

## PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

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Learning extends beyond the realm of simple facts to actively experiencing, questioning, probing and challenging accepted scientific axioms and norms. I define learning as the active pursuit of wisdom. This definition highlights three pivotal elements: (1) the active and engaged roles of teachers and learners, (2) the lifelong learning journey or pursuit and (3) the ultimate goal of achieving wisdom, not merely memorizing data.

The role of the teacher is to create a safe learning environment where different evidence-based and experience-based perspectives can be shared. A successful teacher functions more as a guide, mentor and facilitator allowing learners to assume a central role as they actively engage in exploration. An effective teacher brings the global perspective into the classroom and extends the learners' experience beyond the halls of academia to include the surrounding community. Learners that are poised to expand their knowledge are willing to reflect, challenge their own assumptions, examine other perspectives, take risks and learn from others that are not usually identified as "teachers", such as their peers, patients and community members.

My personal teaching goals reflect these guiding educational principles. I have strived to create a safe learning space, to share the scientific literature as well as my professional experience and to expose learners to local and global community perspectives. I have accomplished these goals teaching in both university and community settings. However, the community-based programs created unique opportunities for the learners and have been unparalleled in terms of educational creativity, innovation and professional passion.

Based on assessments through written evaluations and often poignant personal comments, I have accomplished these goals.