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My Teaching Philosophy

As a young and inexperienced intern, I remember my mentor teacher sharing a basic piece of wisdom that today forms the cornerstone of my teaching philosophy: “Say it, mean it, do it.” Simple as this statement reads, it’s the simplicity and straightforwardness that I find to be the most useful in the classroom experience. This is not my first time writing a teaching philosophy; however, it is my first time taking all of the fluff out and cutting right to the chase.

“Say it, mean it, do it” is easy enough to understand. Applying it, I believe, is an art that takes practice. Early on, I learned how to apply this to a classroom of young children. In recent years I have learned what it means to use this philosophy in a classroom of young adults. Simply put, it means I offer only policies that I intend to honor, that I “say” only that which I am willing to actually implement. It means that when I have an appointment with a student, I keep it. I value my time and theirs and they have my attention when it is requested in a respectful way. Finally, it means that my actions follow suit with my words. This ranges from the promises I make in class, to the appointments I keep, to what is actually written in my syllabus.

The phrase “Say it, mean it, do it” guides my actions while lecturing, answering questions, and conversing with students about their plans for the future. I feel that teaching is a calling, a service, and I am fortunate to be able to share this gift with the world. My weakness as a teacher comes into play with my level of compassion; I know that I am ready to accept any excuse, listen to any story, and allow any tardiness or habitual late work to continue if I do not check myself. “Say it, mean it, do it” has become a mantra for me as I work with young adults both inside and outside the classroom; the adherence to this philosophy shows a level of respect for both my students and for myself as an instructor, giving me the support I need to implement policies that serve the student.

Aside from this basic philosophy, I strive to provide various types of learning activities to students, including individual work, group work, writing assignments, tests, and presentations. The content I cover is made more interesting by pulling the student into the learning experience and giving them something of real value during our time together. I believe that teaching is an opportunity to reach several individuals during one span of time. Will I make an impact on every student? Maybe and maybe not. As a teacher it is my duty to give all that I can; it is the student’s responsibility to be willing to receive what I have to offer.

In short, I am a teacher out of a desire to facilitate learning opportunities for those seeking to learn; I am a learner because I am open to what those experiences can lead to for my own

benefit. My simple philosophy ties back to my goal to make a positive impact on as many students as possible. The easy mantra of "Say it, mean it, do it" has been a powerful tool to guide my teaching, reeling me back in when I stray off course and encouraging me above all to be open, honest, and consistent with my students.