

Instructional philosophies are difficult to fully embody. I do offer below a number of statements—first my own words ... then followed by the words of others—that comprise some portion of my own instructional philosophy:

- ☑ An instructor should be cautious to nurture, rather than dismiss, a student who takes a position contrary to established knowledge. It is such individuals—not individuals who excel merely at mimicking the knowledge that had to be given to them—that ultimately build new knowledge. An instructor must be cautious that his/her responses in such situations do not "teach" the student that it is a bad thing to try to have a good idea. Good ideas are in short supply.
- ☑ An instructor should have a natural preference for students to improve in the identification and solving of new problems ... above a preference for students to improve in the applying of solutions already handed to them. Hindsight makes clear—the problems of today often have little to do with the solutions taught twenty, thirty years ago. A student who can diagnose and solve problems is the student better prepared for any future challenge he/she might face.
- ☑ Students are demotivated when confronted with tasks they perceive as thoroughly unachievable. Students are also demotivated when confronted with tasks they perceive as extraordinarily easy. They are well motivated, however, by tasks they perceive as achievable with reasonable effort—even if that amount of effort is more than they would voluntarily choose to expend. Instructors should not expect motivated results from the assignment of demotivating tasks.
- ☑ Know thy audience. Instructors must give due consideration to the capabilities, masteries and skills that students possess as they begin a course. It does no good to instruct Latin III to students who have not mastered Latin I. To do so ensures the failure of the student from the onset. Further harm—the student will detest Latin forever. The level of instruction should begin at the student's level of ability—not where a grade level or prerequisite coursework suggests the student's ability ought be.
- ☑ The halls of our academies are hardly perfect. There is political turf-fighting, ignoble actions, pettiness, insularity. Sometimes intellectual ideas are borrowed, even though we would decry that behavior in students. Though the halls are not perfect, academics must strive to make them so as best they can. That is because one of the greatest responsibilities we hold is that we should strive to model to students the highest citizenry possible. This so that students can see & understand it, this so students can appreciate the value of it, this so students can aspire to practice it as best they can, throughout the balance of their lives. These halls are best reserved, not for those short in moral character, but for those who intend to mold it.
- ☑ Though it often does not seem so to the instructor standing at the rostrum, students do wish to learn and do wish to improve themselves. This is why each of them has chosen to enroll, to better themselves. They are generally eager to absorb new knowledge when it can be readily comprehended ... and when they can see that the knowledge will serve them well in their lives and careers.

- ☑ Teach as though you were stuck sitting on a hot stove. If you do not possess a true sense of urgency regarding the significance of what you teach, students will know. Model your urgency and they will adopt it.
- ☑ It is said that you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink. I suggest that you can lead a student to knowledge but you cannot make him *think*. Students must *choose* to want to think, learn and understand ... and an instructor should focus upon methods that encourage them to do so. Awesome exams, in of themselves, do not encourage students to think, learn or understand; they DO encourage (at least some) students to expend a lot of unfocused effort to somehow survive awesome exams. This is why the trash cans in the halls of many institutions are seen to be filled with discarded flash/note cards. Someone who is eager to learn has no need for flash cards.
- ☑ A student's final letter grade is not a measure of his/her worth as an individual. A student may well be blessed with any number of talents beyond the scope of the instructor's course. It is unwise for an instructor to presume that a student's performance in a single course makes a definitive statement about who the student will be ten, twenty years from now ... or a statement as to what the student might or might not accomplish in their lifetime. Some of the most accomplished individuals—Einstein being but one example—were first deemed poor students. Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Larry Ellison, Buckminster Fuller, Frank Lloyd Wright, Steve Jobs, all college dropouts. Elvis Presley took poor grades in music. There are a myriad of such examples.
- ☑ Instructors are entrusted with the important task of preparing individuals to be better thinkers, better people and better citizens. In the case of business schools, instructors are further entrusted to prepare individuals for positions of leadership. These are lofty and extremely important goals, essential for a healthy society. Hence, an instructor has a special obligation to constantly keep keen eye and sharp edge against curricula that supposes to fulfill them.
- ☑ An examination is also a learning exercise. Some students will never be more interested in knowing and understanding the course content than when they are in the process of being examined. An instructor dedicated to learning will be willing to capture the opportunity when it presents itself ... and be willing trade off a small bit of the measurement & sorting function ... to accomplish that learning.

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- ☑ "Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not."--Walter Bagehot, English economist, political journalist, and critic, circa 1879.
- ☑ "If your plan is for one year, plant rice. If your plan is for ten years, plant trees. If your plan is for one hundred years, educate children."—Confucius
- ☑ "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them."—Aristotle

- ☑ "The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires."—William Arthur Ward
- ☑ "Study without desire spoils the memory, and it retains nothing that it takes in."—Leonardo Da Vinci
- ☑ "Imagination is more important than knowledge."—Albert Einstein
- ☑ "Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one."—Malcolm Forbes
- ☑ "Education is not filling a pail, but lighting a fire."—William Butler Yeats
- ☑ "It is by logic we prove, but by intuition we discover."—Leonardo Da Vinci
- ☑ "The challenge for professional schools is to broaden their mission to envision a larger role for their graduates. Rather than simply train students to be competent, successful practitioners, faculties need to make greater efforts to prepare people who will look beyond their practice and strive continuously to raise the standards of the profession and improve the system in which it functions."—Derek Bok, former Dean, Harvard Business School and former President, Harvard University
- ☑ "Education is what remains when one has forgotten what one has learned in school.—Albert Einstein
- ☑ "A University is not about results in the next quarter; it is not even about who a student has become by graduation. It is about learning that molds a lifetime, learning that transmits the heritage of millennia; learning that shapes the future."—Drew Gilpin Faust, President of Harvard University, Installation Address, October 12, 2007.
- ☑ "It is not so very important for a person to learn facts. For that he does not really need a college. He can learn them from books. The value of an education ... is not learning of many facts but the training of the mind to think something that cannot be learned from textbooks."—Albert Einstein
- ☑ "... make sure that our students don't simply learn what we know, but [that] they learn how to create what will be and that will be used [in] the future."—Carol Folt, Chancellor, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Acceptance Speech to the UNC Board of Governors, April 17, 2013.
- ☑ "The basic purpose of education is to achieve maturity. Not just physical maturity, but intellectual maturity, emotional maturity and above all moral and spiritual maturity. Without maturity there can be no wisdom, no insight, no judgment, no compassion; nor can there be any real understanding of oneself, of other human beings or of the great questions of our time."—from a Tiffany & Co. advertisement, *New York Times*, circa 1981.

- ☑ "Our educational system has mined our minds in the way that we strip mine the Earth for a particular commodity. In the future, this will not serve us. We have to rethink the fundamental principles upon which we educate our children ... We have to be careful now that we use the gift of human imagination wisely ... by seeing our creative capacities for the richness they are—and by seeing our children for the hope that they are. Our task is to educate their whole being so that they can face this future. We may not see this future, but they will. And our job is to help them make something of it."—Sir Kenneth Robinson, TED Conference, Monterey, CA, 2006.
- ☑ "This process of training, by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture ... to set forth the right standard, and to train according to it, and to help forward all students towards it according to their various capacities, this I conceive to be the business of a University. ... Now this is what some great men are very slow to allow; they insist that Education should be confined to some particular and narrow end, and should issue in some definite work, which can be weighed and measured. They argue as if every thing, as well as every person, had its price; and that where there has been a great outlay, they have a right to expect a return in kind. This they call making Education and Instruction "useful," and "Utility" becomes their watchword. With a fundamental principle of this nature, they very naturally go on to ask, what there is to show for the expense of a University; what is the real worth in the market ... if it does not at once make this man a lawyer, that an engineer, and that a surgeon ... Training of the intellect, which is best for the individual himself, best enables him to discharge his duties to society. ... If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society."—*The Idea of a University*, John Henry Cardinal Newman, 1852.
- ☑ "I think for lesson number one, to learn a mystic formula for answering questions, is very bad."—Richard Feynman
- ☑ "The first job of a university is to teach wisdom; not a trade, not character, not technicalities."—Winston Churchill
- ☑ "If we expect kids to be losers they will be losers. If we expect them to be winners they will be winners. They rise or fall to the level of the expectations of those around them."—Jaime Escalante