Having vivid memories of what it was like to be a student, I have made it clear to myself and others that I don’t simply want to stand in front of a classroom and feed information into my students as if they are machines. To me, that isn’t teaching. Teaching, in its true sense, engages students and encourages them to actively and passionately participate in activities and discussions. For older students that may mean raising emotionally and politically charged issues such as school uniforms or underage drinking; for elementary students it might mean getting a class pet—something the students can interact with, learn from, and care for.

Teaching and learning together form a dynamic experience for students and teachers. No single experience is ever exactly replicated, and thus, each is an important learning opportunity. Students and teachers can grow from interactions with one another, and in these situations, learning is facilitated on both sides. In my classroom, students will have more influence then they are probably used to, for if students have a say in how a topic will be examined, they will be more interested.

I look at teaching as yet another opportunity to learn. My students have just as much to offer me as I have to offer them, and I can’t wait for the day when I can exchange knowledge with the individuals who will one day be in my position.