

## Teaching Philosophy

I believe that a commitment to education and a true enjoyment of the teaching and learning process are as essential for the instructor as a sound background in the subject being taught. I believe that being able to interact with and “relate to” students is as essential in instruction as the presentation of current, accurate information.

Teaching and learning are coincident activities, and the most important core of the process is in the direct interaction between the instructor and the student.

As an instructor, I believe it is my job to present information in a well-organized and easily understood way, and to communicate with students in a way that will allow them to grasp the underlying concepts beneath the facts, concepts that I hope will become part of their way of thinking, even if they lose some of the specific facts in later years.

I also believe that it is my responsibility to ensure that as many students as possible achieve as much as their ability and previous training will allow. In order to allow students to achieve to their maximum potential, it is necessary to challenge them intellectually, both in terms of basic information, and in the ability to reason with the information they have acquired. I believe that an analogy can be made between this advanced learning process and building a wall: the basic facts are the foundation, the more advanced facts the framing materials. Upon this, the “finishing materials” can be suspended, these being the links or intellectual associations the student can make between the facts. I believe it is at this level, where the student starts to make associations on his own that the beginning of true understanding of the subject material occurs. To achieve this goal, I think it is the responsibility of the instructor to communicate these “connections”. This kind of communication often takes the form of helping students to relate new material to concepts and information they already have, and allows them to produce the associations that are key to deep understanding of concepts.

Education is a continuous process for both students and instructors, thus it is also a dynamic, living relationship. As the student grows intellectually, the instructor must sense and react to the continuous progress of his students. This reaction should take the form of adjustments in his instructional methods, materials and even his approach to achieving course learning outcomes. Thus, evaluation of instruction and the adjustment of the material presented and the emphasis placed on each part must be a continuous process, not simply one applied *a-posteriori* to results of student performance at the end of the term.

The final level of student development, where “the student exceeds the master” is, of course, our ultimate achievement and ultimate goal as educators. I believe that with the proper attention and dedication, this ultimate goal is achievable for all professional educators.