Teaching Philosophy:

My teaching philosophy is simple; an instructor should do their best to transfer knowledge to their audience. There are different ways in which this may be accomplished, influenced by the character of the instructor, the material to be covered, the environment and the audience.

An instructor must be enthusiastic about the material, and even about the act of teaching. I believe that the best instructors are masters of the fundamentals, yet they also embrace new technologies and methodologies. An instructor should be versatile and adaptable, enabling them to hold the attention of their students. Engineers and scientists as instructors in the modern era must be multifaceted. They must be able to function independently, yet also be able to work well in a cooperative group. They should be confident of their knowledge, and be aware of the unknown. Instruction does not have to take the form of standard classroom coursework. As an example, real-world experience would be an engaging area of study for students as they could see how what they are learning applies to real-life situations. Successful instruction can be accomplished through many different avenues, the key being maintaining a motivated and receptive audience.

In the classroom, I believe that reasonably set and achievable goals compel and motivate students to learn the required material. All students should receive encouragement, and those who may be lagging will receive extra attention. I believe students should be granted respect, but they also will be levied an equal measure of responsibility. Students can and do live up to high expectations. I have found that if a competitive atmosphere can be fostered between students in the class, classmates inspire each other to reach higher.

The evolution of the engineering and scientific fields of study has resulted in an increase in the amount of knowledge students need at even the basic level. Communication between colleagues is important to minimize redundancy and to expose students to as wide a breadth of information as possible, while at the same time making sure the fundamentals are covered. Communication is also important between the academic program and potential employers. An open dialogue should be maintained to bring to light problems in the program, or to focus on what employers are looking for a recent graduate to be capable of. Good relations with potential employers for our recent graduates are also important in maintaining the identity and visibility of the program and the profession.

In my teaching, I always strive to do my best for the students, and for my department. I hope that I have incorporated the best attributes of all the teachers I have admired in the past into my teachings, and am able to help train the engineers of the future.

Richard Victor, Scholtz, III, Ph.D., E.I.