

# 1 Statement of Teaching

I have spent over 4500 hours in front of classes ranging in size from 15 to 270. I have worked as a teaching assistant, a Head-TA, a lecturer, and a coordinator. Through my experience, I have developed a personal philosophy that I attempt to adhere to when teaching.

One of the first lessons I learned when teaching was that students are responsible and will rise to the level expected of them. The more burden I removed from a student's back, the more I was expected to remove. When I set out the challenges at the beginning and held fast to them, I found the students quite willing to struggle and work. A university-level student should be actively pursuing the knowledge, and not desire to be spoon-fed everything.

One of the other extremely important lessons I have learned as an educator is to be fair. I have found that grading policies can be nearly draconian and the students will not have any complaints as long as the policies are applied evenly to all. Fairness to students means that I cannot break policies that I set out at the beginning of the semester without a complete and honest explanation of why to all students involved. Fairness means that once I set out the standards to achieve a grade, that I do not bend these standards to assist one student or group of students.

However, fairness means more than consistency. Failing all students that took a class would certainly be consistent, but it would not be fair. Expectations of students must be based on an appropriate level as well— I would expect more from students taking an in-major course than students who are attempting to fill university breath-requirements.

I try to tailor my methods of teaching to the type of course being taught. Most of my experience in teaching deals with simple objective mastery. In these cases, the students are informed beforehand what they will be expected to demonstrate by the end of the class, and the instruction is better suited to a true lecture environment: I explain the topics and answer student questions as they come up. Keeping students interested in the class when they are not directing the discussion is challenging, and I have found success in being very animated, and constantly asking questions even in very large lecture halls.

The rarer type of course in our discipline is the one in which students can direct the discourse. These are not all that common because topics such as “pointers” and “disk scheduling algorithms” usually do not have opposing view points that necessitate arguing. However, discussions about active research are possible, and in these cases I work to instill the ability to read papers critically, and the way to ask questions to more deeply explore a subject.