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Intro to Teaching

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Philosophy Essay

A teacher’s effect on present and future generations is immeasurable as a result of the influence they have on the lives of their students. Because of this influence, teachers must be well prepared to handle the dynamics of the classroom with integrity and character. The University of Mary holds student learning in high regard, as a result of this, the university’s Education Department works diligently to train future teachers that are the most well prepared best in the education industry. All that goes into a good teacher, however, must start at the beginning of his training by establishing a good foundation. The University of Mary starts this foundation with a base code or mission that students must follow if they are to be successful in becoming an educator from the university. There are three main points in the Department of Education Mission that teachers will have to follow and use for guidance in their quest to become a teacher. The first is taking responsibility for student learning. Second is demonstrating strong pedagogical content knowledge. Finally, teachers must display professional characteristics.

When it comes to teaching, there are many strategies that use a number of techniques that teachers must master in order to teach subjects that will benefit students. A major part of this mastery is in the form of how to take responsibility for student learning and what to do to better enhance this learning for student achievement. There are many ways to go about succeeding in this, one of them being the usage of student assessment results. Assessments can be in many forms from traditional tests, to teacher observations, to performance based assessments. Using these various testing methods can help tell a teacher where their student is academically, what she is best at, and also what they need help with. Assessments help a teacher plan out the course a student will need to take in order for them to excel in school. However, regardless of what assessment method is used, the main point to understand as a teacher and the concept of ‘taking responsibility for student learning,’ is realizing that if a student is not succeeding, the teacher must reevaluate curriculum and make changes as often as necessary to help the student. A teacher cannot accept student failure, because in reality it is not the student who is failing – it is the teacher. Teachers must constantly reflect on what they are doing in the classroom. Reflecting on work and teaching practices will help identify what worked and what didn’t. Reflection is the best way to change things for the better in the classroom.

While student learning is a top priority as a teacher, there are many things that go hand in hand with it. In order to make student learning effective, the teacher must be able to demonstrate strong pedagogical content knowledge. This means for a teacher to be successful, they must be an expert in the subject matter they are teaching. If a teacher doesn’t know the material they are teaching, it can do more harm than good because students will not get a full picture of the subject. It is like trying to see the object in a puzzle with missing pieces. Many strategies can be used to give a strong grasp on the material, however regardless of what strategy is used, if the teacher doesn’t know the subject, effective teaching will not occur. Teachers must be disciplined with their subject matter and be able to teach it at the highest level possible if they want their students to have the upmost success. A way to keep teaching at a high level is to use a wide variety of teaching strategies. Not all students learn the same way, and teachers must remember this when they are planning how to teach their material. Sometimes they will have to attack student learning at different angles if they want their delivery to work. Adapting instruction to meet each student’s need will help students excel because it specifically targets where they need help and which way to adjust curriculum for student mastery.

Teaching is a profession, and teacher must act with character to succeed. To be a teacher, one must hold themselves to a high level of work ethic, be able to take on great responsibility, and be able to handle the pressure of everyday activities in the classroom and workplace. Being a teacher is not an easy job, but it can be very rewarding in the affect one can have on students. It would be very difficult to just wake up one day and decide to be a teacher. Rather a teacher candidate must reflect on the things they are good at and whether those things are compatible with being a teacher. First, they must be able to display strong communication skills. Getting students to do what a teacher needs them to do requires the ability to talk and communicate well in order to transfer information. Communication is also important when interacting with co-workers. Teachers must discuss teaching methods and other things that will better serve their students. Second, planning is something that teachers use on a daily basis. Teachers plan extensively every day so they control what their students are doing and when they should be doing something different in the context of the material they are teaching. Without good planning skills, teaching becomes an unorganized mass of information that students will not be able to connect together. Planning allows a goal to be defined, and then a road map of how to get there. Finally, as a teaching professional, one must engage and support appropriate practices. A teacher must be able to do things with honesty and integrity that will hold up their job in a bright light and never have a blemish or flaw. A teacher must treat their profession with respect, because when they do something bad it reflects on all fellow teachers. If teaching is suitable for a person, then one of many positive consequences is that they will meet many people that are all necessary to make education possible. Also, a teacher can collaborate with other educators that are in the same field that they, learn new methods, and teach those methods to others.

The University of Mary’s three main points to the Department of Education Mission that teachers follow and use for guidance are extremely important foundational areas to use when becoming an educator. First, teachers must take responsibility for student learning and look to themselves when students are not mastering material. Teachers must demonstrate strong pedagogical content knowledge in order to provide a complete map for students to follow. Finally, teachers must display professional characteristics in order to bring credibility to the profession of teaching. These areas as defined by the University of Mary are central to the successful training of teachers, and will ultimately allow them to be prepared to perform at high levels in order to give their students the best opportunity to learn and succeed.