

## **Teaching Philosophy <sup>1</sup>**

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My teaching philosophy stems predominantly from Kolb's experiential learning theory<sup>2</sup>. In experiential learning, students experience concrete learning interventions (e.g., cases), reflect on their experiences, develop abstract principles, and actively experiment with their insights (e.g., recommend improvements). Internships, field consulting projects, independent studies, and student organizations (e.g. Society for Human Resource Management) extend student learning experiences beyond traditional classroom lectures, discussions, cases, and simulations. Active learning begins in the classroom, and then extends to a multitude of experiences outside the classroom.

As a result of participating in learning experiences with me, students will:

1. develop competency at an entry level in the field of human resources,
2. improve critical thinking skills in a diversity of situations,
3. gain efficacy with respect to self growth and their expectation that they will add value to their future organizations, and
4. develop application skills that bridge the gap between knowledge and application.

To achieve the learning outcomes listed above, I structure learning experiences to promote deep learning, critical thinking, and application skills. In basic level learning experiences such as Human Resource Management (HRM 386), students move thru Kolb's experiential learning cycle by first identifying and discussing current newspaper articles that address HRM. The class explores article HR implications for managing people. Cases and essay exams are debriefed so that students move through the concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation learning cycle. In Compensation Management (HRM 463), students again move through the learning cycle using a comprehensive computer simulation. In the Human Resource Capstone course (HRM 464), students consult with local business and recommend human resource management improvements. Students participate in many opportunities to develop communication, problem solving, and teamwork skills.

My teaching philosophy supports assessment of learning outcomes and emphasizes accommodation of students' learning styles. Exams are not merely assessments for grading purposes, but also provide learning experiences, and function as program evaluation tools. Variation in instructional methods accommodates different student learning styles.

In summary, my teaching philosophy relies on students being active participants in their own learning. The faculty member serves as a facilitator; assisting students acquire subject matter knowledge, business competencies such as teamwork and communication skills, and increased confidence to apply what they learn.

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<sup>1</sup> I base my teaching philosophy on several sources, including Kolb's research on experimental learning and learning styles, the National Educational Association, Wilbert McKeachie (2002), *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, and Dr. Florence Kirk, SUNY Oswego.

<sup>2</sup> Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential Learning*, Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.