

Teaching Philosophy

I knew from a very young age that I wanted to be a teacher. As a child, I would spend lots of my time at my grandmother's house with my younger cousins. When we were together, we'd play and pretend like we were in a classroom. Since I was the oldest cousin, I was always playing the "teacher". I really enjoyed playing my role and looked forward to it on the weekends.

Eventually, I went on to tutor my cousins in math when they were in junior high. Tutoring them is what assured me that teaching is what I wanted to do in the future. Helping them succeed was my ultimate goal, so watching them solve problems on their own was such a rewarding feeling. I realized that I really enjoyed teaching them and that I was really good at it too. I thought about how I really love math and how it felt to help someone reach their own goals, and that's when I knew that teaching math was in my future.

My goals as a teacher are to show students that math is not the worst subject in the world, to encourage them to keep learning whether it be in school or at home, and to engage and entertain the students with my lessons so much that they want to come to school the next day. I hope to build a connection with my students so that they know that my classroom is a safe place. With that, I also hope to increase the students' knowledge in the subject matter. I hope to teach my students in a way that will help them refrain from just memorizing the information, but instead help them actually learn it.

An educational experience that has had the most impact on me was when I taught and observed an Algebra 1 class at an early college high school. This particular

class had about 15 students with a majority of them being English Language Learners. More than half of those students' first language was Spanish. As I observed, I began to realize how behind the students were due to the language barrier between them and their teacher. I attended a school just like this one, and my father was also an English language learner, so it hit close to home for me. I tried to help them as best as I could by translating their assignments and inserting pictures for reference. A group of girls in particular expressed how relieved they were when they found out I spoke a little bit of Spanish. They were excited to have someone there who would be able to help them. The connection I built with these students encouraged them to want to do their work because they felt comfortable enough to ask questions. This made a huge impact on me because it made me realize just how important it is to adjust to every students' learning needs and how much of a difference it makes to build connections with students.

My goal as a teacher is to teach students the way I wish I was taught, hopefully change the perspective that students have on learning certain subjects, like math, and encourage students to play a part in their own learning. As UT's slogan goes, "what starts here changes the world", and I hope to contribute to the change we see in the future. Although I know that being a teacher might not change the world as a whole, I hope to at least change a couple of students along the way.