

Teaching Philosophy Statement

Vijay Subramanian

"Truth is ever to be found in simplicity, and not in the multiplicity and confusion of things."

--Sir Isaac Newton

Mathematics is the language of nature and we deal with it directly or indirectly in our everyday lives. This subject is challenging to a casual onlooker while it is also intimidating to one who decides to learn it. But in a journey to understand mathematics, one is enlightened to see the beauty of its act in everything around us. In order to achieve this as an instructor, in young and curious minds who come aboard, I believe like the above mentioned quote that simplicity is the key factor.

I've been tutoring math since 2007 and was appointed as an adjunct faculty in the Mathematics department at Tallahassee Community College less than a year ago. From my experiences, I've realized that a traditional classroom mode is no longer viable in the present era. An instructor conveys the material while students just listen or take notes which don't seem to suit the modern day learning, in my opinion. To overcome this issue, I make sure that I encourage interactions in class among my students where they are able to discuss the math problems and the challenges involved in overcoming them. Also, they are given opportunities to present their solutions on the board to convey their understanding of the material to their peers. This kind of class participation will bring about greater understanding and build their confidence. This according to me makes it more about the students themselves.

My belief is to maintain a casual and a friendly atmosphere congenial to learning. I've learned that there is no time for unnecessary formalities and demanding respect from students. Definitely it has not helped me in the past when I was a student. Also while teaching, I've failed to connect with my students by calling them by their last names. It simply didn't work and it put me way too far away from them. While maintaining mutual respect, calling my students by their first names has had a far greater impact in achieving a casual atmosphere. To deal with math fear is in itself daunting enough and as a teacher I should make sure that a student doesn't fear me for any unnecessary reasons.

As an instructor, my philosophy is to be a good listener to hear out my students' issues and try to guide them to seek solutions if possible. There is a wide spectrum of students coming

from various backgrounds with many issues. At times, I ask my students to take a deep breath and relax. I believe that being relaxed and comfortable brings about greater success. I also often ask my students to try and leave behind their other troubles outside the classroom and deal with the math problems at hand. This will ensure that students will intake more of what is being taught to them.

I believe in holding periodic class assessments where students voice their opinions and suggest ways to better their classroom experience. Each class is different and adjusting to their needs to a reasonable extent is imperative as an instructor. This will also make student understand that his/her being in the class is important and significant.

While it is all about students, character and personality of a teacher is also worth paying attention. From my readings and experiences, great teachers are free from their ego. I sincerely believe that this aspect comes with realizing the role a teacher is playing. I've learned to seek happiness in my students' success and take responsibility when a student fails. A teacher fails when there is a lack of care. I will strive to be the one to guide my students to reach greater heights and seek happiness seeing them walk through the path of success.

With the above mentioned beliefs, I wish to make my students more motivated, more responsible and bring about life-long learners.