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TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My teaching philosophy is inseparably connected with how I view the overarching role of higher education in our society. At its core, higher education should maintain a singular focus on one thing, truth. Everything else is tangential. The effective acquisition and dissemination of knowledge is merely a byproduct of our innate human desire to discover and share truth. Truth is real. Truth is exciting. Truth resonates in both the mind and heart.

I believe that one cannot separate effective teaching and research. Adding to the extant body of knowledge through the discovery of additional truth is stimulating and inspires curiosity. This prepares one to enter the classroom with energy, enthusiasm and an open mind. In this manner, teaching becomes a form of leadership. Students respond positively and develop a passion for discovery when the teacher exudes such a passion. It is contagious.

My ultimate goal in the classroom is to empower the students. A college degree signals to the world that one has successfully completed a rigorous course of study and now possesses the tools that will enable them to effectively compete in an ultra-competitive world, pursue a course of lifelong learning, and add greater value to their home and community. It is my responsibility to help the students develop their financial skill set and imbue within them critical thinking skills that are imperative for success in today's business climate.

I feel that this is best accomplished when the students are engaged in the material. I am much more satisfied with a lecture when it can appropriately be described as more of a discussion, where I serve as the discussion leader. Some discussions require more direction than others, but I strive to involve the students as much as the material allows. I do not seek to entertain, for that shifts the focus from the students and their grasp on the material to me, but thoughtful questions, a lively discussion, and relevant "real-world" examples are naturally entertaining. As a result, class time is often peppered with a little laughter and some smiles. Student wit, if respectful of others, is welcomed.

All who choose to embark on the journey of formal education have accepted the challenge that goes along with it. As a teacher it is incumbent upon me to challenge the students. I know that they possess tremendous capacity for learning and growth, and I expect them to perform. Anything less would do them a great disservice. Although I lament having to assign grades, I do so in a straight forward, equitable fashion. All have the opportunity to receive as high a mark as they choose to receive. I recognize that, in some cases, more time and attention is required to fully understand certain concepts. To this end, my door is always open.