TEACHING ABSTRACT

Brian A. Hagler

What do I try to teach my University students?

In my lower division courses and beyond:
Excellence is
taking the initiative to do more
than those who measure your performance
might otherwise rate as excellent.

In my bridge courses and beyond:
If you’re looking to succeed,
you can, and in my courses you should,
in spite of me.

In my upper division courses and beyond:
What my discipline is
to those who profess to know.

As it turns out, I teach Mathematics.

-Brian Hagler, Spring 2003

Documentation shows that I employ highly evolved and adaptive teaching strategies based on long-term guiding principles. Informed and enlightened by a diverse group of my students, Jim Olson, acting as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Chairman of the Department of Science and Mathematics in May, 2003, rated my teaching as “Exceeds Expectations”, with the comment that “Your course evaluations do not tell the tale of the quality of your teaching.” I have continued to follow the maxim I preach to my students: Take the initiative to do more than those who measure your performance might otherwise rate as excellent.

Deconstruct, Construct, Synthesize.

Lower          Intermediate          Upper

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Target Scholar’s Proportion of Learning Responsibilities by Course Level

A good teacher is superfluous, but not right away. My teaching promotes over time self-reliance in my charges. Learning of a canonical topic includes three stages
deconstruction, construction, and synthesis. I implement structures and enforce policies that over an undergraduate’s academic career shifts the balance of responsibility for these three components from me to my student, increasing the demands on all involved. Predictably, this has lead to misconceptions. For example, since I integrate and enforce measures gauging success in learning from a text, I may compare badly from the viewpoint of a pre-conditioned upper division student to their previous instructors who, as is appropriate for lower level courses, completely managed the scholar’s deconstruction of the textbook material. I cannot stress enough the point that expended energy as teacher is proportional, not inversely proportional, to the student’s total learning responsibility: This philosophy has required more, not less, of me as a teacher in development, implementation, instruction, and student assessment.

Points of Interest

- 14 Years Experience Teaching Mathematics at the University Level, 1992-2006
- Courses Taught as Instructor of Record, 1992-2006:
  - Freshman Seminar
  - Mathematics for Prospective Elementary School Teachers
  - Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematical Skills
  - Contemporary Mathematics
  - Trigonometry
  - College Algebra
  - Applications of Discrete Mathematics
  - Applications of Continuous Mathematics
  - Precalculus
  - Analytic Geometry and Calculus 1, Calculus 1
  - Calculus 2
  - Analytic Geometry and Calculus 3
  - Introduction to Differential Equations
  - Introduction to Linear Algebra
  - Mathematical Reasoning
  - Algebraic Structures
  - Introduction to Analysis, Intermediate Analysis
  - Complex Variables
  - Mathematical Reasoning 2
  - Happy Lands: Senior Capstone (Scheduled for Spring 2007)
- Teaching Innovations Include:
  - Class Websites for All Courses Taught, 1995-present
  - Graphics Tablet Blackboard Recording and Archiving, 2002-2004
  - UTTC Web Courses, 2003-2004
  - Qualifying/Value-Added Testing Implemented Online, 2004-present
  - Happy Lands Project Implemented Online, 2005-present
- Mathematical Association of America Member, 1994-present
- Nominated 3 Times For University Teaching Awards, 1996, 2002, 2004