

## My Teaching Philosophy

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I have adopted as my personal mission statement advice given by the late Dr. Robert S. Hartman. He said that there are only 4 steps to a successful life: 1) Know yourself. 2) Choose yourself. 3) Grow yourself. 4) Give yourself to something greater than you. The greatest wisdom I can pass on my students is that they follow Hartman's 4-step path.

My observation is that, as educators, we tend to do a better job, on the whole, of teaching students subject-matter than we do teaching students about themselves. I strive in my courses to help students to learn to know themselves as well as to learn the subjects being taught.

I encourage my students to adopt what Carol Dweck calls a "growth mindset." With such a mindset, satisfaction stems from working hard to master a complex and difficult challenge. The professor's job is to find the right level of intellectual challenge to extend to students; not enough and they grow bored; too much and they give up; the right amount and they learn and take joy in the learning. Most people are smarter and more capable than they realize. I strive to help students identify and capitalize upon their own genius.

I embrace the values of mutual respect and collegiality between faculty and students. In some ways, my youthful experience as an undergraduate at the University of Virginia and my late-career experience as a graduate student at Fielding Graduate University are worlds apart. Yet, a commitment to the values of mutual respect and collegiality between faculty and students is deeply honored at both institutions. I endeavor to carry forward those same principles in my own teaching.

I strive to teach according to the principles of andragogy and collaborative critical pedagogy that were modeled for me at Fielding. These principles, as articulated by Schapiro (2003), encourage me to embrace teaching methods that are:

- Inquiry-driven rather than answer-directed
- Experiential rather than purely didactic
- Collaborative rather than competitive
- Constructivist rather than transmission-based
- Person-centered rather than role-centered

*Cliff Hurst*