Robert T. Farley

7 Glenwood Drive, Scotia, New York 12302
Tel: 518-399-9769   Cell: 518-986-2037   Fax: (518) 836-0260
E-Mail: bobfarley@bobfarley.org

STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Teaching is among the noblest of human pursuits. Through its communication of knowledge and experience, our society is advanced, and our civilization is offered the promise of a brighter tomorrow.

This high mantle of responsibility requires an effective teacher to possess a number of talents as well as expend a great deal of energy, enthusiasm and effort. As a result, the measures of effective teaching include:

1. Knowledge;
2. Communication;
3. Retention; and
4. Understanding.

The threshold measure of effective teaching is ***knowledge***. A Professor must exhibit, through education, study, background and experience, a fundamental knowledge of the subject matter. Moreover, such knowledge must be kept timely, through regular research on recent developments, theories and advances. Knowledge is not a static quality, but an ever growing and evolving virtue. Great teachers know their subject.

Knowledge alone, however, is not enough. Like some many other pursuits in life, high quality teaching also requires ***communication***. A Professor must demonstrate effective two way communication, to assure not only the delivery, but also the receipt, of the knowledge to be conveyed. Such effective communication takes place when a teacher is always prepared, exudes a contagious enthusiasm for the subject discussed, offers concepts in an understandable, focused and interesting manner, and shares a passion, relevance and real world application of the material presented. Great teachers motivate, fascinate and educate.

Conveyance of knowledge through effective communication, however, is only the first step to first class teaching. Equally important is the ***retention*** of such conveyed knowledge by the student. For if such knowledge is not retained, the conveyance was in vain. A Professor succeeds when their student succeeds, and a professor should not only assure delivery, but also develop methods and measures that promote long term retention. Different students retain differently, requiring the use of a variety of mediums and methods. Lectures, written materials, audio and visual presentations and practical interactions must all be selected and presented in a complementary manner, to promote the repetition and reinforcement that leads to retention, without the dull redundancy that produces boredom and disinterest. Creative Intellectual devices and responsive measurements further prove helpful in pursuit of this goal. In the end, retention is a cornerstone to learning. Great teachers communicate knowledge in ways it will be retained.

The final measure of effective teaching is student ***understanding***. A Professor has succeeded when their student understands the retained knowledge communicated. Building understanding, the hardest task in all of teaching, requires a Professor to motivate students to develop their own intellectual talents, and to apply their recently retained knowledge to new and different situations. Offered by way of the teacher's enlightened path of perspective and insight, understanding is attained by the student through their own thought and analysis. Through understanding, the future application and extension of communicated knowledge can be achieved. Producing understanding is thus the essential element of education. It is the fundamental factor for which a teacher must effectively test. By inspiring students to achieve it, understanding is the ultimate hallmark of an effective teacher. Great teachers advance understanding.

It these four measures, knowledge, communication, retention and understanding, that I wish to employ as a professor. It is through this framework that I wish to offer my time, talent, energy, enthusiasm and effort. It is upon this foundation, that I wish to combine my experience, to provide depth and relevance in the education of our students. It is upon this philosophy, that I wish to develop into a great teacher.