

I think of myself as a fire starter. My goal is to light a fire in my students so that they want, and even crave, excellence in all aspects of their lives, both inside and outside academia, as professionals, and as individuals. I start these fires by making my own fire visible. . . I strive, in my interactions with them, to make certain they can see that excitement. I want them to understand my expectation, indeed, my assumption, that every one can be-should be-an outstanding scholar, a well-rounded person, and an actively engaged member of society. I firmly believe that, from the most boisterous to the quietest, each student has a unique way of learning and has an inherent "fire" that can be ignited if given the right catalyst. I endeavor to identify and provide that catalyst. *Denise Lewis*

I have the best job I could imagine. I believe that Universities are integral to human prosperity. Universities are the incubators of individual and societal growth and change by serving as libraries of the past, stages for the dialogues of today, and telescopes into the future. We train, we inform, and most importantly we inspire. We promote and vigorously defend an environment of free thought and expression. The particular elegance of the Land Grant University is that we provide that opportunity to all, and we make it our mission to lift anyone willing to learn and participate. . . My teaching philosophy is inspired by this belief, and is informed by the realization that my primary job is to inspire younger people to appreciate their world, to find a place where their skills and passions collide, and to endeavor to learn more. *John Maerz*

I believe my primary responsibility is to help students learn the values, skills, and knowledge they will need to be successful practitioners of clinical social work. . . . by keeping my primary career identity as a clinical social worker (who happens to be a teacher and researcher at the moment), I remain more deeply embedded in the value system and view my "practice" as taking place in the classroom. Similar to clients, students feel more empowered and open to learning when approached from a perspective of respect, non-judgmental regard, genuineness, and hope, all of which elevate the role of relationship in creating a working alliance. My hope is that my behavior in the classroom provides an avenue through which students begin to find their own professional identities. *Betsy Vonk*

I believe that good teachers are INSPIRING. . . I believe that the most effective teachers are the ones that inspire us to study on our own, so I believe that the most important thing I can bring to the classroom, in whatever form it may be, is passion for my subject. I try to convince students that learning about my subject is so interesting and fun (which, of course, is true) that they will want to do it on their own. I try to excite practicing veterinarians to take on the complicated case and learn about it, read about it, question what they know and become excited. Therefore, my first teaching mantras are to inspire and excite as I fulfill my teaching mission at the University of Georgia. *Cynthia Ward*

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While the best curriculum, most creative presentations, and latest technology are essential ingredients to good teaching, my conviction and extensive experience is that even the best techniques are often sterile without the development of positive personal relationships and one-on-one interactions. . . . my teaching philosophy recognizes that the “human element” is the most important one in both teaching and discovering chemistry. Students are not faceless automatons. When students are convinced that the teacher is their advocate and not their adversary, then many flowers bloom in the classroom. *Wesley Allen*

One of the important missions of the University includes “a commitment to excellence in a teaching/learning environment dedicated to serving a diverse and well-prepared student body, to promoting high levels of student achievement, and to providing appropriate academic support services” . . . I believe that students will do well when they are inspired – motivation would then follow. In all my classes, I always have the above in mind. *Hamid Arabia*

My long-term goal in teaching is to offer UGA students the highest quality instruction available at any given moment in my discipline, Hispanic literary studies. To achieve this requires flexibility and curiosity because the contexts for teaching vary subtly, yet constantly, over time. . . . What happens in our classrooms shapes the spirit of our institution, and then, as our students graduate, moves out into the state and the world in the memories and abilities they carry with them: dialoging, problem-solving, resourcefulness, creativity, research and diplomacy skills, collaboration and questioning, to name a few. *Dana Bultman*

I hope my students gain an appreciation for lifelong learning. To encourage this, I encourage them to think deeply, and to always be passionate about learning something new each day. In addition, I show them that I genuinely care about their success, that I believe in them and that I won't let them stop until they are the best that they can be. In terms of career advice, I always encourage my students to find that place in their life that they are truly passionate about, and challenge them to move out of their comfort zone to understand the importance of hard work and dedication. . . . Finally, because I love what I do, I am not afraid to show them that, and -consequently - I cheer for each of my students to find what they love to do, too. *Tina Carpenter*

Each semester I look forward to the opportunity of participating in the education of some of the most capable young people in the nation, and am continually astonished by their ability to grasp new concepts and to think rationally. . . . I am viewed as an exacting professor that loves his course materials. The structure of my courses provides students tools and experiences to inspire them to reach and attain their very best. With this approach, I witness the transformation of students who simply attend classes and memorize materials to students who are engaged in the materials and want to know more. I see and feel students gain confidence in expressing themselves and their ability to solve problems. *Terence Centner*

As I think about my teaching experiences over the course of the past eleven years, the two core principles governing what I hope to do is (1) to show my students how to be the high-quality lawyers that our state needs by setting high expectations for them, and (2) to help all of them find their voices. . . . I was very shy through law school and would never have raised my hand in any class. A professor finally called on me, and I had to speak. I think I was a disaster. My professor took the time to talk to me after class and tell me that he thought I had an interesting point, and he wanted to explore it with me further. After we talked, he then called on me the next day to explain what I tried to say the previous day. That professor gave me my voice. *Erica Hashimoto*

My teaching philosophy is distinctly feminist and therefore personal, social, and political. I believe education can – and should – be transformative for both students and teachers as they carve their journeys toward a more knowledgeable, perceptive, critical, inclusive, and liberating life as a person and as an educator. I focus my attention squarely on each student in front of me to scaffold him or her to be confident and knowledgeable enough to be willing to take the leap and create transformative classroom spaces for his or her future students. Generations of youth will certainly be well served by fuller, more open and aware, socially conscious teachers who are well positioned to recognize and respond to the resources and vulnerabilities of their students. *Stephanie Jones*

Like most people there are quotes I value and reread. One is attributed in various forms to Confucian philosopher Xun Kuang, Benjamin Franklin, and others, "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn". . . . I think of my faculty mentors. One provided me with a framed statement on teaching that includes the statements: "Students are not an interruption of our work, they are the purpose of it," and "Take care of the student, that is why we are here." There is little to say beyond that. Another provided me with the advice to have a teapot in my office, not for the tea, but to communicate to students that if I had time to make tea for them, I have time to talk with them. Writing this statement, reminds me that I have not made enough tea this year. *Joel Lee*

I believe that all students can realize their maximum potential. Therefore as a teacher, my job is to communicate high and clear expectations for my students and help them to develop effective tools to reach these expectations. A central strategy of mine is to challenge students to think deeply and thoughtfully about issues pertinent to their chosen profession, the world, and societal conditions that directly influence them both professionally and socially. I strive to capture the imagination of my students, stimulate their curiosity, and ignite a zeal for learning that will last throughout their lives. . . . My ultimate goal for my students is for them to not need me anymore. For them to be able to soar as high as their curiosity, intellect, and hard work will take them. *Roy Legette*