

## My Philosophy of Teaching.

As an immigrant, I have a special appreciation for the challenges involved in learning a second language. My goal of being a fluent speaker often seems less attainable (and, in fact, less important) than the more realistic objective of being an effective communicator. In my opinion, having an accent is not a serious impediment to communicating effectively with others; instead, it is a minor limitation which I continue to minimize through my ongoing efforts. It is a motivation to maintain an active search for new or better words.

I want my students to be effective speakers and therefore I need to know them individually. Memorizing their names is obviously not good enough; I need to understand their needs, expectations, and goals. Knowing my audience helps me bridge the gap between my professional standards and my students' aspirations. I want my students to feel comfortable expressing their ideas independent of their level of proficiency, and consequently I work to provide an environment of confidence and mutual respect. I believe that learning a second language provides an invaluable opportunity to further develop the good habit of thinking before talking. Accordingly, I ask my students to organize their ideas before responding. This simple technique helps to control over-participation, encourages everyone to participate, and increases the quality of class discussions. I love when I see my students looking for special words, appropriate grammar constructions, or persuasive, effective approaches. As I say in class, "the least that you will get out this course is that you will improve your skills as a thinker and communicator."

Learning a second language is a challenging process: it requires the constant learning of new words, expressions, and grammar rules. It requires self-discipline, motivation, organization, and plenty of work. It is a long process, but I aim to ensure that it will also be an enjoyable and memorable journey. My course's standards are clear and high. My lectures and course material are organized, versatile, informational, and fun. Everyone is required to act responsibly, professionally, positively, and optimistically. Everyone adheres to deadlines, makes commitments to produce good quality work, and contributes to a lively academic atmosphere. I always strive to create an environment in which my students learn while having a good time. I inject humor in my lectures, in the hope of showing students that learning and laughter can go often hand in hand.

In my opinion, learning a second language has long-term life benefits. It compels us to pay more attention to pronunciation and grammar rules and opens our minds to other cultures. It helps us to think before talking and to enjoy the process of learning (keeping in mind that, if nothing else, mistakes usually allow us to laugh at ourselves). I sincerely believe that learning a second language helps us to be better writers and speakers in our own language.

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