Teaching Philosophy

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I believe that learning should be a fun, fair, life-long process. As a teacher, I would like to always hold this belief, and build up an environment where students will feel joy, equality, and enduring enthusiasm. Rather than a dictator of the classroom, I am dedicated to promoting a scientific way of thinking and a multi-disciplinary understanding of the subject of Communication.

First of all, learning should by no means be dreadful. Instead, my ideal class is an interactive, lively, participatory, and fun one. More importantly, to students with different intellectual capability, the learning process should be a joyful journey. I hope to enable the students with confidence that they can reach the personal goal with their own effort and necessary guidance from the teacher. Therefore, I feel that I am obliged to think of my students as individuals and care for their individual needs and concerns, so they can enjoy the class despite their distinct characteristics.

Although students are individuals and, as a teacher, I would consider their personal circumstances, that is not to comprise the equality of learning. I believe the ideal education system should be one that provides an equal learning opportunity for all people, rich and poor, male and female, black and white. In this essence, learning should be fair to everyone. From a narrower perspective, all students are equal. The teacher should by no means bias the evaluation of the students: rules and expectations are set at the earliest stage, clearly, and straightforward. More importantly, the students and the teacher are equal counterparts, too. They share equal rights, but teachers naturally possess power. In the pursuit of scientific truth, I shall not misuse my power; I shall not let any idea be suppressed, any expression be prohibited, any innovation be restrained.

As Ken Bain noted in his What the Best College Teachers Do, teachers’ chief responsibility is not to “find ability” but to “encourage its development” (2004, p.152); I cannot agree with him more. Learning should be an everlasting, life-long process. So, the most important goal for me is to infuse the students with enthusiasm to learn, and tools and skills of learning, rather than to implant the knowledge and reward the photographic memory. I hope to inspire and motivate the students, stimulate their passion and their curiosity, and foster their interest in understanding the world through a scientific scope (perhaps as a complementary point of view). This is also partly why I would like to teach a research method class.

Considering the field of Communication specifically, one of the most important characteristics of Communication, as a subject, is its multi-disciplinary nature. Therefore, it is my goal to encourage students to constantly expose themselves to information beyond their particular areas of interest, and to break down the artificial, mostly unnecessary, borders between sub-disciplines. Moreover, I am a believer of media effect, which is to say I think how to communicate is equally important as what/who to communicate and with whom. A good Communication scholar is very likely a good communicator. Therefore, I expect my students to possess the literacy of reading scientific articles, the scientific language to deliver their findings to fellow scholar and the public, and the willingness to bridge the academia and the society.