

## **Geoffrey Koester's Educational Philosophy**

My approach to teaching in general is that educational moments and learning opportunities can occur anywhere at any time. Instruction in a standard classroom complemented with life experiences outside of a classroom both contribute to the making of a whole person. Education is a holistic process that cannot be accurately measured for levels and letter grades. I have applied this holistic overview of teaching to the following tenets of my teaching philosophy. All of the following tenets are interworking and relate to each other, as you shall see in each description.

In order for a student to learn, they must first have the desire to learn. It is important for students to have a stake in their own educational process to determine what they want to learn. If students choose what they are most interested in and an education is created around that choice, I strongly believe that the students will achieve more and be more successful long term.

Similarly to applying student ownership, students should go through the educational process as preparation for future careers and other life paths they may take. Students can receive specific training for a job when they start the job itself; they should get the broader skills that are applicable across disciplines from a general education. Students should be able to express themselves in written and verbal forms, they should be able to process daily tasks such as making bill payments or understanding their finances, and they should also be able to make decisions about their life from an informed perspective.

As an educator, it is important to develop one-on-one relationships and connections with students. In order to provide educational opportunities both in and out of the classroom, those relationships need to be established so students are comfortable coming to me for help and with questions. Even within the classroom, interpersonal relationships will allow me to best adapt my teaching style to meet the needs of individual students because I know what their needs are. Finally, this allows me to role model proper interpersonal, professional relationships to help prepare students for their own future professional roles.

My final tenet of my teaching philosophy is an area of passion for me and is what has drawn me to the field of education. All students should have the opportunity to receive an education, regardless of financial or familial burdens that may be in place. I, as an educator, and the larger institution within which I work should be able to assist those students in need so they can persist through their educational journey and be successful. Education is the most valuable asset we have on the planet and we should acknowledge that immense value by continuing to invest in it.