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Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is rooted in three core elements: a teacher's expectation of a student's ability, a teacher's credibility along with mastery of the subject content, and ongoing feedback to the student. Ultimately it is up to the teacher to facilitate learning. I believe John Hattie (2013) *Visible Learning Model* captures this concept of inspiring the student to actively take part in their learning process. Hattie (2013) described the *Visible Learning Model* as follows; "When teachers SEE learning through the eyes of the student. When students SEE themselves as their own teachers" (p.238).

In order to achieve learning, the class must be connected to real life experiences using a structured and safe learning environment. This learning environment is based in adult learning principles that leverage experiences of each student, while understanding their individual needs. To engage students in their own learning process, lessons should require students to apply content knowledge and use problem-solving skills to analyze an issue. In my classes, I use a combination of presenting information followed by learning activities, which requires students to apply new information through techniques such as collaborative group work, individual case studies and interactive challenges/games.

My philosophy is centered on the following tenets supported by educational research and through my experience in teaching both children and adults.

- 1) Teachers are among the most powerful influences in learning. It is the role of the teacher to create a learning environment that fosters sharing of ideas and where error is welcomed as a learning opportunity.
- 2) The teacher-student communication is essential to building respect and establishing expectations. It is important for a teacher to have follow-through on small items, such as responding to emails in a timely manner to larger things, such as meeting criteria for a class report, presentation and/or project.
- 3) It is important to assess student's current knowledge and skills and then build upon this knowledge. On-going assessment can be accomplished through a pre-survey, journals, and building portfolios. Technology in the classroom can also be used to check for understanding and to assess current knowledge. I like to use technology tools such as clickers, online surveys (SurveyMonkey, Google Form), use of smart phones to provide feedback and do a quick pre-assessment.
- 4) Learning summative assessments do matter. It is important for teachers and equally important for students to know their learning goals and criteria for meeting those goals. It is important to have clarity in the class in understanding expectations. I am a believer of providing rubrics, examples of exemplary work and resources to help a student understand expectations. It is also important to maintain rigor, but also understand that students need support and scaffolding to meet expectations. I do feel strongly that lowering expectations not only does a disservice to the individual student but to the entire class as a whole.

- 5) Finally, it is critical to make learning relevant and applicable to real life situations and career opportunities. I am a believer of having students bring in real life issues as cases studies for discussion and input. I also enjoy inviting guest speakers and role models into the classroom so students can envision themselves in that future position.

Igniting a passion for learning is my ultimate goal. I enjoy teaching and for me it is fun and exciting to discuss public health, data driven decision-making and the power to make a difference in your community. Public Health makes this a reality!

Reference

Hattie, J. (2013). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.