

My teaching philosophy is inspired by John Locke's statement that "[r]eading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours" (Locke 1706:§20), built up through my interpretation of its relevance for practicing, and learning how to practice rigorous, compassionate and just 21<sup>st</sup> Century Anthropocene science and politics (Dewey, 1916; 1927; Kuhn, 1970[1962]; Ravetz, 1995[1971]).

I enjoy teaching and learning and believe that the greatest challenge in teaching is to give students the materials, space, and support that they need in order to have, as Kant recommends, the courage to use their own understanding (Kant, 1990[1984]). In my classrooms and consultations, fun and rigorous, socially relevant scholarship are comfortable companions, supported by a passion to address pressing questions about the state of humanity, a commitment to providing classical foundations in both analytical and synthetic thinking and in iterative, reflexive abductive work. Having first encountered Gardner's (1993[1983]; 1999) theory of Multiple Intelligences during my doctoral studies, I am a keen believer in the didactic benefits that come with constructing multiple pathways for students to achieve understanding and ownership of learning materials.

Along the undergraduate/postgraduate spectrum, I vary the focus from learning foundation principles, to creating relevant research, to creating new understanding and design my lectures to encourage students not only to record but also to process what is being taught, using dialogue, debate, exercises, and small group work on thought experiments and applied projects. Student involvement in research is a key feature of this dialogical approach and is encouraged. When such a flexible approach is not feasible, due for example to class sizes, similar results can be achieved using seminars and study groups; an example of this is the Philosophy of Science Discussion Group that I facilitated for several years while working at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, which allowed more advanced students to push the frontiers of their learning in a structured creative space. Having taught at university level in the United States, United Kingdom, Continental European and Latin American, I have experience with outcome oriented, principle oriented, problem based, competence based and mixed pedagogical cultures and find that mixed approaches can be very effective, with the scoped and composition depending on whether pedagogical aims are more focused on theory, practice, or a combination of the two.

My way of going about teaching is informed by my reading of Dewey's (1916; 2000[1958]) American Pragmatist existentialist epistemology, which recognizes the irrefutable realness of the existence of truths as a basic part of the human experience, while at the same time emphasizing the inevitably anthropogenic ways in which these truths are discerned, postulated and proven. As such, I work to always keep on the table, whether in teaching of theory or applied studies, Kuhn's inspiring, albeit problematic observation that "[t]here is, I think, no theory-independent way to reconstruct phrases like 'really there'..." (1970[1962]: 206).

### References

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