

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

It is my belief that many people are rarely pushed to utilize their full potential and that, given an opportunity, each of us is capable of further developing our gifts, talents, and skills. Importantly, I believe that people do their best work when they are self-directed, given opportunities to try new things, allowed to fail, encouraged to assess their progress, and facilitated through their own process of learning. I also believe that working in groups is important and in two key ways. First, working in groups is something most of us will do throughout our lives, whether it is in the workplace or the home. Practicing effective ways to work in groups is, then, relevant to all of our lives. Second, working in groups allows each of us to benefit from the gifts and talents of others. None of us is a perfect being and few of us are equipped with all the skills needed in every domain of our lives. Therefore, working with others enriches the learning experience for each and every one of us.

I approach learning as something done best when individuals are given opportunities to solve problems and to develop their critical thinking skills. This means at times that some students will feel as though they are flailing about and unsure of what they are doing. It is at these times that it is best to trust that continued effort will bring desired results. I believe that learning is less about the final product (i.e., grade or amount of new information) as it is about the process of discovering ways in which we learn, ways in which we can improve, and ways in which we can make contributions to our field of interest. My overall hope is that students will become life-long learners and that the information and skills addressed in my courses will become important components in their academic, and non-academic, toolbox.