

YEE MING LEE'S TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education." - Martin Luther King Jr.

"Teaching" is one of the most prestigious and respectable professions in the world, in which this unique career plays a crucial role in shaping the future of the nation. My mother, sister, brother and uncle are all high school teachers and my aunt owns a kindergarten. Growing up in a family which majority of its members is teachers inspired me to choose teaching as my future career. I admire their dedications, as well as sacrifices to transform the lackadaisical students into someone who are highly commitment to their studies.

Under their influence, I determined to become an educator when I grew up. I was blessed with the opportunity to work as a Teaching Assistant while I was doing my master at Texas Woman's University. Even though I did not directly involve in teaching, this opportunity had provided me new insights on how different teaching techniques, styles, and strategies could be adopted to make the learning environment more conducive. Consequently, I developed my teaching philosophy based on this eye-opening experience. I will continue to seek improvement in my career with these five objectives in my mind.

Objective 1: Conduct knowledge and enhance understanding

My primary objective is to conduct knowledge and enhance understanding of the students about a subject by making the class materials easy to comprehend. From my perspective, teaching is not all about bombarding students with complex formulas and information with the hope that students could remember something when they walk out of the classroom. In contrast, a capable educator should be able to articulate the sophisticated classroom materials using simple and concise sentences to facilitate learning. In a long run, the students will be able to expand their knowledge based on this fundamental information they have acquired.

Another method to enhance understanding of students is to understand the learning styles of the students. I will provide enough room for flexibility when I plan the class syllabus and make some modifications as the course proceeds. Moreover, I will integrate my classroom teaching with sufficient examples, case studies, demonstrations, and in-class experiments, in order to improve the level of understanding.

Objective 2: Seek balance between theory and application

Theories and practice coexist with each other in the era of education. It is imperative to teach students "what they are doing" and "why they are doing it", but it is more important to teach the students "how to do it". I strongly believe that teaching should be practical and linked to real world situation. By doing so, students will be mentally prepared for the challenges they might face in the future. They will also have higher degree of self-awareness and understanding of the world and people around them. For example, Food Systems is an umbrella term that covers cost control, layout design, and food production management, etc. Classroom teaching is essential, but field trips and addition hand-on opportunities (i.e. meal service project) are helpful

to develop the soft skills such as communication and leadership skills that are important in this field.

In addition, I will challenge my students to explore outside of their comfort zones and take advantage of the opportunities available to them to gain new experiences. I will also encourage the students to get involved in voluntary works for the same reasons. I hope that this learning experience would positively influence how they view themselves and the society.

Objective 3: Support diversity and respect individual differences

Being cultural sensitive and possess high level of culture competency are critical, since our society has gradually evolved from mono-culture to multi-cultures. I believe that an ethnic diversified classroom is beneficial as it encourages the generation and development of creative ideas. I will encourage students from different backgrounds to interact with each other inside and outside of the classroom. None of my student will feel that he/ she is being discriminated and deprived of opportunity to acquire knowledge and participate in the class activities.

I believe that every human is born with a special gift. Therefore, I will also respect different talents of my students and continuously challenge them to discover their true interests. For example, I will encourage my students to be actively involved in different student organizations if they have the good qualities to be a leader. This objective is in lieu with Tom Bradley's saying, "*A loving, caring teacher took a liking to me. She noticed the potential and wanted to help shape it*". I hope I could help my students to be successful doing something that is congruent with their given strengths and talents.

Objective 4: Maintain pleasant and conducive classroom environment

Teaching is a two-way proposition. My responsibility is to build a pleasant learning environment and students' responsibility is to come to the class prepared and ready to absorb the knowledge. I also believe that students learn the best when they feel comfortable with the classroom setting and the instructors. I will implement open door policy when I teach. Open door policy is a stepping stone for me to personalize the needs and problems of the students, since we have limited time in the classroom to interact with each other. My students are welcomed to my office and talk to me regarding the problems that they encounter in the classroom. Even so, I still expect the students to respect me and know my standards and expectations toward them. Negotiation of grade is allowed if students could prove the efforts they put in and show their engagement in the pursuit of knowledge.

Objective 5: Motivate and inspire students

William Arthur Ward, the famous author of hundreds of inspirational books said "*The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.*" Even though the main responsibility of a teacher is to conceptualize information to facilitate the cognitive process, I do believe that an educator's accountability is far beyond that. A good educator should also show the path, motivate, support, inspire, and lead by example. I also believe that having great passion toward my career helps me a lot to be a better teacher. Students like teachers who are enthusiastic and possess the strong desire to teach. These two characters will draw students' attentions and engage them in the classroom teaching.

In conclusion, being a good educator is not an easy job and it involves a lot of efforts and perspiration. However, with my zest interest, strong will, and devoted mind, I believe that I could overcome all the obstacles I potentially face in the future. My love for teaching grows as I follow these five principles with wholehearted. I view teaching as a very rewarding journey, in the way that I am so thrilled and elated when I see my students succeed. I know that their hard works are finally being paid off and the efforts that I put in are worthy.