



My objective in teaching is to get my students to think critically so that they can apply what they learn to everyday life. For example, in teaching about human memory, I present our current theoretical understanding of the organization of memory and then have students participate in several activities so that they can understand how the theories apply to everyday behavior. I work to incorporate the best practices of education in my classes. For example, in addition to traditional lecture, class discussion, and powerpoint presentation, I include a number of real-world activities that require students to apply the knowledge from class in different ways.

I have also developed a novel undergraduate seminar, entitled *Cognition in the Wild*. The course is designed to explore how our mental experience is connected to the environment. This is emerging as a hot topic area in cognitive neuroscience, with new papers on the topic published in the top journals in the field (e.g., *Perspectives in Psychological Science*). The course samples quite broadly from the literature, and includes readings from Psychology, Anthropology, Geology, Environmental Studies, and Ecology.

With *Cognition in the Wild*, I use the best practices of education to enhance the quality of my class. There is a collaborative learning component, that encourages class discussion and participation. Given the divergent background of the students, there is a healthy exchange of ideas. There is a writing component, which encourages students to write on a daily basis (in journals, thought papers, and a final term paper). Students also have to give a formal presentation of the ideas that they develop for their term paper. In addition, a portion of the class also includes a traditional lecture format.

I use my classes to get students to think critically, communicate effectively, and write with purpose. I try to get the students to think about how the material applies to real world settings. I have found that this helps to ground the theoretical discussion and directly address how the material relates to the real world. I focus my discussion on big picture concepts that the students will, hopefully, remember and incorporate into their life for years after the course.

Sincerely,