

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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Teaching for me is a way to make a positive contribution. While I did enjoy success as a trader in the financial markets, the ongoing learning experience of being a teacher is extremely rewarding. Conveying the necessary important points of the subject material, developing a positive rapport with my students and creating a classroom environment which is fair, honest and stimulating is remarkably fulfilling. The opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of my students is one of the main attractions of teaching for me.

Good teaching requires engaging the students and exciting them to embrace the material. Not only is it necessary to display a vibrant regard for the subject, but also to convey to students the idea that having a curious, inquisitive philosophy of learning can bring so much enrichment to their lives. I think it is important to present the material in various ways that cater to the different ways students learn. The material I present is highly technical. Some students can learn by listening, others by visual presentation, graphs and equations, and still others by actually practicing the material. All these teaching strategies are necessary to convey the most information to the broadest audience.

Teaching also involves understanding what constitutes good learning. It is tremendously exciting to stand in front of a new group of students each semester. Looking at a group of fresh faces, learning how they view the world and trying to determine the best way to make a positive impact on their lives is an exciting challenge. My personal learning experiences provide the best guide for good teaching experience. I learned best from teachers who were excited about the subject material, and also who conveyed a genuine sense of caring about me. For me, good learning has come to mean the teacher understanding the student as well as the student understanding the teacher. Good learning not only involves understanding the material, but also the practical relevance of the material and how it is applicable to the field of interest.

I want to stand out in my students' lives as a teacher who cares; someone who is knowledgeable, someone who took the time to learn about them, and someone they will remember. I believe I am unique in offering every student extra credit for performing volunteer community service. I think it is important and rewarding to cater to the entire individual when teaching. Asking my students to volunteer provides a number of enriching experiences as a teacher. Firstly, it is fascinating to discover how students invest their time outside of the classroom, it is an education in itself to discover the different ways my students are involved in the community and other peoples' lives. Students at Fordham come from all different socio-economic backgrounds, and have many different talents to share. For some who volunteer to feed the homeless, it may be the only time they see the inside of a soup kitchen, or for others, tutoring underprivileged kids, the only time they see the inside of an inner city elementary school; whether this enriches the students lives or not, it will likely be a memorable experience.

Essential to good teaching is articulating clear expectations of my students. I expect them to come to class, listen, put forth sufficient effort to master the material, and maintain respect for each other. They are expected to participate in class discussions, complete the assigned work and approach me with questions and comments either about the subject material or the teaching style. I also make it clear what my students can expect of me. Students can expect me to be prompt, and adhere to the course syllabus. They can expect me to be available for help outside of class, patient when learning difficult material, organized and kind. They can expect me to be very well prepared, fair, honest, and non-judgmental.

I think it is important to continually grow as a teacher; each student and class is an opportunity for me to learn, there is always room for improvement. I always ask my students what they like about the course, what they don't like, and what they would like to see done differently. Also, it is often very helpful to ask other teachers their advice and best practices, particularly teachers who have a reputation

for excellence and are well respected. To have an experienced teacher come and critique my lecture is always a learning experience. I think it is very important to always read the *Student Evaluations of Educational Quality*; many times a student will write criticism of me or the course that they might not voice to me directly. Lastly, I feel it is a terrific privilege to have the opportunity to teach, and with that is significant responsibility.