

My philosophy about undergraduate teaching centers on my conviction that our students deserve the highest level of instruction because some of them could have enrolled in any of our nation's best universities. . . . this standard for instruction dictates that I stay abreast with the most recent research findings on the topics that I cover in class. . . . to retain the attention of the bright students and make the class very rigorous. This is the best of both worlds, because the students and I can both have a great time, even if the students confess that the class takes a large amount of their time (away from tweeting). *Kojo Mensa-Wilmot*

We have all witnessed painfully boring seminars and presentations where the presenter was so woefully incapable of introducing and developing contact that the audience was completely disengaged. However, it almost seems ironic that a concerted effort is required to persuade some university faculty that teaching is a genuine and valid form of scholarship. Teaching is the central mission of an institution of higher learning. . . . As academicians, we must be adept teachers in a wide variety of settings from the traditional lecture to the research laboratory. *Richard Morrison*

I strive to challenge students to examine their assumptions by bringing the law to life. I lecture about legal principles, then we discuss the roots, application, and concepts of justice. My goal is for students to think critically, to apply the law to facts and to consider the nuances. In class, it is energizing to see students look beyond stock "talk radio" sound bites, discussing a topic from a range of perspectives. . . . I hope that I influence my students, but they also influence me. There is hardly ever a day that I leave campus after class, that I am not still thinking about some aspect of our discussion or conversations with students. Their influence never stops. *Marisa Pagnattaro*

Motivation is the key to learning. Without motivation, some learning may take place, but little of it will be retained. Thus a major objective in all my courses is to motivate students to learn and have them develop an appreciation for the power offered by a knowledge of microeconomic theory. . . . Long after students have forgotten most of the specific content within a microeconomic course, they will be left with general impressions and attitudes about the theory. Hopefully my teaching will aid in making these impressions positive and support my goal of demonstrating the substantial utility to be gained from understanding economic theory. *Michael Wetzstein*

# UGA Teaching Academy

*Class of 2009*



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I believe that as a faculty member at a research university, it is extremely important to have teachers who are actively engaged in research as part of their job. A common perception among students and the public is that faculty with high research appointments are disinterested in teaching, particularly at the undergraduate level. . . . At the end of a day that I have lectured, I can clearly define what I have accomplished. This is a rare event in my research efforts. *Michael Azain*

I approach teaching and research as complimentary endeavors. In doing so, I hope that students leave my classes as competent *consumers* of research, able to think critically about any research study they may encounter, whether on CNN or in a textbook. . . . By allowing research to serve as a cornerstone of our teaching, I believe that we provide an important service to our students and also demonstrate the unique role that research universities and their professors play in undergraduate education. *Jody Clay Warner*

A chalkboard drawing is such a personal form of presentation, a sharing of information in an artistic medium. Students watch the image materialize before them, and with each drawn line, and each detailed rendition, an explanation of form, function, and purpose unfolds. . . . Of all the things I hope to teach students, self-confidence would be at the very top of the list. . . . If our student can walk away from our classroom with these types of learning skills, they will be competitive in the “real world” and their academic experience on this campus will have served them well. *Mark Compton*

I strive to teach through leadership, not intimidation, emphasizing cooperation, not competition. I try to instill confidence in a supportive environment. I recognize that different people learn differently, and I try to accommodate them all. . . . But how does one develop critical thinking, innovative thinking and creativity? It is a challenge but I think an important start as a leader is to create a supportive environment that fosters confidence and creativity, and ultimately promotes the critical thinking we all seek. *Robert Cooper*

The liberal educator, Paulo Freire (1970) reminded us that no dialogue can begin with the premise that some chosen among us can enter that dialogue, or that some voices carry more weight than others. So, to immerse is to expect all to go deep and take part in constructing new understandings, to blur and re-invent the definitions of teacher and students. . . . we who write have the rest of our lives to try to become perfect writers. It is how I feel about teaching. *Bob Fecho*

Engineering academic programs should align studies that develop the student’s capacity to have a comparative perspective (societal, historical, etc.) of a problem with studies that develop the capacity to engage today’s rapid advancements of science and technology for designing solutions. . . . my philosophy is one where a fundamental approach combined with a liberal engineering education provides the foundation for student growth and learning. *Tim Foutz*

I view my primary role as an instructor as a facilitator assisting students in their development of critical thinking and lifelong learning skills. Content is important but I try to give students materials to enhance their ability to create a conceptual framework with facts that enhance general understanding of the area through specific varied examples. I also recognize the power of peer interaction and hands on experiences and try to incorporate these into my courses. *Scott Gold*

I see my role as a professor not only to teach students techniques in the various printmaking processes, but also to dig deep into their souls to discover if being an artist is what they really want to do. If so, they need to trust their own instincts, intuition and decisions no matter what outside sources may say. . . . Being a parent, I try to treat each of my students as I hope my daughter will be treated when she is in school; with respect, dignity, an open mind, and a willingness to listen. *Melissa Harshman*

I think of the professors that made me want to learn. They all shared some common characteristics. They loved and knew their subject matter well. They encouraged rather than discouraged. They made me believe that what we were studying mattered, and more importantly, that I mattered as well, and, if I really wanted to, I could make a difference. And of course, they had a sense of humor and were also very professional about it all. Moreover, I could tell they cared because of the time and effort they put into their teaching. That really made the difference to me. *Audrey Haynes*

My greatest strength as a teacher is my ability to see potential in my students. . . . Failure is not an option in my class unless a student chooses not to attend. As educators, we can encourage our students to excellence by providing them with the tools they need to excel and by making ourselves available to them outside the classroom. For me one of the greatest joys of teaching is having students, in whom I have invested time, become my friends after graduation. *Betty Jones*