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My fundamental goal is to make learning enjoyable. To achieve this, I employ an overlapping tripartite strategy of “reducing student stress”, “injecting some fun in class”, and “learning by doing”. I reduce stress by managing student expectations, being clear about what they need to do, spreading assessments out through the semester, using open-book exams, and having an open-door policy. The fun I inject is usually in the form of un-graded quizzes and team competitions, but it can also be from simply relating a personal experience or watching an amusing video clip. Learning by doing is my favourite pedagogical method. Problem solving, designing experiments, field trips, creating education materials, etc. engage students in ways that lecturing simply cannot. These three strategies are in addition to more general ‘good-practice’ approaches such as being enthusiastic, making the topics relevant to students, providing topical examples, and using a diverse selection of teaching methodologies. If students can relax a little and enjoy their classes, learning becomes easier. Furthermore, other important benefits arise: a classroom that is relatively free of stress, enjoyable and has plenty of activities is fertile ground for creativity. Innovation, ingenuity, and originality are all highly prized attributes in contemporary society, but how can we encourage these attributes? University is probably the last chance students will have to develop their creativity in an educational context. I hope to use this opportunity to cultivate curiosity and imagination in students so they can readily adapt to an increasingly dynamic world.

What Students Say...

“...he brings his boundless laughter and enthusiasm to the class and it is reflected by how much the students have enjoyed the module.”

“Prof Todd has been a really sincere and great mentor. Starting out as a lost sheep, I’ve learnt a lot through this module and his guidance.”

“He is an extremely engaging lecturer and his lectures are always fun and interactive. He is extremely knowledgeable in his area of discipline and always challenges students to think critically in class.”