As an individual, I believe that the school system reflects the lives of people who live in that given society. As a university instructor, I have always tried as much as possible to ensure that this reflects on my teaching approaches as I seek to equip the students with the necessary skillsets essential for success in the real world. This could range from classroom activities that combine various learning approaches (e.g., traditional lectures, student-led discussions, and group work) to practical evaluation methods that assess not only students' understanding of course materials but also their transferable value to real-life contexts and enhanced problem-solving skills.

I have demonstrated this conviction over the past year when I taught two courses as an instructor at the University of Utah. The first course (undergraduate level: Cultural context of developmental psychology) has not previously been taught at the University of Utah and involved a new curriculum development. The key objective of this course is to enhance students' understanding of cultural dynamics that may dictate how specific cultural groups are reared from infancy to childhood and how such cultural standards go on to shape their adult functioning. As a course that intersects between cross-cultural psychology and developmental psychology, I was blessed to have a rich diversity of students from various cultural groups and religious faiths enrolled in the Fall 2024. To ensure students have a better appreciation of cultural differences in child rearing and development, parenting attitudes, and adult development, I devised an assessment style that required students to work in groups towards writing a term paper. The group compositions were intentionally designed to include students from diverse backgrounds (ethnicity, religious faith, or social class). They regularly met throughout the semester, and each student ultimately made an oral presentation to the whole class, defending their positions and arguments. At the end of the class, my impression was that a significant number of students appreciated the diversity of human development and were possibly better equipped to relate to or interact with people from a different cultural background.

Similarly, when developing the curriculum for the graduate course (Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience) that I taught in the spring semester, a big motivation underlying the syllabus development involves what relevant academic skills from this course would be gainful for students' success in the graduate school and later life as a faculty. That was why, just like the undergraduate course that I taught in the earlier semester, this course combined learning styles to achieve this aim. For example, in addition to my teaching days, there were also regular student-led journal club activities where students made a presentation on the current issues in Developmental Cognitive Science using recently published empirical and theoretical papers. In addition, as part of their assessment, they also did some thought papers where they were asked to drive home a hypothetical question using critical analysis, mainly from scientific articles sent earlier to them. My impression was that this complex course approach provided better skill-sets that are essential for success in graduate school and beyond for those who enrolled and completed the course.

As part of teaching philosophy, I also value an enriched students' mentorship or supervision for the mutual benefits of both the students and the supervisor. I have had the pleasure of supervising undergraduate students and high school students in the past, most of whom I have jointly published research papers with. As a supervisor at the University of Utah, I hope to continue this tradition. I already have the pleasure of briefly working with a few undergraduate research assistants at Utah in 2025, and now, an addition of a graduate student. I already have a paper under review with these undergraduate and graduate students as co-authors. I also look forward to helping them achieve their objectives, while I expect they will contribute significantly to my research programs.