

REFLECTIONS OF A PRACTITIONER

My Teaching Philosophy

I have never taught a class without learning something new.

I have never met a student that did not have something to teach me.

I teach because I love to learn. I believe to be a teacher you need to be a lifelong learner. If I could accomplish only a few of my goals as a teacher it would be to have my students share my curiosity about the world and to imbue them with my love of learning.

*Always answer questions...
build rapport...tell stories to
make it relevant...always be
flexible enough to put down
the notes, teach in the present
moment...and don't be afraid
to make mistakes.*

My ideal classroom is filled with students enthusiastically engaged in discussions and working together to solve a problem or understand a new concept. It is noisy and exciting, and may appear a bit disorganized. I am either in the midst of a deep debate with my students or on the periphery moving around from group to group interjecting and providing gentle guidance. I believe in creating an atmosphere where my students are comfortable expressing themselves, are not afraid to make mistakes and are willing to challenge themselves to learn something new. To spark this dynamic interaction, all it will take is an inspiring problem or question.



To be an effective teacher I believe in:

Knowing the group and building rapport.

It's important that my classroom atmosphere be conducive to students asking questions and, equally importantly, that students feel comfortable answering my questions even when they are uncertain of their answers. I use humor, I tell stories and I look for common experiences that bond us together. Build rapport among the group and everyone will learn.

Recognizing and fostering creativity.

As architects, creativity is our most valuable problem solving tool. Everyone is creative. If they do not recognize it in themselves - show it to them. Once a student has tapped into their own creativity the flood gates to knowledge will open.

Acknowledging the accomplishment of learning.

The greatest satisfaction comes from watching a student succeed in learning something that has challenged their abilities and stretched their limits. Acknowledge the accomplishment and the effort and they will always be willing to accept the next challenge.

Planting seeds for future learning.

As a lifelong learner I believe that my students will continue to learn from the lessons I have taught long after they have graduated. I am consciously aware when I teach that not everything will be understood that day, that week or even during that semester but that I am planting seeds for future learning. One of the great pleasures of being a teacher is having a former student come back for a visit to tell you they finally understand the big picture.

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