“You’re only as strong as your weakest link”

Teaching Philosophy

Often classes are taught in a way that is meant to divide students between above average or average, however this leaves out a particularly vulnerable group of students that teaching should be focused on. At the beginning of courses, students are penalized if they do not have a comprehensive background on the subject at hand and will be discouraged as they fall farther behind their peers. I strongly feel that this is the wrong approach for how classes should be taught because it is assuming everyone has the same background, which is not true on an academic or personal level.

As an undergraduate at UCLA, I was the stereotypical student that overperformed at an underperforming high school. Although I had the basic requirements to take my pre-requisite courses for a pre-med major, I started those classes with a vastly different background than my fellow peers who were also taking their very first pre-requisite courses. But that is where the similarity ended. When I took my first computer coding class in R, I had absolutely no concept of what coding was or even understood the point of coding, unlike my peers who took computer science courses in high school or had parents who had familiarity with computers. I felt like I was being penalized for not being exposed to computer science prior to college despite it not being a prerequisite for that particular course. The teacher and my peers were able to zoom through concepts and languages while I felt like I was drowning to keep up and it discouraged me from taking another computer science course despite having an interest in analyzing biological trends. Yet that experience has profoundly shaped how I approach my teaching philosophy as a PhD student, especially now that I’m a reoccurring EEMB TA for Biometry – Analysis of Biological Trends in R.

I firmly believe a class is as successful as your weakest student and that as a teacher it is my objective to elevate all students learning