

TYLER LEHMAN ADAMS, PH.D. / MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

After being an instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, and an endowed full professor over 30 years of teaching experience, I possess a very unique and experienced perspective of what needs to occur in an effective classroom. My pedagogical philosophy comes from all of my classroom experiences in human and mass communication. I am a very student-centered educator. I believe that the measure of any teacher comes from student progress and outcomes. If the students are not performing well, it is because the teacher has not done his or her job effectively.

My teaching style is highly interactive. I require my students to participate in the lecture process. Students are required to read all class materials before coming to class, make presentations in class over important segments of instruction, and actually “act” as teachers, in and of themselves. One of my key assignments in every class is to require students to do chapter critiques from the assigned textbook. By small groups, students break-down each chapter in the book, make outlines for class distribution, and also prepare PowerPoint slideshows for presentation. Accordingly, I refer to this approach as “community learning,” and it is highly effective. These graded presentations help make the class more animated and interactive.

My students commonly argue that they cover far too much information in my classes; however, while we do cover a lot of information, I want the students to be tested. My tests are usually very challenging, and require a lot of memory skills to pass with an “A.” Fortunately for the students, I allow notes to be used on examinations. The students appreciate this a great deal. I believe that the students should be allowed to access all of the notes they have taken during the course of a semester to augment their test-taking requirements. This tactic has proven to be very effective in making sure that the students prepare for their examinations fully.

My teaching results, by and large, are very high. I regularly get good results on my teaching evaluations, and take great pride in that fact. As well, I always hold a community get-together at the end of my classes, where the students and I are allowed to mix informally and get to know one another as human beings – instead of teacher-student. My students always enjoy these parties, and feel more free to ask me questions about their major path and career. This is a great way to break the ice at the end of a semester, prior to finals.

All in all, I consider myself to be a highly effective classroom manager and instructor. My students always respond in the affirmative to my instruction, and typically complement me on my methods at the end of a class. As well, you can see from my CV that I am versed in a great number of subjects in the communication discipline. So, teaching in either human communication or mass communication is not an issue.