

IS THIS THE RIGHT CLASS FOR YOU?

A synthesis of my teaching philosophy

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Grading Scale for Essays

- ▣ A = perfect paper, highly original, professional quality (0-15% of class)
- ▣ B = solid paper with very few if any flaws, answers the question in a clear organized fashion (20-60%)
- ▣ C = reasonable effort but major flaws in either the analysis or the writing (30-60%)
- ▣ Note: Late work is penalized cumulatively
- ▣ There is no point by numbers for how to write an original analysis, but I am happy to answer questions about how to diagnose and fix problems so you can improve. Key issue is to work ahead!

Why are you here?

- ▣ My teaching mission:
 - Give students opportunities to learn the knowledge and skills to find meaningful work and contribute to the world in a time of increasing competitiveness

- ▣ My perception:
 - You can expand your intellectual boundaries at the same time as you secure your future.
 - A 4 year liberal arts degree is no longer an automatic ticket to a good job. If you don't take care of your education, you will find yourself without a plan when you graduate.
 - That means you have to be willing to work hard and acquire skills and knowledge that may not come naturally.

Like/Dislike?

- ▣ Students who often don't like my courses:
 - those who are just here bec. of convenience (timing, couldn't register into others, etc)
 - those who are sensitive to criticism or need to get an "A"
 - those who don't want to talk in class
 - those who procrastinate
 - those who have strong &/or fatalistic views

- ▣ Students who do like my classes:
 - Are persistent, want steady feedback (even if critical),
 - Understand that improvement in results, not the particular grade, is the true measure of learning
 - are willing to take initiative and work hard
 - Are oriented towards getting employment and are pragmatic in their approach to solving puzzles
 - Are intellectually flexible, open-minded and enjoy a well-prepared debate that pushes the envelope

Classes are not enough

- ▣ Learning to analyze is like learning a new language; it takes time, persistence, steady work, and appropriate feedback
- ▣ Skills can make a big difference
- ▣ Student learning commons
- ▣ Co-op
- ▣ Student exchange
- ▣ Learn a skill or specialized knowledge, eg., statistics; education; health; agriculture
- ▣ volunteer

What I can teach you if you do the work

- Personal skills of persistence, time management, learning on the fly, detail orientation
- Pragmatic problem solving where there is no clear easy answer
- The ability to read, understand, and comment upon the highest level complexity material in the field, and know how to learn/research/write about the most difficult topics
- Policy analysis: qualitative and statistical
- Professional-level oral, writing, and debating skills
- Learning to work in groups in a professional setting
- In short, preparing for the tough situations of life, both professional and personal.