

Teaching Philosophy

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Introduction

The classes I teach focus on problem-based, experiential learning. Students work in teams trying to solve difficult, real-world problems that have no easy answer. This often occurs in a competitive environment. My job is to help them through this process: to help them better understand the problem or challenge, and some of the fundamental issues that must be considered; to help them think creatively and critically. There is an energy level, an edge to the classroom environment that is distinctly different from most other classes. This is accomplished through the use of videos, music, and my demanding approach to results. I believe that my approach is further defined by the fundamental principles:

I am passionate about Entrepreneurship, Leadership, and Teaching.

I love entrepreneurship and leadership. Both have defined my professional and personal life. That passion comes through in my teaching. But I don't glorify entrepreneurship or leadership. I want students to come to their own conclusions, and, so, if an individual decides that through taking one of my classes entrepreneurship is not for them, that is a good result. I also love to teach, or more specifically, I love to help people in a way that enriches their lives.

I hold students to a very high standard.

I expect my students to do great work. I typically tell them at the start of a semester that they have to think of the class as a start-up, and we need everyone's best work if we are to succeed. They are expected to be in class, every class, and if they do average work, I tell them directly in no uncertain terms. But in the process I help them understand what they need to do to make the work great and convey an unwavering belief that they can do it.

I want my students to become fearless problem solvers.

People who enthusiastically take-on the solving of difficult problems are invaluable to any organization. I help students develop problem solving skills and key to that is encouraging students to embrace failure. To learn from it as quickly as possible and to try again and again until they succeed.

I am committed to the long term success and welfare of my students.

I genuinely care about my students and believe that part of the responsibility of this work is to be available to students outside of the classroom, and after they leave Penn State.