will often tell them that I am still learning myself, so if I can stand and teach them, so can they. Similarly, this also involves giving homework problems. It is important that they are not so repetitive that it makes mathematics dull, as this enforces my previous worry of making students dislike mathematics.

As a teacher, I hope to help the students grow, and grow myself. I am still learning new things every day, just as my students are. I hope that as I teach them, I can gain more experience to help make me into a better teacher. To help myself grow as a teacher, I will continue to try new things so that I can find what works best for different students, and hopefully I can tailor make a class for each group of students that I have. I plan to make a difference in their lives, both personally and through their studies. To do this I will always have my office open for more than just mathematics, it will be open for students as people as well. I hope that someday they will remember me as a teacher and think that I was a good mentor, as well as a good teacher.

In conclusion, I thoroughly look forward to more teaching experience. I want to grow alongside my students, and be there to help them along their paths of growing as they guide me along mine as well. I want to make mathematics beautiful and fun for them. I plan to help hone their skills and set them up to go out into the real world, prepared for more mathematics, and more of life in general. In the end, I just want to be a good teacher.