

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I enjoy being an accounting professor because it allows me to help develop future accounting professionals by preparing students with solid accounting and accounting-related skills. My objectives are to ensure that students understand fundamental and intermediate accounting concepts and develop their problem-solving strategies and critical thinking skills. To achieve these objectives, I plan my courses around various activities and resources aligned with the following beliefs.

I believe that learning is an active process. Because engagement is a critical component of learning, I encourage my students to gain early exposure to the accounting topic before discussing it in class. To achieve this purpose, I use a hybrid teaching approach with a mix of a lecture-based and a flipped course. My lectures are recorded and available online for students to watch before coming to class. I assign pre-lecture activities where students are required to read the course reference material and show their basic comprehension of the topic at hand. After that, students bring to class discussions of their proposed solutions to the accounting situations at hand; this approach helps them recognize the need for learning the accounting standards relevant to the business matter discussed.

I believe that students need to engage with primary sources. I often bring to the classroom current events relevant to the accounting topic under discussion to allow my students to work on real-life problems using authentic evidence. For example, I used media coverage of Facebook's and Twitter's recent IPO when discussing the stockholders' equity section of the balance sheet and the smartphone mania of Apple's iPhone when discussing contingent liabilities (i.e., warranty expense and liabilities). I combine Starbucks' audited financial statements with my the history of my family's coffee plantation in the Caribbean to illustrate discussions of financial reporting and the usefulness of the financial statements.

I believe in experiential learning. I prepare handouts for each topic discussed and include accounting situations in exercises that students must solve individually or in teams during class. These handouts are integrated into my lectures to create an interactive discussion environment. As a project-based learning activity, I assign a business case where the students have a chance to apply their accounting knowledge to present the financial position of a publicly-traded company. This particular assignment requires that they conduct research using FASB Accounting Standards Codification online, a vital resource used in the industry and required to use for the CPA exam. In addition, students present their findings in the form of a business memorandum for which I provide feedback regarding the accounting content and writing skills.

I believe that students do not learn in a single way. To reach a wide range of learners, I combine various approaches inside and outside the classroom, including online pre-lecture activities, online lectures, readiness assessment tests (in-class quizzes), online homework assignments, daily solution-walkthrough exercises, writing workshops, and exam-review sessions. I evaluate the activities that produce the highest level of engagement by reviewing my student evaluations, completed after the first examination and at the end of every semester, and adjusting the next semester's course accordingly.

I believe that the classroom climate is essential. I dedicate the first day of class to discussing the policies that we will follow during the semester to create a safe and stimulating environment that encourages students to participate actively. These policies are disclosed on my syllabus and the online course website. I strive to be sensitive to individual differences to maintain a healthy environment before, during, and after my lectures, including office hours, emails, and other face-to-face interactions. I attend Safe Zone/Space training and Inclusive Teaching workshops to keep updated on cultural, physical, and mental challenges students might face on campus and help my students by providing a productive and inclusive learning environment.