

Teaching Philosophy & Teaching with Technology Philosophy

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**I believe in education as a mission in our society.** The objective is not only having students to learn the content of each course, but also helping them to develop life-long learning skills and critical thinking. These are very important qualities to prepare students for their future professions and to become the best possible human beings who are involved in the progress of our society.

**In today's world educators can no longer be just dispensers of knowledge.** Educators should, of course have knowledge and skills, but also possess other very important qualities such as being an adviser, an encourager, a stimulator, a mentor, a resource, a researcher and a patient person. I believe that these are some of the qualities needed to become an outstanding educator, which implies that not every expert in their field of research is an excellent educator. Educators are no longer just "Sage on the stage". They should be sensitive to the needs and interests of students, and to the demands of the work market. Educators should be able to communicate effectively with their students in order to share experiences with the goal of continuously improving their pedagogical approaches. I always try to meet my students' needs regardless of their previous knowledge, background and learning abilities. I often receive new ideas from my students' feedback and comments, which means that the more I teach the more I learn. It is a life-long process. I always keep in mind that a good educator should also inspire students in their future professions and in their everyday life as young adults ready to make their contribution for the best possible future of our society.

**The teaching materials should always be presented in a variety of ways.** The three principles of [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#), which borrowed the term of universal design from architects and designers, illustrates the importance of presenting class materials in multiple ways to promote engagement at different levels and to tap into learners' interests in an appropriate manner, so it will motivate students to learn and ultimately to become self-learners. I believe that a small percentage of students are motivated no matter what, but for the majority of the students there are other ways to improve motivation and open doors on professional opportunities that they would have ever thought before. I think that the learning process in adults can be made more effective, if new material can retrieve previous background knowledge and if life experiences can be related to the abstract concepts of a lecture.

**Example from my personal teaching practice of Anatomy & Physiology.** I could change the class environment from boring and passive to engaged and interested by asking students to become aware of their breathing with a couple of simple breathing practices. My practical approach helped the students to be consciously aware of one of the most important system in human physiology. At the same time they could see the act of breathing with new eyes and how it can be related to the whole body. Later, one of my students was grateful for my practical approach on that particular lecture because it opened a new door in her mind. Now she is doing a job that she really loves. This story is an example of how I indirectly helped students in finding the best possible opportunity in their professional life.

**Introducing new concepts and skills is a complex task.** I think that it is very important to provide a way to visualize and create new associations on the material that students are learning in class. I successfully used a new visual approach in my Biology lab classes. Students were supposed to watch selected educational videos, before and after classes to improve their comprehension of bio labs. I also use questions to introduce different topics because I believe that questions are one of the most effective tools to stimulate curiosity, especially if they relate to real life experiences. In this way theories will be supported by facts and feelings, which can help the long-term memory consolidation process.

**Incorporating technology into the learning process to improve students' learning.** I think that technology stimulates active learning because it promotes engagement, motivation and life-long learning, which are fundamental qualities of any good teaching practice. Technologies that are already known by students and educators can be easily integrated, if appropriate, in traditional courses. I believe in "do less and better" philosophy, so I wouldn't overwhelm students with too many technologies. I successfully used [SurveyMonkey.com](#) to gather students' opinions about the usefulness, of the above-mentioned, audio-visual materials. [Polleverywhere.com](#) is another Web 2.0 technology that can be used in class because it easily allows real-time double-loop feedback on the learning/teaching process. We often teach how we were taught, so a new teaching approach is also a way to inspire the new generation of educators.