Teaching Philosophy

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Inspiring and supporting my students through the joyful discovery and exploration of the power and beauty of mathematical methods and their amazing real life applications

On the importance of vision (Creating relevance by pointing at great things to come): I see the teaching component of my profession as an opportunity to ignite the curiosity and interest of my students. I make the most of this opportunity through my enthusiastic way of presenting my lectures, but mostly by constantly choosing examples and problems that hint at great things to come. For instance, I often tell my Math majors of the more powerful and more vastly applicable results derived as generalizations of the basic ones that they need to learn right now. It is my experience that the sense of anticipation nurtures the core of all learners. I constantly relate my material to what great engineers, scientists, and mathematicians explore in their work.

The crucial place of responsibility: A crucial component of my teaching philosophy is my commitment to instilling a sense of responsibility in young aspiring college students. My syllabi emphasize the responsibility of my students, but I also constantly remind them to be focused and dedicated. The relationship between the instructor and the student is really a tacit contract that crucially requires the shared responsibility of the two parties involved, if it has to be successful. As an instructor, I strive to fulfill my responsibilities to the best of my abilities, and I expect all my students to do the same.

Depth first, then breadth: If I absolutely had to sacrifice something during a given term, I would sacrifice details and concentrate on deepening my students’ knowledge on key fundamentals. It is my strong belief that a student equipped with a deep and solid knowledge of key fundamentals has what it takes to learn more advanced concepts on his/her own. Mindful of the fact that depth requires patience, confidence and support, I do my best to create an atmosphere that invites my students to seek a deeper understanding all the time. I never tire at drawing my students’ attention on the importance of truly understanding, as opposed to scratching the surface of knowledge. I always provide added support to students who express an interest in deepening their knowledge.

Learning through hands on discovery: Over the years, I have found that data analysis projects provide my students with one of the best opportunities to master probability and statistics concepts. Students are allowed to do the project alone or with at most another students. The project must be motivated by an interesting issue that can be addressed through the statistical analysis of data related to the issue. In recent years, I have decided to require students to provide me with an oral progress report on the project every other week. This is clearly a highlight of my teaching as I have noticed that my Statistics students finish with a more well-rounded understanding of Probability and Statistics.

Inspiring and supporting all my students: I have been told by peers and students alike that my greatest strength as a instructor is my enthusiastic, crystal clear and inspiring delivery of lectures along with my genuine dedication to helping all my students discover and explore the power and beauty of Mathematical Sciences. I have consistently maintained a long term average of around 4.4 out of 5 on my evaluations by my students.

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