Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Education that consists of learning things and not the meaning of them is feeding upon the husks and not the corn.  ~ Mark Twain

My doctorate combines two programs, Management and Psychology, allowing me to teach in both departments, and gain experience with students at all levels (undergraduate and graduate). Throughout, three principles have governed my teaching: responsibility, control, and empowerment.

**Responsibility:** Students must assume the primary responsibility for their learning in my class. A good example of this is my approach to grading schemes. I begin the term by working with the students to determine how they will be graded. For example, in Introductory Psychology, one section preferred periodic quizzes and a final paper; the other section opted for weekly homework. As a result, I used different grading schemes for the two concurrent sessions. Such co-creation immediately shows students their important role in the class. It also benefits the class by increasing motivation and creating assignments that accommodate students’ unique learning styles. I expect a great deal from my students, though I have come to recognize that different audiences will accept different levels of responsibility, and that it is important to meet that level without exceeding it.

**Control:** Students have not learned until they can handle relevant problems in their field. Abstract ideas must be connected to relevant practice to produce appropriate results (e.g., implementing a change, explaining a strange behavior). To promote control, my classes emphasize practical experience. For example, the co-creation of grading criteria served as an experiential exercise in my Change Management class. When we discussed employee responses to change, the students compared their attitudes in other classes and mine, where they helped to design the grading scheme. This gave them a concrete experience of how participation influences support. Connecting important, tangible issues (i.e., their grades) to course concepts better prepares students to use their knowledge; it gives them control.

**Empowerment:** In support of responsibility and control, my teaching has a Socratic element to empower students. I create situations where students find their own answers, rather than receiving them from me. A classroom instructor has three duties: introducing the issues, creating an environment that supports learning, and providing the necessary resources necessary. Within the limits of the course material, I prefer to be a guide to information, rather than an expert informant.

My teaching goal is for students to be able to use content knowledge effectively outside class. To demonstrate such control, they must take responsibility for their own learning. I empower them by providing the tools, but the action must come from them.
### Course Evaluations

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<tr>
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<th>Managing Change (OB 314)</th>
<th>Intro Psychology (Psych 111)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, this was an excellent course</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall rating of the instructor as a teacher</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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</tbody>
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- All scores are on a 5-point scale.
- There were no formal teaching evaluations for teaching assistants in Psych 613.

### Teaching Experience

Winter 2007 I am scheduled to teach MO512, *Bargaining Behavior and Influence Skills*, the MBA course in negotiation.

Autumn 2003, 2005  PSYCH 613  *Advanced Statistical Methods*  Class size: 47, 45 students

This was the required statistics class for all graduate students in Psychology. I assisted with practical labs, grading, software training, and assignments.

Winter 2005  PSYCH 111  *Introductory Psychology*  Class size: 61 students

This class, a survey of the field of psychology as a whole, was offered in lecture sessions of 400 students. Seven teaching assistants were assigned to the class, each of whom was responsible for two discussion sections of students.

Winter 2004  OB 314  *Managing change*  Class size: 13 students

This Organizational Behavior class allowed me to combine my academic training in organizational behavior and psychology with my professional experience as a management consultant to create an experience-oriented class for students preparing to become managers or change consultants.

Representative written comments from students:
- “Arran is very upbeat and accepting of students’ shortcomings”
- “Writing [expectation] was a little extreme”
- “Good comprehensive, applicable information and tools learned”
- “The best and most interesting parts of the class were the applications and the ability to form our own rubric”
- “I really like that he let the students come up with a syllabus that fit their needs”
- “The ability for students to help structure the class was very good”