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Pedagogical Philosophy

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Educators are defenders of absolute, objective truth, protecting the mandate and value of the educational system--consequentially, a salient ethical accountability and altruistic responsibility. Aristotle's axiom, "If the art of shipbuilding were in the wood, we would have ships by nature," hints at the value and intent of education. "For Aristotle, to know something is essentially to know the cause of it; that is, to have a systematic, scientific understanding of things (*episteme*) is to know the causes by which things are brought about" (Robinson, 2004, p. 53). Consequently, the pursuit of axiomatic causation, restricted and applied in a rigid schematic vacuum, produces ordered and sequential relationships of ontological and teleological importance. This is the essential question in which all education explores: truly developed knowledge embrace[d] not only the material, efficient, and formal causes, but the 'that for the sake of which' these causes were recruited [terminus ad quem]. To understand x is to 'know what x is for'" (Robinson, 2004, p.54)—ontological and teleological argumentation: sine qua non. The educational role has an obligation to instruct in a manner that unites Aristotlean metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology. It is the defined clarity of what man is that guides instruction.

A proper lesson in Greek history will lead directly to three names: Euripides, Aeschylus, and Sophocles. It was through drama that the ancient Greek culture disseminated wisdom, honor, integrity, loyalty--man's most noble attributes. The Greeks knew that society, comprised of men, is not sustainable or worthy to pursue and achieve progress if the totality of man's good and bad tendencies are not acknowledged, nurtured or even, at times, governed. Greek drama morphed into proper philosophical Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian schools of thought inspired by pre-Socratic objective mathematics (e.g., Democritus). The temptation and pathetic failure to

mathematically equate man's actions to objective results suggests that man is a unique creature that lives a binary existence: concrete and abstract, carnal and spiritual, physical and spiritual. To lead men, to nurture a society of men, to educate men in truth or virtue becomes a necessity of a worldview based on, as stated, the desired outcome. If man's pursuit is of the carnal or spoils of war, then man is reduced to the barbaric, brutal, superficial side of life. Education, as the etymology suggests, is the leading in truth. This was not lost but rather celebrated by the ancient Latin culture when man's core definition, *Vir*, a derivative of virtue becomes a conversation of true strength, honest bravery, and ethical living. Consequently, the leading of men is inseparable from the teaching of the young to walk properly, honorably. The Latin phrase, *Cor Aut Mors*, live by truth or cease to exist, suggests that man's core purpose is defined by doing things correctly, some value of universal law of human nature. This is the essence of refined, strategic, education as to build up compassionate, intelligent, empathetic guides and civil leaders.

The university commissions and leads the preservation of learning, exemplifying conscientious temperance, discretion, and perseverance against obstinance, prejudice, and discrimination. It is the attempt at legacy and retrospective adherence to equality and fidelity that will separate a viable education and university as a faithful, didactic, instructional testimony.

The elementary or primary foundation begins as a student, a proper disciple governed and guided by benevolent disciplinarians. Consequently, the most noble of all professional pursuits is the altruistic value of teaching wisdom to the young, the impressionable, the life of society's tomorrow. To inspire, to lead, to progress is interwoven with imparting these foundational, vital attributes that far exceed the definition of successful modern education. Education cannot be reduced to a profit-margin. Education and the University create a necessary delineation of

“shadow and light.” It is imperative that universities understand, protect, and teach the navigation between choice and a predetermined, unfaltering ethos. John Quincy Adams’ defined education as a patient and persevering exercise inseparable from an ethos designed to inspire, to dream, to learn, to “do more and [to] become more.” Education in pursuit of progress that is bound ethically is a quick history lesson of the rise and fall of any empire. An educator that truly instructs is to be considered a protector of the truth that is reliant upon the ethical values of the curriculum. Education must be considered in light of ethical determination common to a natural law of humanity not reliant on upon bias ideology. Education is to be holistic in its interaction with man, an honest pursuit of progress that somehow does not sacrifice the god-shaped stuff.

My educational philosophy and ambitions are rooted in the belief that teachers are incredibly influential. Educators influence by imparting knowledge within and across disciplines, and by daily sharing their lives as fellow-learners, friends, mentors, and, occasionally, benevolent disciplinarians. Therefore, a teacher is to be a role-model that fosters the love of learning and the enthusiasm for life through strong, consistent, and practical teaching methods in and outside the classroom. However, collaboration from all participants (i.e., faculty, staff, student, parent/s, and administration) is necessary to ensure a culture of learning. Every participant adds value, support, and accountability to encourage and monitor social and academic progress, especially within the often more intimate and spiritually accountable educational context. Specifically, the teacher/professor’s facilitation of classroom learning is complemented by students' participation, behavioral management, and academic endeavor. When these variables are combined with the students’ unique cultural/personal backgrounds and individual

talents and intelligences, then academic excellence and social competence are daily achievements.

The final objective of any Alma Mater is to foster life-long learners and conscientiously optimistic citizens. For the university, the mandate for apologetics and discipleship increase the tangibility of education with a shared faith, community, and social ethos. The purpose of education is to teach us more about each other and, ultimately, the world within which one lives. The university posits a worldview and reinforces a continual alignment of instruction filtered through this worldview dictated by the scientific, objective, and equitable truth. As a result, teaching is a profession with much responsibility and much edification, in this life and future generations. We reach backward to our parents and forward to our children, and through their children to a future we will never see, but about which we need to care (Carl Jung, as cited in Myers, 2004).