

Teaching Philosophy

By Raymond Gerson

I believe that the purpose of education is to bring out each student's potential and to teach them the knowledge and skills needed for a successful career and life.

A few components of my teaching philosophy are as follows:

1. Be an example and model the attitudes, work habits and behaviors which are being taught. For example, in my Effective Learning Strategies and Transition to College Success courses I come prepared, on time, and return tests and papers the next class. Then I ask my students to come prepared, to be on time and to hand in papers on time.
2. Set high and realistic expectations and treat students with respect, worth, and dignity. I communicate to my students verbally and non-verbally that I see them as capable students and expect quality work completed in a timely manner. They also understand that I care and will be available to support them so they can excel in my courses if they are willing to work.
3. Students need to be active learners with time to discuss and reflect upon knowledge and ideas. A combination of motivating lectures, self-assessments, small group exercises, and class discussions are important to maximize student learning. Self-knowledge is as important as learning subject matter. Students learn well through asking and being asked questions, putting ideas in their own words, and teaching others what they are learning.
4. A teacher's power to make a positive contribution comes from within. As the teacher grows through personal and professional development, so does his/her influence. The type of human being the teacher is becoming will determine how he/she perceives his/her students. If the teacher sees them as potentially excellent people and students, then this vision will be transferred to the canvass of their minds and they will begin to see themselves the same way. The students will usually rise to the level of the teacher's expectations.
5. Students need to learn to set goals, think creatively and critically, improve verbal and written communication, and develop people skills to maximize success in their careers and life.

Teachers should help students to see how the course is relevant and applicable to their student's goals and life. This stimulates self-motivation in students. For example, I find out what the hopes and dreams of my students are so that I can show them how ideas in the course can help them to achieve their goals.

I also created a web site with free articles, books, and other information to encourage students to strive for their dreams.

In conclusion, I believe that an education should bring out the best in students, develop their potential, natural gifts and character, and help them to become positive contributors to society.

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Raymond Gerson has a Masters Degree in Psychology and over 40 years experience teaching and coaching career and personal development. He also teaches college success strategy courses as a part-time adjunct professor. He has written five books including, Create the Life You Want. Two of his career how-to e-books and a motivational audio are available as free gifts at:

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