I. Aspects of Students

1. They are possessed, simultaneously, of a relative (to an adult’s conviction) uncertainty of who they are but also of a developing image of who they would like to be. In this I do not mean simply vocationally.

2. They frequently have not developed, or do not employ the skills of an active listener in all endeavors and as such frequently miss and/or forget fairly crucial details.

3. They have developed and firmly set their preconceptions of what is required of them academically in each subject, and how they feel about each, separately; without necessarily, and far too often, seeing the interrelations among these fields.

4. With regard to (3) they have also solidly set expectations for what they will not be expected to do within each subject; or at least not be evaluated upon. In example: most are assured that their math skills will be relevant in a science class but are equally assured that their language skills are of little importance.

5. They are capable, if poorly practiced, of effective critical thinking and through this building scaffolds of their own through which their subject knowledge can interrelate.

6. They are willing learners of lessons that they can see the intrinsic value of and relation to their own endeavors.

II. Attitudes of My Own

1. Despite a relative failure to teach the intended lesson, in doing anything a lesson is learned.

2. Discovery is learning, first-hand, and is among the best, most memorable means of imparting a lesson.

3. They are capable of changing behaviors and will do so willingly in order to align with what is desired of them; if, the requestor can create in them a desire to comply through ‘referent’ rapport or effective pedagogy (which are in and of themselves entwined). (Changed application of (I.6))

4. I’m not in control. Can’t be, and wouldn’t want to be even if I could, as control forsakes involved thought on the part of the controlled which in and of itself is counterproductive to the desired end of teaching.

5. All problems can be solved or alleviated through the correct means or method and as such if there is a chronic issue I have not yet found that aforementioned.
Given what I currently know and feel about secondary students, I anticipate emphasizing certain instructional practices within my 495 class(es) this semester. As indicated in these brief lists, I have developed a philosophy of teaching, to date, that supposes an inability to ‘control’ anything extended beyond myself. I intend to use what influence I am given by my students to impart to them what changes in behavior I may ask. This influence that they would give to me I expect and would hope to be founded upon a respect for me, my motives as well as my knowledge/wisdom that they would wish to benefit from. This would be increased by my actions and interactions with these students; specifically, by my own tailoring of lessons to those things about which they care, or are interested in.

In order to ‘tailor’ my lessons to things that they feel have value I would need to know what it is they value. Some of these I expect I could discern from observations and deduction, but this method would be of limited value and effect in the short time that I have. This would be best accomplished by learning about my students and sharing with them some of the things about me, through dialogue and course-related activity.

Although these noted beliefs are what I currently have in place to work with, I will at the same time seek to improve upon my own basis of precepts throughout this semester’s experiences and all others as my career proceeds.