

**Statements of Teaching Philosophy
by 2006 Recipients**



Jay Brewster
Seaver College

Larry Bumgardner
Graziadio School of Business and Management

Paul Contino
Seaver College

Jim Gash
School of Law

Levon Goukasian
Seaver College

Jack Green
Graziadio School of Business and Management

Susan Hall
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Robert Popovich
School of Law

Ed Shafranske
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Timothy Willis
Seaver College

Jay Brewster
Associate Professor of Biology
Seaver College

Introduction

As a scientist, I am driven by a thirst for discovery and understanding. Unraveling the complexities of the world around me through investigation, experimentation, and through the study of scientific literature is a fascination for me. As a teacher, I want students to experience the joy of discovery and to appreciate the work of great research scientists and physicians who have contributed to our knowledge of the natural world. It is an incredible experience to watch students develop an appreciation for Gregor Mendel and his contributions to the study of inheritance, or Stanley Pruisner and his Nobel Prize-winning work in neuroscience. We live in an exciting time for the biological sciences as major breakthroughs occur each year, and also a challenging time as the ethics of some biological experimentation has come into question. As a teacher, I want my students to appreciate the times in which we live and to develop a competency in science that opens doors for them upon graduation.

Certainly these goals are challenging, as students must invest a great deal of energy building the necessary knowledge base. This alienates some, generating a kind of phobia that restricts their interest in science. Yet I feel that anyone, the scientist and the non-scientist alike, can find a joy in learning about the natural world and its wonders, if they are willing to devote their attention. Students sometimes feel they simply aren't good at science, or that science classes involve only the memorization of uninteresting content. As a scientist, I must somehow relay my own interest in the sciences, the things that truly excite me and fascinate me. There are days where I succeed, and days where I fail at this. But by the end of the semester, there is typically a sense of confidence and excitement within the class, as students begin to realize they truly understand some fascinating biological concepts. I find this transition to be tremendously rewarding.

As a faculty member at Pepperdine, I think the most important task I face each semester is to connect with students on a personal level. It is easy to teach a class from a distance, never really connecting with the students. It is true that students can be quite demanding of the instructor's time. I recall a day, during my first year at Pepperdine, when the persistent visits of students to my office began to exhaust me, I was not thinking clearly, and I subconsciously thought, "Without all these students bothering me, I would do such a great job as a teacher". I immediately laughed at myself, recognizing that the students are at the heart of what I do, and that those tutoring sessions were probably my most effective time as a teacher. C.S. Lewis once wrote, "there are no ordinary people" and "it is immortals who we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit" - and who we teach! The best teachers I experienced as a student were all excellent instructors, who were interested in me as more than a face in the crowd. I try to follow the example of those teachers, inviting students into my life and making myself available as much as is possible. I want to teach through mentoring, through building relationships with the students in my class.

Specific Course Content

Biology graduates must have a solid knowledge base in specific content areas to succeed on entrance exams for medical or graduate school. This can predispose the class to a more traditional lecture-style format, ensuring that all of the details have been "said aloud" during the class meetings. However, this teaching style can drain the energy from a classroom, and is not necessarily the best methodology to direct students to a complete understanding of key concepts. In recent years, I have transitioned into a more interactive teaching style, but without abandoning essential course content. I have incorporated more problem-based course content, included student led discussions in the class dynamic, and altered laboratory exercises into true exploratory modules. During class discussions, students are encouraged to discuss what they think are key experimental questions in specific areas of scientific study, to assess the bio-ethical implications of controversial research topics, and to define the moral foundation behind their position on these topics.

One example is the Molecular Biology course: which is specifically designed to offer a high-level of student participation, discussion of the primary research literature, and the integration of an intensive laboratory component. In 2002, I developed a major 6-8 week module for integrating a genomics-based research module into the course. The module demands more independence of the students as they work in teams of two to develop a research project utilizing a new technology known as the microarray slide (gene chip). Microarray analysis is a new technology that utilizes information from the genome projects to generate DNA probes for each gene found in an organism. These probes can then be spotted onto glass slides in a grid pattern, with up to 50,000 DNA spots located on a single glass slide. Ultimately these slides can then be used to analyze how genes are utilized in a living cell, addressing some of the most fundamental questions of the biological sciences. This technology enables a powerful experimental approach to research in biology, but as might be expected, is quite expensive. Through our collaboration with a group of undergraduate-focused universities (the Genome Consortium for Active Teaching) we have been able to offer microarray analyses as a component of the Molecular Biology course. This module is challenging for the students (and for me), but is a tremendous learning experience. The GCAT consortium has garnered national attention for its work - highlighted in Science magazine and other publications. More information about the GCAT program can be found at the Davidson College website: www.bio.davidson.edu/biology/GCAT/gcat.html.

Mentoring Research Students

During my time at Pepperdine, I have mentored a number of research students in my research laboratory (~25). As a cell biologist, the research that I pursue is focused upon the basic mechanisms of cell function and research techniques that we utilize involve molecular biology, biochemistry, and genetics. Undergraduate research students can learn these techniques and become excellent experimentalists, though it is challenging as they begin in the laboratory. It is a tremendous privilege to contribute to the training of new scientists, facilitating that first research experience as they begin to recognize their potential as a scientist. Our research laboratory is active year round, and we have published peer-reviewed research manuscripts with undergraduate co-authors (two of those articles were highlighted by the Council for Undergraduate Research). Seven of these research students completed an honors thesis focused upon their research, and presented a seminar to the Natural Science Division faculty and students (graduating with Honors in Biology). The students in my laboratory have been funded through grants from the National Science

Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. These research students have presented their work at national research conferences, gained research fellowships upon graduation (Fulbright Fellowship, National Institutes of Health fellowship), and have gone on to Ph.D. and M.D. programs across the country (Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Baylor Universities). It is thrilling to watch these talented young scientists develop into professionals of the highest caliber.

Conclusions

I do love to teach. I enjoy watching students develop academically, emotionally, and spiritually during their time at Pepperdine. I consider it an honor to be a part of that process. The students I experience have an incredible array of talent and potential, they are always surprising me with the things they do. As I get to know them, I discover their work as ministers, as volunteers, as mentors. When I consider the students we graduate each year, it gives me optimism for the future, and it energizes my teaching for that next group of students.

Larry Bumgardner
Associate Professor of Business Law
Graziadio School of Business and Management

It has been my privilege to teach at Pepperdine for more than two decades, as either an adjunct or a full-time faculty member. I taught at least two courses each year from 1984 through 1998 while also serving in full-time administrative positions (at Pepperdine and elsewhere). During that time, I realized that I enjoyed teaching far more than administration. Moreover, I believed that I could have a greater impact as a teacher than as an administrator, and that is why I sought to join the full-time faculty. In a sense, I consider this nomination for the Howard A. White Award as some confirmation that I chose the correct path in wanting to be a full-time faculty member.

I have also been fortunate to teach a wide variety of courses, and at four different schools of Pepperdine. Before becoming a full-time faculty member at the Graziadio School of Business and Management in 2000, I spent one year on the full-time faculty at Seaver College. Previously, as an adjunct, I had taught law, political science, and communication courses at Seaver, Graziadio, the School of Law, and the School of Public Policy.

In fact, even before coming to Pepperdine, I began teaching journalism courses at David Lipscomb College in 1979, while I was still a student at Vanderbilt Law School. I believe the experience of being a student and instructor concurrently (and often on the same day) has influenced my teaching philosophy ever since. While attending law school classes, I would take note of the methods of the very good professors, as well as the styles of others who were not necessarily the best conveyors of knowledge. That made me determined to make sure that all of my classes were not only highly informative and useful, but also as interesting and enjoyable as possible. I tried to emulate the good professors, and to avoid the shortcomings of the others.

First, I discovered that a professor needs to be very interested in the subject matter that he or she is teaching. Students can clearly detect if the professor does not consider the subject important, and they will likely reach the same conclusion. Second, I found that the more energy and enthusiasm a professor displays in class, the more enjoyable the class is for the students. Thus, I have always chosen to employ a fast-paced, high-energy approach to teaching. I seek to motivate the students to cover as much material and learn as much as possible in the time allotted, even at the risk of an occasional student saying that the classes are too demanding.

Third, and obviously, I saw that a good professor is well prepared for each class and extremely knowledgeable about the subject matter. In my opinion, having an excess of information about the subject matter is crucial to gaining students' respect and appreciation. As a result, I try to over-prepare for each class, carefully reviewing my notes and other materials and anticipating potential student questions, even for courses that I have taught a number of times.

Of course, the specifics of my teaching approach have varied depending on the school, the course, and the level of the students. I will comment primarily on my teaching methods at the Graziadio School, as that is where I have taught exclusively for the past six years.

In the various business law courses at the Graziadio School, I seek to imbue students with a practical, business-oriented view of legal issues. Rather than using the Socratic Method employed in many law school courses, I take a more straightforward approach of explaining legal principles in a particular business-related area. At the same time, though, I make it clear that there often is no absolutely certain, right or wrong answer in the law. Thus, I encourage students to see and argue both sides of various legal issues, and to apply the legal principles to real situations, including those at their workplaces.

The business law courses cover a vast terrain (contracts, torts, intellectual property, ethics and crimes, business organizations, securities law, antitrust, and bankruptcy, to name just some of the topics covered in 15 weeks). As a result, my goal is to leave the students with a basic understanding of each subject, rather than detailed information about any one of these areas of law. After completing the course, these MBA students should know enough about each subject to recognize potential legal trouble in their workplaces, to understand how to protect against future legal issues, and to be able to make good business decisions on any legal matters that do inevitably arise.

A key element of my classes involves providing students with many examples of law-related issues in the business world. Over the years, I have developed extensive files of newspaper and Internet clippings on virtually every major topic covered in the business law courses – demonstrating to students how real and current these legal issues are, and how they play out in specific business settings. Similarly, my exams include a number of open-ended questions, rather than objective questions only. That is an attempt to test how well the students can apply the legal principles to new and difficult problems.

For many of the weekly assignments, I require students to research a current business issue or case, and then apply the legal principles from the textbook to that case. For example, students have been asked to research and comment on the corporate governance issues at the Walt Disney Company when studying corporations, on both the U.S. and European Union cases against Microsoft Corporation for the antitrust assignment, on the scandals at Enron, WorldCom, Arthur Andersen,

and similar businesses for crimes and ethics, and on the insider trading allegations against Martha Stewart for securities law.

As suggested, I have examined the criteria listed for the Howard A. White Award. I certainly strive for all of those qualities, and hope that I have some success in achieving them – but I also know that others will be better judges of that than I am. Still, I am grateful to have received high student evaluation ratings throughout my teaching career, but especially during the past six years at the Graziadio School. In addition to the statistical results, I am often more appreciative of the written comments, as a number of my students have referred to the course as one of the best in the MBA program.

I am also pleased that I continue to hear from prior students – some from as long as 20 years ago. In fact, I have often found that my Graziadio students seem to appreciate my business law class even more after the course is over. Once the pressure of tests and assignments is over, they more clearly see the value of the course material in their daily work.

Student evaluations are not the only way that I evaluate my own teaching. Rather, if I feel that my students have truly learned and grown personally and professionally during my course, and if I have also enjoyed teaching the class, that is what I find to be most rewarding and indicative of a good class. Fortunately, that has been true for the vast majority of my classes.

Being selected as a finalist for the Howard A. White Award has special meaning for me personally because the award is named after Dr. White. Dr. White was president when I first came to Pepperdine, and I had the privilege of working with him when I was an administrator. I knew then of his reputation as an outstanding teacher and academic. I had heard many good stories about Dr. White from my grandmother, as both of my grandparents had known him when he was a professor at Lipscomb many decades ago. Because I am very familiar with Dr. White's reputation as a teacher, I am especially grateful to be considered for the Howard A. White Award for Teaching Excellence.

Paul Contino
Professor of Great Books and
Associate Director of the Center for Faith and Learning
Seaver College

My first four or so years of teaching at Pepperdine University have been a great blessing to my family and me. I have taught and discussed wonderful works with many unforgettable students and a number of outstanding colleagues. Given the quality of my fellow teachers, I am especially honored to be granted the Howard White Award, and am grateful for this opportunity to reflect upon my philosophy of teaching.

Teaching begins with and is animated by love. Love for one's subject and for one's students are vital to good teaching. For as long as I can remember, I have loved to read and to encounter new ideas. This love has helped me to bring what Mikhail Bakhtin calls "loving attentiveness" to my subject, the "great books" that I am blessed to teach. I agree with Parker Palmer that the subject is "the great thing" that stands at the center of any class's attention. In my own case, the subject is almost always a "classic" work of literature or philosophy. Classic works often attain their status by virtue of their wisdom or their formal, pleasing beauty, but always by their capacity to raise timeless, complex questions. The works I teach are ever-fresh in their potential to raise such questions upon each reading, and in each conversation they inspire.

For example, a two-hour conversation in Great Books might focus upon a question and a work such as these: What does war do to the warrior, to those he conquers, and to their families (Homer, Iliad)? Should the wisest rule the rest of us (Plato, Republic)? Why is friendship necessary for happiness (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics)? Are people naturally good or evil (Mencius / Hsun Tzu)? Why does a concern for results paralyze the human will (Bhagavad-Gita / Chuang Tzu)? Need passion cripple the quest to be virtuous (Euripides, Hippolytus)? Where does a person find God (St. Augustine, Confessions)? What is heaven like (Dante, Commedia)? Can love be quantified or earned? Can radical suffering teach humility (Shakespeare, King Lear)? Must an effective ruler be a good person (Machiavelli, The Prince)? Does human free will cooperate with grace (Luther / Erasmus)? What might the story of Adam and Eve teach us about marriage (Milton, Paradise Lost)? What happens when body and soul are divided (Descartes, Meditations)? Is there a universal moral law? Is lying ever permissible (Kant, Grounding)? Does learning have limits (Goethe, Faust)? Does propriety nourish society (Austen, Mansfield Park)? Does society corrupt individuals (Rousseau, Emile)? Does evolutionary theory obliterate the conception of person as imago Dei (Darwin, Descent of Man)? In the name of religion, can ethical laws be suspended (Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling)? Has Christianity blighted eros (Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals)? Why do innocent children suffer? Is Christ-like love possible for human beings (Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov)?

Each time I teach these works, I want students to see such questions as vital, and to feel that something is at stake when they respond.

Before I walk into class, the questions must feel alive for me. I prepare by re-reading the work we will be discussing, recollecting and reviewing past notes, preparing new ones, and reading essays on or related to the work. All of this preparation assists me in asking the right questions, in the right order, at the right time – an anticipation of the "rhythm" of the class. It enables me to walk into class with the confidence that these are questions that *matter* – a sense of the "music" of the class.

Before class I have also made it a practice to review the names and interests (on index cards) and writing (on Blackboard) of each student in the class. During this time, I can imaginatively enter into and attend to each student's concerns. As I get to know the students, I can begin to anticipate and be alert to the kinds of questions and responses individual students may have to a work and to the questions it inspires.

A Great Books class depends upon collaborative inquiry. Our conversation requires attentiveness toward the work and toward each other. At its best, our conversation will take unexpected turns. That's why preparation is imperative: If I'm to be alert and receptive to surprising turns – and the

emergence of truth – in our conversation, I must bring loving attentiveness to both the work and to each student in the class. I must strive to model what I expect from my students.

In reading and teaching Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Josef Pieper, and the work of my friend and colleague Andy Yuengert, I have come to appreciate the vital role of prudence (phronesis) in the life and work of a teacher. Certainly, teaching employs art, craft, or technique (techne); it studiously seeks the truth of matters (theoria). But teaching also requires the virtue of prudence: the receptivity to reality that allows one to perceive and respond to the particular situation before the teacher. Sometimes it's best to push one's students; sometimes it's best to let be. Each mix of students is different; each day in class is different – and a teacher must be alert and responsive to these differences.

As both Aristotle and Aquinas emphasize, prudence develops through experience. One of the things I most value about the vocation of teaching is that each semester – each day – provides a new chance to grow in experience: to learn and love more about my subject, but also to learn more about *how* to teach my students with love, and how to help them to turn toward, see, and respond to the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Through experience, I've learned that if I am serving at my best I will, before class, pause, take a moment away from the work I'm preparing. During this pause, I will imaginatively call up the name and face of each student in the class, and silently pray for her or his well-being. I will take a moment to gaze upon an image that hangs on the wall of my office: Christ the teacher from Chartres Cathedral. Then I'll walk upstairs to class.

When I arrive, I try to look at each student's face, greet the class as a whole with a smile, and, in some form, ask, "How are you?" It's helpful to know "where the students are at": Are they excited? Weary? Distracted? Struggling? Puzzled? Since the learning in each class is collaborative and interpersonal, it is crucial that I attend to the students with whom I will be teaching – and largely by asking questions and integrating points – and *from* whom I will be learning. We begin class with a prayer – usually a minute of silence – and then begin our conversation.

Why pray for and with students? To answer this, I need to ask: What is the goal, the end, the telos of my teaching? Certainly I want students to achieve all that I state explicitly on my syllabus as goals: to read thoughtfully classic works of various traditions; to listen attentively to each other; to articulate questions, insights, and arguments with clarity and cogency, be it in speech or prose. I work toward achieving this latter goal when I spend long hours reading, commenting on, and evaluating student essays – and meeting with students one-to-one in my office to work on improvements in their writing.

But my ultimate goal, or my deepest hope, is that my students will in some way be transformed: that each will turn toward and decisively respond to the truth as it emerges in the class. A limited truth emerges in reading and interpreting the work at hand: What does the work say? What does it *mean*? But a third, more encompassing truth emerges when a student asks of a work: "Is it *true*?" Does the work reflect the reality of the way things are? Does it make an ethical claim upon its reader? Such questions demand an existential response, one that has implications for the way in which both students and teacher will live beyond the classroom, throughout their pilgrimages through this life and toward eternity.

I believe that we are pilgrims, on the way to eternal life with God. Along the way, God remains “the hidden ground of love” (Thomas Merton), in Whom “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). God calls us, holds us in His love, and makes His grace ever available on the way of our pilgrim’s path. That grace is available in our studies and in our classrooms, in solitude and community, whenever we employ our God-given gift of reason. Receptively attuned to God’s grace, reason is enriched.

An encounter with classic works, in focused dialogue with a group of studious friends, can influence the quality of a person’s pilgrimage to God: It can influence the road taken or refused, the vigor of one’s perseverance on that chosen road, and the depth of one’s love – toward God and others – lived along the way. Encounters with classic works can be graced.

Of the three things that last – faith, hope, and love – love is the greatest (1 Corinthians 13:13). This was recognized and applied to the intellectual life by the 12th century monastic reformer St. Bernard of Clairvaux: “There are many who seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge: that is curiosity. There are others who desire to know in order that they themselves might be known: that is vanity. But there are those some who seek knowledge in order to serve and edify others: that is love [*caritas*].” When a student comes away from a class loving the work we’ve read and discussed, I am grateful. And even more so when, perhaps in response to the work and the way we’ve discussed it, the student longs to live a better life through service -- through love of God and love of neighbor.

Jim Gash
Associate Professor of Law and
Associate Dean of Student Life
School Of Law

When asked what I do by those I meet, I usually respond by simply saying that I am a teacher. I am the son of two career teachers, and I believe that teaching is my vocation. I have been privileged to have had numerous excellent teachers over the course of my educational years, from Kindergarten through law school. These teachers have conveyed to me knowledge, challenged my intellect, inspired me to set and reach goals, acted as role models, and sought and nurtured genuine friendships with me. As a direct consequence of the influence and inspiration of these teachers, I have been granted the opportunity and responsibility of also being a teacher. Like those that have come before me, I seek to convey legal knowledge to my students, to challenge them to think about what they are learning, to inspire them to reach their potential in the law and in all other aspects of their lives, to be an example of someone who appreciates the power of the law as a tool of service, and to create lasting and genuine relationships with my students. I believe that my teaching responsibilities and opportunities exist outside the classroom as much as inside. I have been teaching at Pepperdine for a little over seven years and could not imagine a more fulfilling job. This past year, I have been serving as Associate Dean for Student Life and have enjoyed the opportunity to work very closely with students in an effort to enhance the academic, social, and spiritual life of the law school. What follows is a brief elaboration on my teaching philosophy.

Conveying Knowledge. The most mundane aspect of my job is conveying knowledge to my students. Teaching them the elements of the intentional torts, or the intricacies of the Federal Rules of Evidence, or the public policy rationales for products liability law can become tedious if done in a sterile setting. In fact, many of our students are bright enough to absorb this information simply by reading the text book. Yet this aspect of teaching is probably the one students most expect and most covet. “Do I have to know this for the test?” is asked much more frequently than “Is this the most effective way to order relationships within a community?” Consequently, I recognize that it is incumbent upon me to master the subject matter I am teaching to the best of my ability so that the knowledge I convey is as accurate and reflective of current trends in the law as I can make it. To that end, I continue to devote a substantial amount of time to class preparation, and on the occasional day that my administrative duties intrude upon this preparation time, I can tell that I was not as sharp or as clear as the students deserve.

Challenging Intellect. While I seek to convey knowledge effectively, my goal in the classroom is to do so in the context of challenging the students to think. My first experience with the Socratic Method was in my first year of law school. I was intrigued, enthralled, and inspired. All of my life, I had been a student who viewed learning as the ingestion and regurgitation of facts and information, and I had grown quite good at this simple process, such that I rarely read in advance of class because I knew the teacher would tell me what I needed to know for the exam. Law school changed all of this, and for the better. I found in law school that if I understood the purpose behind a particular law, I was much more able to apply the law to various situations. I also found that reading the assigned material in advance of the class made a dramatic difference in my ability to understand (rather than simply memorize) the law. During my first year of teaching, Professor Kris Knaplund (then of UCLA) came to Pepperdine to lecture at lunch to the faculty about law school learning. One thing she said that I will never forget is that the single most important predictor of law school success is the student’s level of preparedness when walking into class each day. This confirmed what my experience had been – that expecting and requiring students to read the material and think about it before class will allow them to learn far more effectively than simply telling them what they need to know. Consequently, I take what some would consider to be a hard line on student class preparation. After explaining the results of Professor Knaplund’s study, I tell the students that the first time a student is unprepared for class, the student is marked absent that day. The second time a student is unprepared for class, the student loses a discretionary point. The third time a student is unprepared for class, the student loses three discretionary points. As a result of this hard line stance, I have never had more than one student unprepared for class over the course of the semester, and about half of the semesters, I do not have a single student who is unprepared (or at least is caught unprepared). During class, my goal is to call on as many students as possible to get them involved in the discussion. The students’ responsibility during class is to correctly identify the issues raised and rules discussed in the assigned reading and to tell me (and the class) whether they agree with the rules and why. I then attempt to vary the facts from the case or propose new hypotheticals that require the students to apply what they learn to other fact situations. Though I am confident that I am not always successful, I try to make sure that at the end of the class (or the end of a block of material) I have clearly summarized the rules the students should have learned up to that point.

Inspiring Students to Reach Their Potential. I was fortunate to have numerous teachers along the way who not only provided me with knowledge and challenged me to think, but who also inspired me to set and reach goals I never would have sought or reached if left to follow my own instincts to do the least required of me. I have had (and continue to have) so many students that have been blessed with so much talent and ambition that I feel it would be irresponsible of me not to offer some guidance to them as they seek to discover where they can use these talents to serve others. Likewise, many of my students have struggled in their studies and openly questioned whether they have what it takes to graduate, let alone succeed in the practice of law. In these situations, I also feel a responsibility to reach out to them with encouragement and with substantive assistance to help them reach their goal of becoming a lawyer. Not all students succeed, and when this reality sets in, I think it is important to help students recognize that God has a purpose for their lives, even if it is not in the legal profession. This is one of the most difficult aspects of my job, but one that is very important.

Being an Example. I have been blessed beyond what I could reasonably expect or hope in my life with people from whom I have learned or with whom I have worked who have shown me the best of what it means to be a Christian, a father, a husband, a teacher, and a friend. I have also had the opportunity to observe individuals who have modeled the opposite. As a (fairly) recent graduate of Pepperdine's law school, I still have clear memories of the way that I and other students viewed the law faculty, how we hung on every word that was said, how we observed the way the professors treated the students, how we listened as the professors spoke about each other and the administration, how the professors talked about their families, and how the professors acted outside the classroom and off campus. It is humbling to know that this same scrutiny is now being directed at me, that there are students who are watching, and listening, and following. I will be the first to admit that sometimes I stumble, but I am always aware of the awesome responsibility that accompanies teaching, and teaching at a Christian University.

Building Relationships. The aspect of teaching that I most enjoy and that I feel is most important is building relationships with students. I recognize that the ability to convey knowledge effectively is not dependent upon having a personal relationship with students. I think it is even possible to be good at challenging students to think without having to invest the time and energy into developing personal relationships with students, though this is a bit more debatable given that I believe that the level of the students' investment in the class is at least partially dependent upon the level of respect the student has for the professor. I think, however, it is impossible for a professor to effectively inspire and mentor a student without first developing a personal relationship with the student.

It seems to me that relationships are built on respect and trust. Unless and until the student respects the professor and the subject matter, there exists a barrier (or at least an impediment) to learning. Likewise, unless the student trusts the professor, the student will be unwilling to take risks either inside or outside the classroom, and growth will consequently be impeded. I believe that both respect and trust are usually given before they are received. Consequently, my aim is always to treat the students and the subject matter with the utmost respect. Likewise, I endeavor early on in the semester to convey trust to the students by sharing a little bit about who I am, where I have been, and what I value. Much of this occurs inside the classroom, much of it occurs outside the classroom. I always make sure to introduce the students to my family during the first week or two of class. I also make it a priority to quickly learn their names, their hometowns, their undergrad institution and major, and something distinctive about them that separates them from their

classmates (distinctive characteristics reported by students). I can usually have this memory work done by the end of the first week. I believe if they see I am making an effort, they will feel a responsibility to do the same. Once respect and trust are established, then relationship building can begin. I treasure the times I am able to spend with current and former students rejoicing with their personal triumphs, laughing with them as they tell stories, crying with them as they share struggles and heartaches, and praying with them as they seek wisdom, guidance, and comfort from the Creator. I can say without hesitation or reservation that I am more blessed by these times than are the students.

I firmly subscribe to Pepperdine's philosophy of a student-centered education. I also very much enjoy being involved in the students' intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development. I have been blessed with a wife and children who also consider it a privilege to participate in the lives of my students. This year I have also had the privilege of getting more tangibly involved in the spiritual life of the law school as part of my administrative role. I have selected three men and women from each of the three classes to serve as Spiritual Life Advisors. We meet each week to pray and to explore ways to facilitate spiritual growth among the student body while they are here at Pepperdine. This opportunity has helped me to grow as much as any student.

It is an honor and privilege to teach at Pepperdine. It is a further honor and a privilege to be considered for the Howard A. White Teaching Award.

Levon Goukasian
Assistant Professor of Finance
Seaver College

It is a great honor to be selected as a finalist for the Howard A. White Teaching Award at a university such as Pepperdine- where the teaching standards are high and there are so many excellent, committed and student-oriented teachers. For me, a "teaching philosophy" is an expression of individual values, like a personal mission statement, and my mission is to help my students recognize the gifts and strengths that God has given them and utilize those gifts and strengths in best possible ways. I try to achieve this goal through teaching, counseling, mentoring and advising, using all the resources available to me.

As a professor of finance, I am interested in teaching students to develop critical and creative thinking ability. Decision-making and problem solving in a business environment can be very complex. Uninformed managers can make poor decisions that may affect the lives of many people. Therefore, I combine my academic and industry experience to teach students to be informed, ethical and effective decision-makers. Bringing in many real-life examples and challenging students by discussing complex situations are good ways of achieving that goal. I show students my passion for finance and teaching and I constantly try new ways to increase my teaching effectiveness and engage students in the learning process. Last summer I attended a week-long workshop in New York City, organized by the Education Department of the New York Stock Exchange, to improve

my knowledge of market operations, exchanges and investments and to incorporate that knowledge in my classes at Pepperdine. I adopted many methods and ideas I learned there and implemented them in my Financial Management and Applied Portfolio Management classes.

To better prepare students for careers in investment banking, I created a course in Applied Portfolio Management that was offered for the first time in Spring 2006 and a course in Financial Derivatives that will be offered for the first time in Fall 2006. As part of the Applied Portfolio Management course, students manage an investment fund and thus obtain very valuable hands-on experience in asset management. This course is unique in Southern California and will make our students very competitive in the marketplace. It turned out to be very successful and popular among students. The class has strong support from the Business Division and the upper administration. In fact, the Treasurer and the Vice President of Finance have tentatively agreed to provide some seed money for a fund, to be managed by students, under an investment committee's supervision. I hope to grow the fund (by capital gains and fundraising) and very soon be able to use some part of the gains for student scholarships. Having this fund will attract students interested in finance, give our students tools to succeed in their careers and increase the reputation of the university.

To encourage intellectual interest in Finance and to motivate and engage students, I took six students to Dayton, Ohio last March to participate in a 3-day conference (titled R.I.S.E.) tailored for students interested in investment banking. Students from more than 200 hundred universities and 20 countries participated in the conference. The conference enabled our students to interact with peers, learn about the investment industry and listen to professionals discussing current economic, business and career issues. Most participating schools have student-managed investment funds (SMIF) and in conjunction with the conference, those SMIFs compete to determine the fund with the best performance in asset management. After the conference, all of our students asked for recommendations on literature and courses to improve their valuation and quantitative skills. I intend to make participation in R.I.S.E. a tradition and to take more students to the conference in the future. In addition, I will be preparing our students to compete in the SMIFs challenge next year.

I believe in the need for academic rigor. Finance is a difficult subject, which requires excellent analytical and critical thinking, and students expect to be challenged coming into the class. Although students perceive the class as demanding, they seem to appreciate the fact that they are learning theoretical concepts backed by practical applications that will help them in their future careers and personal asset management. The average GPA for my classes is a 2.82 and average rating for difficulty is a 4.4 on the 5-point scale used in the teaching evaluations. Although students find the class difficult my overall teaching effectiveness rating is a 4.75.

I believe that scholarly research and teaching effectiveness are intertwined and inseparable. In order to be an effective teacher, I must have a thorough understanding of the subject matter being taught, therefore, I am committed to being current in my field, engaging in research and participating in conferences and seminars. I am very involved in academic and practitioner-oriented research, actively present my work at other universities, in conferences and seminars and serve as a reviewer for three academic journals. I am currently working on multiple research projects with coauthors from many institutions, including Pepperdine, USC and Caltech. I regularly present research findings in the classroom, which creates a stimulating learning environment for students. As a result, several students have expressed interest in participating in research projects. For example, two students recently completed a directed study with me on "Co-movements of Industries in the

U.S and Oil Prices”. This study helped the students better understand how industries are affected by movements in oil prices.

Recently I proposed commencing a series of research seminars in finance which would invite academicians and research-oriented practitioners to present their work at Pepperdine. This idea was supported by the Business Division and the Associate Provost for Research. The seminars will debut in September of this year. These seminars will give our students a chance to become familiar with current research and to network with practitioners and will ultimately help the students to develop as professionals.

I believe it is important for professors to build meaningful and lasting relationships with students. For me to be an effective teacher and role model, it is crucial to know my students; therefore I learn their names in the first few days of the term. I spend more than 40 hours a week in my office and students are my first priority when I am in the office. I genuinely enjoy learning about my students’ lives outside the classroom. I regularly coach current and former students on various personal and professional matters and provide letters of recommendations. During the last academic year, I helped approximately 20 students polish their resumes and cover letters, apply for jobs and negotiate offers. As a result, several of our students have obtained positions with major investment banks. In order to help students, I reviewed many books on career preparation and investment banking topics and selected about 50 for acquisition. Last year, Payson Library acquired all of those books. I am currently reviewing books on finance topics to make additional recommendations to the Library.

I support the University's mission of academic excellence and Christian values and regard character development as an important part of the education process. I try to serve as a role model and mentor to my students. I am the founder and faculty advisor for the Pepperdine Finance and Investment Club that was created last year and already has more than 40 members. The club meets biweekly to discuss a variety of finance topics that are not normally covered in classes. The Club has members throughout Seaver College, including communication, religion and other majors as well as business majors. I intend to continue and expand the club activities by involving more students and other faculty members.

Teachers are given God’s gifts and they should be willing to share those with others. With this in mind, I am trying my best to provide a business education to our students while helping develop Christian character. I think of my students as my academic "children" and try to do everything in my power to help them grow intellectually, and to give them what they need by sharing my knowledge and experience with them.

My goal is for my students to be able to say of me that: “He truly cared about me as an individual, shared his knowledge and experience with me, and prepared me for entering the competitive world as a skilled person equipped with ethical values”.

Jack Green
Associate Professor of Strategy
Graziadio School of Business and Management

This is written to provide insight to me as a person and to assist in understanding who I am and why my teaching philosophy is what it is. Teaching fully employed adults has become my passion as my students and I mutually explore opportunities for continuing our pursuit of knowledge. I am very practical in my teaching and attempt to encourage application of the course material to the individual, to their careers, and to their organizations.

My overall evaluation as a teacher by students on the course evaluation forms consistently averages greater than 4.7 on a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the best. Many comments are received on my evaluations that the work load is heavy, but that my course is one of the best the students have experienced in their time with Pepperdine.

I began my employment with Pepperdine in Spring 1994 as an adjunct professor. In Fall 1995, I began full-time service with the Graziadio School of Business and Management under an initial one-year contract that later was converted to a multi-year contract. Subsequently, I was promoted to Assistant Professor of Strategy and then to Associate Professor of Strategy. In Fall 2000, I entered into a tenure track position. In March 2006, after 12 years with Pepperdine, I received a letter from President Benton advising me that I had been granted tenure. I am now looking for the next "mountain" to climb.

My focus on teaching has been in (1) developing the MBFE 659 Strategic Management Course including providing increased material through the Internet to students. I maintain my own web pages that are updated regularly. (2) Developing and leading the Pilot of the Integration Modules in the Orange County MBFE curriculum and then leading the expansion of the Integration Modules to the other campuses. (3) Improving the use of the simulation in the MBFE, EMBA, and PKE programs. This has been accomplished through direct work with the author of the simulation, faculty members, and staff. I used the new edition of the Business Policy Game for one year and then introduced it for full use by the school in Fall 2002. I tested an updated version that increases the functionality of the simulation and introduced it for use in Summer 2004. In Fall 2006, I will test a new, updated version of the software in my courses, prior to its use by other faculty members in Spring 2007.

In Summer 2006, I introduced the simulation as part of my strategy course for the full-time students at Malibu. Based on the experience and feed-back, we will now make the simulation a requirement for the full-time students as a vehicle for increasing the understanding of implementation issues in strategic management. The last time I was assigned a course in Malibu was 1996. I have enjoyed my interaction with these younger, less-experienced students. My approach to teaching appears to have been successful. They respond well to my business and academic experience.

The simulation has been fully integrated into my regular coursework. I continue to work closely with the author on improvements and changes. The author acknowledged my contribution formally in his manuals. Student responses to my use of the web and the continued enhancements have been very positive. I have provided training to the faculty, both full-time and adjuncts. I regularly work with faculty and their classes on improving the use of the simulation.

Fall 2002 was the first time I taught the EMBA Strategy course (8-units). When my EMBA students were unable to visit Nellis, I arranged with Sheriff Lee Baca for them to visit Men's Central Jail in downtown Los Angeles. This was an "eye-opening" experience for these executive students.

Since we have the students for sessions of at least four hours, I use a variety of teaching approaches to bring variety to the class. Lectures are structured to invite student comments about their actual experiences in the workplace. I lead some case discussions and each student team leads at least one case discussion. I have changed from having students present a case using Power Point, to having them facilitate a case discussion. This has been positive for the students, as they are able to practice different skills.

I have found that fully employed and executive students respond well to the Socratic approach to teaching. In order to enhance the learning process, students prepare one to two-page papers on all assigned articles that respond to two questions: (1) what is the contribution of the article to strategy and (2) what do I "take-away" from the article and what is its application to me. Also, in preparing case notes, which are required for all assigned cases, the final question to answer is "what do I take away from this case and what is its application to me". In all of our class activities, we take time to discuss this important question of "take-aways". I have found that this causes more introspection than simply discussing material. When a student focuses on the application of the material, the process of "owning" the material increases.

Each term, I add new required and optional articles that have been recently published in journals such as the Harvard Business Review and The Academy of Management Executive. These articles are linked through my web page to the library resources. The students download the articles in either Acrobat format or text format depending on their preferences. Responses to this approach have been very favorable.

I am available to students through meetings, by telephone, and by email. I receive many requests after the course ends for recommendations and counseling on careers. I find this very rewarding from a personal point of view.

I have encouraged several students to prepare articles for publication or presentation. Two articles were published in the Graziadio Business Report and one article was presented and published in the proceedings of the Society for the Advancement of Management Conference held earlier this year. It is wonderful to help students achieve and be successful.

I maintain strong contacts in the business community. I am active with the Board of Directors of a large non-profit organization that serves developmentally disabled adults. Because of trust funds of the non-profit organization that are invested through Wells Fargo Bank, I have direct contact with the bank and the President of Wells Capital Management has become a good friend. I assisted my son in the formation of his business, Green & Green CPA, Inc., located in Valencia. I am grateful he continues to look to me for advice. These are examples of the contacts I have and I am able to use to stay current in strategic management issues. I use these “real world” examples throughout my courses to bring relevance into our discussions. This encourages the students to provide their own examples from their companies.

My decisions relating to my occupation, my family, my friends and my church are based on being able to “look myself in the mirror” each day. I do not profess to be perfect, although my grandchildren think I am. I believe in strong commitment. Sharie and I have been married for 42 years. We have four children and fourteen grandchildren. Our youngest child, Jacquilin, has cerebral palsy and lives with us. Our commitment as a family is to have her in our home and, when we are no longer able to care for her, she will live with our daughter, Stephenie, and her family. Our estate planning has been arranged to provide for Jacquilin and our three other children concur with our plans. The strength of our family was manifest when our grandson passed away in September 2002. He was 6 ½ months old. I believe this personal commitment to that which I do to be reflected in the values that are conveyed in the classroom.

After 28 years in management, I have found the past twelve years to be very rewarding. I have the opportunity of sharing both my academic training and my work experience with others. Equally of importance is that I have learned much from these wonderful students who bring valuable experience and information to the classroom. I look forward each week to the challenge of interacting with them on a basis that brings value to all of us. I consider myself to be a “life-long” learner.

My life has been good. I have been blessed with a wonderful wife and family. We have had sufficient income to meet our needs and to help our children establish their own homes. I have enjoyed each challenge I have faced in management, in service to the community and in my role with the university. Last year, I was elected by the faculty to serve on the school’s Faculty Council. In June, I agreed to accept the position of Academic Chair for Strategy and Information Systems. The position was offered based on the nomination by my peers and the acceptance by Dean Livingston.

I look forward to more challenges in the future as a contributing member of the Graziadio School.

Susan Hall
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

At a university dedicated to outstanding teaching and full of so many wonderful role models, it is a great honor to be a recipient of the Howard A. White Award for Teaching Excellence.

I am thankful for this opportunity to reflect on my teaching philosophy, which grows and changes as I do. I think I've always wanted to live an academic life. Some of my earliest memories include playing the teacher in my Fisher-Price schoolhouse (with her blue dress, spectacles and blond hair wrapped up in a bun) with my younger brother and/or friends who would play the students. Fast forwarding many years, I am blessed to be living my calling as a professor who serves others across four graduate campuses as a mentor, scholar, colleague, coach, advisor, supervisor, co-learner, friend, as well as teacher (who does occasionally don a blue dress and glasses, but draws the line at the hair bun!).

Although my ideas, roles and experiences of being a teacher have expanded over time, they remain grounded in my Christian faith that sustains and guides me on my journey through life.

Accordingly, my beliefs about what it means to be a "good" teacher, my goals for teaching, and the ways I try to achieve my goals reflect the overarching theme of love.

I believe that "good" teachers truly love what they do. By this I mean that they are passionate about the subjects they teach and deeply care about the students and colleagues with whom they work. I feel fortunate to have been mentored by many professors who possess and have shared such love with me, including Bruce Sales, J.D., Ph.D., the "father of law and psychology". Bruce's brilliant mind, active engagement in collaborative scholarship, pure joy for the field, and concern for his "academic children," are inspirations to me.

Love: Passion for the Work

Given this heritage, I find it easy to love what I do. I sometimes can't believe that I get paid to do some of my favorite things, such as reading, writing, thinking, and helping and serving others. I am excited about my work in integrating the varied fields of clinical psychology, marriage and family therapy, law, policy, and, more recently, religious / spiritual faith. As I have grown as a teacher, I don't worry about letting my excitement show and looking like a "geek."

When sharing knowledge from recent texts and articles with my students in our graduate programs in clinical psychology, I attempt to bring the field to life by describing my experiences as an evaluator, therapist, lawyer and scholar in different clinical, pediatric, forensic and academic settings. I find they desire to hear stories of my work with clients, as it helps to focus the conversation on the reason we are drawn together – to learn how to help people who are struggling with personal problems and problems with other people. For this reason, I also involve them in applying theories to case examples as learning tools in the classroom. I enjoy drawing these case examples from the world around me, which I seem to find everywhere: sitcoms, Dr. Phil, movies, songs, newspaper articles, my own personal stories, etc. My students tell me that they also find real-world examples engaging and relevant, and I know I've done well when they email me with a link to an article they've just read or an exercise to share with future classes, or tell me that "you know,

every movie I watch has something to do with developmental” (one of the classes I teach is Individual and Family Development: A Life Cycle Approach).

Out of respect and love for my fields, I have high standards for my work and that of my students. I believe I have a reputation for being challenging but fair as well as caring. Even for courses that I have taught before, I ensure that my courses contain the most helpful, relevant and current materials, are revised on an ongoing basis, require students to think critically when engaging the material, and involve techniques that they can practice and use with their clients. For example, in my Principles and Theories of Learning Class, I have students engage in a project where they work with another adult for at least 3 weeks to change a behavior the other person finds problematic, such as nail biting or procrastination, after researching the problem and the most effective treatments for it. Not only do they gain experience in helping another person make changes based on theory and accepted practices (as they would in therapy), but students also share the results in a professional article-formatted paper and oral presentation to their classmates. To assist them in learning about the evolving process of behavioral change, the project is itself broken into 5 stages; they receive considerable feedback and guidance based on drafts of their written work in each of the stages, with only the final product graded.

Love: Care for Students

One of the favorite things about my work at GSEP is meeting, teaching, advising and mentoring masters and doctoral students in psychology. I think this is why I feel called to seek involvement with many students in a variety of roles. In addition to teaching masters students in my classes at Malibu, West Los Angeles and Orange County every year, I supervise teaching assistants (TAs) and advise doctoral students. Currently I work with seven dissertation students on topics related to Positive Psychology, and have presented at national conferences with two of them. I work closely with my research assistants/graduate assistants (RAs/GAs), including those involved in our grant-funded efforts to bring research into our clinics and counseling centers. Since 2003, I have also met regularly with a growing number of members of the GSEP CAPS West (Christian Association for Psychological Studies, West Division) Student Group, which I founded to provide a context at GSEP for building fellowship, engaging in community service, and spurring conversation about the integration of Christian faith and psychotherapy.

Because our Greatest Teacher taught us to love one another and to love our neighbor as ourselves, another goal of mine is to love all of my students and to be a servant leader to them. I endeavor to show my students that they are my highest priority. I attempt to show this love through being genuinely interested in their lives, available, responsive, organized and dependable. I put them first.

For example, regarding students in my classes, we spend time getting to know each other during the first class, and I learn their names within a few classes. I start all classes promptly and begin with an informal time for announcements and conversation to build community. I keep at least 2 hours of office hours per week before and after class at my different campuses - staying after as long as students need, which has sometimes been after 11pm. My door is almost always open for casual conversation and/or snacks from my treat bowl. Students tell me how they are pleasantly surprised when they find I respond to phone calls and emails generally within one day, including weekends, unless I let them know otherwise. Similarly, papers, projects and homework are returned within 1 week, or 2 weeks at the latest, with detailed feedback and

objective grading forms whenever possible. I believe that, as a result of this care, many of my masters' students also seek out individual meetings with me about personal and professional development issues (e.g., whether they could participate in my research; what the difference is between a Ph.D. and a Psy.D. and which should they pursue after graduating from our program) as well as issues related to their spiritual development. Such mentorship is also a large part of my work with my other students (i.e., dissertation students, TAs, RAs, GAs, CAPS West students) both on- and off- campus, such as over lunch or coffee.

In being a loving "academic parent" to adult students, I also care about their development as professionals in the field of clinical psychology and marriage and family therapy. Recognizing the gifts, talents and experiences our students bring to GSEP, I desire to develop a collegial relationship with them. My teaching philosophy, therefore, reflects a belief that that professors and students engage in a collaborative process of learning in which both sides develop and grow. It is also informed by Parker Palmer's belief that we place the subject material/questions in the center of the room, and work together to understand and learn.

My objective is to actively engage students in the learning process, so that they challenge themselves to think critically about theories and concepts, and are prepared to apply these theories to real world practice as clinicians. Accordingly, in the classroom, I use an organic, multimedia and multidimensional teaching approach and evaluation methods designed to stimulate different types of learners. My classes foster and require student participation and interaction via individual presentations and exercises, frequent class, small group, and out of class discussions, community/field research projects, in-class reports, and class evaluations at specified intervals. In this way, students affect both the content and the structure of their class and make the learning process their own. To help them gain professional experiences in the field, I regularly invite students to join me at conferences and in serving as reviewers for conference submissions, and encourage students to submit papers for publication and applications for grants.

Because I believe in a collaborative model of learning, student evaluations are a critical part of my courses and advisement activities. To facilitate this process, I attempt to create an open, respectful and friendly classroom environment. In addition to frequent informal requests for reactions to the material, methods of evaluation of student performance, and presentation style, I also include a formal midterm course review in all of my classes. Because I believe that teaching is not a top-down endeavor, and is a two-way experience, my midterm course evaluation encourages students to think about their contributions to the classroom environment and to their own learning. The processing of this midterm evaluation also produces rich discussion about the idea of shared student-professor responsibility for learning.

In sum, I feel blessed to be at GSEP where I can live my vocation as a professor who endeavors to serve her professional fields and students with passion and care. I look forward to many years of growth and continued development as a servant leader at Pepperdine.

Robert Popovich
Professor of Law and
Director of International Programs
School of Law

I am truly humbled to be nominated as a potential recipient of the Howard A. White Award for Teaching Excellence. The award is, of course, a fitting tribute President White the inspiring educator, the brilliant administrator, and beloved member of the Pepperdine University family. The possibility that I am being considered for this award, however, is somewhat of a mystery to me. Honored, I am. Deserving of such recognition when I already receive so many rewards for doing a job that I so dearly love? I do not know how I can be more “honored” than I already am.

I write this personal statement having just returned from our annual law school faculty retreat in preparation of the beginning of a new school year. Provost Tippens was our luncheon speaker, and so much of his message about the roles of teachers resonated with me – finding myself nodding in agreement throughout his talk, notwithstanding the invading, but not overriding, noise of alarms and car horns. While the matching of authors and their respective quotes has escaped my memory, many of the phrases that had my head nodding, have not. “The quality of the student-teacher relationship trumps all.” The “teacher is the beneficiary and the student is the teacher.” “Teaching is relinquishment.”

Provost Tippens’ comments and quotes were prophetic on the subject of our roles as teachers. They were also particularly germane to my own thoughts about my role as a teacher. Honored to be a professor at Pepperdine, my “job” is not, for me, defined as merely my “job.” Rather, it is my life’s work, it is my lifeblood, and it is, I feel, the life’s path upon which God has directed me.

Standing on the threshold of beginning my seventeenth year of teaching at the Law School, I feel not a scintilla of diminished excitement or anticipation for the start of classes. As the years have passed, my enthusiasm and excitement for the start of the new school year, as well as for every class session, has not waned in the least. I am as passionate about my classes today as I was when I first began my teaching career.

“The quality of the student-teacher relationship trumps all.” This quote succinctly reflects how I view my role as a teacher. From the first day class, my students know that they are my number one priority. Their probable initial thought as to exactly what this means is somewhat accurate; educating them and helping them learn that they can stretch beyond just learning “what they need to know for the exam” are basic components of making the students my top priority. They quickly come to realize, however, that their number one priority status also, and perhaps more importantly, encompasses the notion that their “wellbeing” is paramount to me. My job as my students’ professor is not only to facilitate their learning of the law, but is also one of stewardship – they are entrusted to my care, and this includes more than just “teaching” them.

To inspire my students so that they will at some later time tell me that “I” have made a difference in their lives is NOT my goal. Inspire them, yes, but I would much rather hear that something they learned in my classes somehow helped them in their lives or made a positive difference. It is pure gold to hear a former student say that they took something from my class and used it in their work or personal life – knowledge, skills or lessons that they garnered from class played an important role in their professional or personal life. To sometimes hear that I may have inspired them to strive or obtain a significant life goal is extra “frosting” on the professorial “cake.”

In class, on a daily basis, I receive “rewards” from my students. Their learning of the law, our interaction and fellowship provide me with a constant flow of treasured moments and memories. Most times, I feel as if I am learning more from them than they are from me. For me, “the teacher is the beneficiary and the student is the teacher.”

A very tangible example of my teaching priorities is illustrated in this “personal statement” itself, specifically the timing of its submission for your consideration. I left, to the very last minute, the task of writing it. This was not due to some lack of interest, nor any lack of gratitude that I feel as a potential recipient of the award. Rather, my responsibilities to my current and future students, and the school work related thereto, came first.

Tangential, but nonetheless critical to how I view my responsibilities and role as a teacher, are those of scholarship. My completion of this personal statement also took a “back seat” to the completion of edits for an upcoming publication and ongoing research to further my own education while contributing to the Law School’s body of scholarship.

My role as an educator is inexorably intertwined with my faith. On a somewhat selfish note, each day I thank God for the health of my family and for the opportunity to be at Pepperdine, performing the job that I so dearly love. In my original application for employment at Pepperdine, I wrote:

The wisdom that a legal education and the pursuit of the highest moral values are not mutually exclusive concepts, was an important factor that originally attracted me to Pepperdine as a law student. This philosophy is one which I would also be honored to pursue as a member of the Pepperdine faculty.

This is, I believe, how I have lived my life as a member of the Law School faculty. To the classroom I have tried not only to bring substantive knowledge, but those values that I believe to be at the heart of our institution. As I was raised to have the highest respect for my fellow human being, I accord my students such respect. I have made a concerted effort to bring the *human side* of law school and the legal profession into the classroom. In each of my classes I constantly remind students how important it is to keep one’s life in the legal field in its proper perspective – to make time for one’s family, friends, spiritual life, and community – to be proud to perform the responsibilities of their student and professional jobs with honesty and integrity.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you my feelings about my role as a teacher.

Ed Shafranske
Professor of Psychology
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

My philosophy of teaching is informed by personal, professional and contextual factors. Foremost in my mind as I begin this essay is the gratitude I feel for “being privileged” to live a life of study and service. I recall a professor’s challenge to me and to others on the first day of class many years ago. He reminded his students that for most people, their days on this earth were spent in labor, while we were given the opportunity to work in a field of ideas, which offered the possibility of meaning and purpose for which we should be grateful. With such opportunity comes responsibility as well as gratitude. Such a call to responsibility emanates not only from external obligation; rather, it issues from an inner sense of gratitude and purpose, consistent with the Christian heritage of moral and social responsibility. As a professor that responsibility is expressed in many roles: scholar, teacher, practitioner, mentor, colleague, institutional and public citizen. The specific role of teacher is the centerpiece of an academic’s life (at least here at Pepperdine) and concerns not only the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next but more importantly fosters a process of learning that instills values and builds skills upon which human understanding and welfare will be advanced.

Overarching Vision

The Transmission of Knowledge

Although the transmission of knowledge will always remain essential to the task of teaching, other learning objectives are ascending in importance. Today, the growth of information is exponential and requires a shift in focus from learning a discrete body of theories, facts, and skills to developing the ability to sift through and to critically examine the volumes of information, which are readily accessible, and to discern the intellectual wheat from the chaff. The scientific literature doubles every 20 years and it has been estimated that the half-life of knowledge in psychology is less than 5 years. If these projections come to pass (and history suggests they will) this means that half the ‘facts’ are replaced within the ordinary span of graduate school. This requires a vision of education that places emphasis on rigorous critical analysis, thoughtful examination of relevant facts and theories, as well as cognitive flexibility and skill in the application of scientific knowledge.

I strive in my teaching to not only present comprehensive and fair-minded explication of psychological theory but also to challenge students to critically examine the inherent assumptions and values embedded within the literature, to give voice to doubts, to encourage synthesis across theories as well as to illuminate differences and inconsistencies. This is accomplished by close examinations of texts; assignment of reaction papers and detailed clinical case studies (integrated with reviews of the literature); active questioning in class discussions and, at times, by conducting oral exams. Such an approach requires me to stay abreast of the developments in the field, to examine my own theoretical biases and resistance to new knowledge or opinion. These activities aim to keep the classroom discourse thought provoking and to facilitate the development of critical thinking, necessary for evidence-based clinical practice.

The Transmission of Values

Professors not only teach but they transmit (either intentionally or unwittingly) the values that form the foundation of their own professional lives. In addition to knowledge that is conveyed or skills that are trained, values, ethics and faith commitments are expressed. *Unlike facts, essential values have no half-life.* Training students to become clinical psychologists involves the internalization of ethical principles and includes, beyond the narrow prescriptions and proscriptions incorporated in APA guidelines, professional and personal values. Ethical principles are taught in class and applied in clinical supervision; however, values are most likely transmitted through myriad interpersonal transactions in and outside of the classroom. I am mindful that the values and personal qualities, which are embodied in my professional life and are actualized in moments of relationship, will probably have as great if not greater an impact on my students than any of the lectures I deliver. I am mindful that how I interact with students, colleagues, staff, and others conveys not only who I am but in some way teaches what it means to be a psychologist. Further, there is a heightened responsibility and opportunity to reflect the values of the university as a Christian university, rooted in a faith tradition, which affirms the sacredness of life. I strive to convey the respect I hold for my students through interest and commitment to their development. I strive to conduct myself always with integrity, to demonstrate the satisfaction that comes through hard work and enthusiastic commitment to continuous development as a professional, and to contribute to the profession through scholarship and leadership. Through these avenues I work to advance the mission of GSEP and the university.

Clarity of Purpose

The aims of higher education can only reach fruition, if there is clarity in purpose. Each learning opportunity, i.e., individual consultation, clinical supervision, class instruction, program administration and development, requires a clear understanding of the knowledge, skills, and values that inform the process of professional development. Each course requires attention to both the learning objectives and the strategies to meet those goals. This involves continual review of the scientific literature, reflection and experimentation with different pedagogies, e.g., critical analyses of texts, role-playing activities, oral examinations, Socratic questioning, etc. I learn through collaboration with my students about the processes that are best suited to a given class and often make adjustments within the academic term. Of particular interest is the development of the ability for critical thinking and applying evidence-based principles to clinical practice. The integration of science and practice is foremost in the development of any course.

I am mindful that it is only through the development of an alliance that genuine engagement and learning can occur, whether in the classroom or in individual mentoring and supervision. This requires careful attention to the interpersonal dynamics in the relationship, sensitivity to the student's anxieties and concerns, and thoughtful and deliberate transparency to allow the challenges the student is facing to be brought into the relationship. I enjoy the opportunity to be actively involved in the practice of clinical supervision of doctoral students, which contributes to my applied research and publications focusing on this specific clinical competency.

I view my role as Director of the Psy.D. Program to be integral to my responsibility as an educator. I am pleased to have played a role in the program's success, which recently was noted to be within the top tier of graduate programs in clinical psychology. I see my responsibility to be faithfully carrying out the administration of the policies and procedures of the program, ensuring that all

rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are fulfilled, facilitating continuous improvement and development of the program, which involves staying abreast of developments within the clinical psychology and within the training community. I have also taken upon myself the responsibility to be highly active in professional psychology, serving in leadership and service positions, e.g., twice-elected chair of the California Psychological Association Division of Education and Training and twice-elected President of APA Division 36, contributing to the professional literature, and speaking on professional issues and presenting workshops for APA on the integration of religious and spiritual resources in psychotherapy and on clinical supervision. I also mentor students and facilitate opportunities for them to become involved in local, state and national organizations, which supports not only their professional development but also the standing of the university. I approach each of these activities with enthusiasm, commitment and with clarity of purpose.

Excellence in Teaching: An Aspiration

I am both honored and humbled to be selected to receive the Howard A. White Award for Teaching Excellence. I am honored because I stand among so many accomplished teachers and I know directly of their commitment and the talents they bring to educating their students. I am humbled because such an award stirs in me the awareness that “excellence” is a somewhat allusive quality and the knowledge that each day brings with it new challenges. This recognition inspires me to offer as much as I can to the development of wisdom and values in the students who stand before me, and who will shape the future of our profession and impact the world entrusted to them.

Timothy Willis
Professor of Religion
Seaver College

A teacher has an unquenchable thirst for learning. My primary inspiration as a teacher is the belief that my students might be just as excited as I am about what I have learned. What is more, I have discovered that I learn when they learn. I anxiously anticipate the act of teaching because, in this act, I learn too. I believe strongly that teaching is an interactive enterprise. Even though I am the teacher and they are “just students,” we are equals in that we all are still learning. Each one of us comes to the subject of a class with different knowledge about it, and then we work together to merge our collective knowledge to “learn” the subject. Certainly the students acquire quantitatively more that is new than I do, but I learn from them as well. As we work through a topic, they integrate their new knowledge with what they already know. As they process it, their previous knowledge and experiences cause them to recognize aspects of the subject that are new to me. I work hard to get them to share what they have learned, because the perspectives they bring cause me to see the subject in a new light; and so, to some degree, I learn it all over again.

I think about this learning process in different modes, based on the classes I regularly teach. My main responsibility is to teach one of the Religion courses required in the GE curriculum. Most of the students in this course are in their first year of college, often in their first semester. They are being bombarded with new experiences and new ideas – even new ways of thinking. I assume that for most of them this is their first exposure to an academic examination of religion and the Bible. I try to remain sensitive to the wide diversity of backgrounds represented in the classroom. Some have grown up in families where knowledge of the Bible and personal faith commitments are cornerstones of their life. Others come from homes where there was virtually no knowledge of biblical characters and events, and perhaps even animosity toward learning about the Bible or anything having to do with religion. Between these two extremes lies a wide spectrum of young people who possess a mixture of curiosity and apathy about a topic that is very private and yet very much a part of American public life. I see my first task to be one of informing them about the contents of the Bible. I try to gear the reading assignments and lectures so that those who come with the least amount of knowledge will be able to dialogue with those who have more extensive knowledge. But then I try to move all of them beyond simple knowledge of the contents to a critical evaluation of the nature of that information by viewing it from more than one perspective (literary, historical, sociological, archaeological, etc.). I emphasize how important it is for them to recognize their own assumptions about the nature of a written text (particularly a text that is thought to be “divinely inspired”) and how those assumptions influence what they learn. I model this for them by talking about my own assumptions, making sure that I mention ways in which those assumptions have changed over the years. Finally, I give them assignments that I think will cause them to take responsibility for thinking through some real-life issues more deeply and critically, so that they will see the importance of considering the spiritual and religious aspects of questions in their own lives. I try to do this in a non-threatening and non-judgmental atmosphere, allowing students to espouse opposing views and to reach opposing conclusions, requiring only that they justify those with reasonable arguments.

A similar sort of process takes place in the upper division Religion classes I teach. The difference with these classes is that we devote significantly more time to the application of learning to the lives of the students. The student population in these classes is significantly different than that in the GE classes. There are far fewer students, and the majority of them have a strong desire to learn about the topic. Most of them are pursuing a major or minor in Religion. As a result, the amount that I learn in this environment increases dramatically. My first task still is to inform, but the amount and diversity of that information increases greatly. I spend much more time in these courses in discussions with the students. These discussions grow out of the information we all are digesting, because I regularly incorporate selections that I have encountered recently in my own research. These discussions tend to focus even more intently on the assumptions we bring to our reading, how we acquire knowledge, and how we integrate that knowledge into our personal belief systems. Most of them are training to become teachers themselves, either informally or formally. They have something that they want to pass on to others. In this environment I am more keenly aware of the model that I am for them. I participate with them in the learning process as much as possible, showing them how I evaluate new information and giving suggestions about integrating it into what I already know or have thought before about the topic. I try to prepare them to do the same with other people by having them make presentations on what they are learning. This involves peer critiques, so that they will become more adept at giving and receiving feedback in a professional manner. I believe that personal interactions like these will regularly occur in the lifelong process of learning. Furthermore, I try to give them my own extensive feedback for oral and written

assignments in a timely fashion. In this mode as well I recognize that I am modeling for them what it is to be a lifelong learner. I will tell them when their ideas are new to me or something I have often encountered, the arguments that are strongest and weakest, etc.

The other type of class I teach is a language class (Biblical Hebrew). There is an even smaller pool of students involved here, and the personal motivation must be stronger. The learning of a language is different in its nature, though. It requires a fair amount of rote memorization, and the students must acquire a “critical mass” of information before they begin to see concrete benefits to what they are doing. Also, it is difficult for them to see the “Big Picture” until much later in the process. This has forced me to develop different motivational techniques (such as mnemonic devices) to diminish the possible monotony inherent to such an exercise and encourage them as they learn. I again try to serve as a model for them by showing them, not only what I have learned, but how I have learned it. One of the primary side benefits of a language course is a clearer recognition of what takes place in communication, as different peoples have developed different means of communicating the same ideas. I am constantly pointing out these differences, as well as getting them to think about how they communicate ideas. Also, I make sure they learn the language in such a way that they can continue to learn it on their own after the course is completed, and I give them assignments that require them to apply their learning to activities they are likely to take up in the years to come (for example, in preparation for classes at a church and in personal Bible study).

Finally, I am keenly aware in all my classes that the materials we are learning concern matters of Christian faith and doctrine. As I said earlier, religion is a very personal matter, and I want to honor that in this process. Academic study of the Bible has been known to be detrimental to the spiritual health of those who engage in it. One of my primary goals is to work against such a development by showing how I sort through difficult issues. I remember how impressed I was by my professors at Harvard, who openly told us that their goal was to train their students to be better able to serve their respective faith communities. I want to further the same goal with my students, first on a personal level and then, if they choose a career in religion, in service to their communities. I admit to them that my knowledge is incomplete and that I might be wrong in my own conclusions, because I am still learning; but I make sure that my students are aware that I am a man of faith myself. The faith of some will grow while they are at Seaver, and the faith of others will wither. I cannot control that. I want them to see why I continue to have faith in the face of knowledge that leads others to doubt. There was a time when I thought my task would be to lead them all the way to a mature faith. I have learned that faith requires a long journey, and I am with these students for only a small part of that journey. My ultimate goal now is to give them good tools and to show them how to use those tools so that they can proceed on their own journey of faith in a more mature and responsible way.