

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Xuerong Yong

[I have had thirteen years' university level teaching and research experiences. The names of courses taught are listed in my CV and the syllabus of each of the courses can be accessed from <http://www.math.uprm.edu/~xryong>. I teach a variety of undergraduate courses and specialized graduate courses. My teaching evaluations and professional evaluations from the department are averaging 4.21/5 and 4.52/5, respectively.]

My overall strategy is to run well-organized teaching by mimicing the methods used by my most successful professors. I set up a webpage for each course assigned so that my students can check easily the syllabus and course information – where I describe the prerequisites, the covering topics, and the names of reference books and where I also describe clearly my plan for homework and exams, my grading policy, office hours, telephone number, email address, and the TA information (if any), etc.

My class often starts with a simple example and then gets into the details. I believe that only when the students have the fundamentals down can I attempt more involved topics. A key to efficient teaching is to prepare well each lecture before the time. Another important thing is to carefully choose the part which you want to emphasize in class and try to explain each complicated concept in a simple way so as to inspire the interest of the students instead of boring them or scaring them away. Even though one topic may follow logically from another, a certain amount of time must be allowed for the students to absorb new material.

In class I often try to put myself into the students' position, remembering what it was like when I was a student. This way allows me to get feedback from the students. In answering questions, I make a point of keeping track of what my students currently know about the course. I avoid using any inappropriate examples or methods which could lead to confusion for the students. I used Maple, MATLAB and Mathematica.

In creating an exam I often indicate the difficulties of the questions, and place my greatest emphasis on understanding the basic concepts and techniques. After two or three quizzes, I often can determine whether a challenge problem would be given. If so, I would put a relatively difficult question (which is optional) in the next exam, as an extra credit problem, to give a little inspiration. This method worked well in my several classes. Only when the students become interested in the lectures, will they be actively involved, work hard, and finally grasp the knowledge.

I became interested in mathematics since my elementary school. My mother, a very good math teacher, inspired me a lot to be a teacher. After entering into the University, I took clear notes in class so as to reference them someday if I got an opportunity to go into teaching. I wanted to be able to transfer what I learned to my students just as my successful professors did. My desire to be a teacher became stronger and stronger as I have progressed.

I received *Best Teaching Awards*. I am confident about my teaching and I feel pride in what I have done.