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TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

STUDENT CENTERED: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

The base of my teaching philosophy was laid during my teaching training and it has evolved during my teaching experience. Rather than a teacher, I see myself as more of a facilitator. I believe that the relationship between a professor and students needs to be built on three pillars: collaboration, mutual respect, and engagement.

The students and the professor start each class as a team embarking on a journey of knowledge with the professor as guide. Each member of the team, including the professor, will learn from this experience. In order for the common goal, respectively learning, to be reached, collaboration needs to be developed. The guide, the teacher, should be the leader and moderator in this collaboration. Channels of communication need to be opened between all members of the team. Activities that build the feeling of association to a common goal of knowledge achievement and creation should be at the core of this collaboration in which every member of the learning community is respected.

I believe in participative lectures where the students and professors discuss ideas and academic concepts as opposed to passive classrooms where educators simply lecture at students. Most of my classes have some level of award for participation, as I believe the best way of learning. Each member of the crew comes on this journey with a baggage of knowledge accumulated from previous education and experiences. Each of these experiences is somehow unique. Since they have all embarked on the journey together, they need to respect each other and get to know each other, to respect and build on differences and similarities. It is not easy to understand all the differences between people, but respecting them is the first step to understanding. Mutual respect also ensures that the professor-student relationship is a two-way road: each side has something to learn from the other. The student gathers knowledge from the professor while the professor gets to understand the student's needs and values, and to adapt his/her teaching style and content to that.

In this collaboration, each partner needs to be actively engaged in reaching the goals. During class, the professor and the students need to be engaged in lively conversations that could help students understand concepts, notions and even the need for long and complicated formulas. When the professor explains materials using examples drawn from the experience of her students, then s/he is not only making a connection between science and real life, but s/he is engaging students in discovering new meanings of all aspects of life and world.

I believe that by building an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, and engagement in a classroom, a teacher does not only teach, but also prepares students for life. It is my opinion that in such an environment students are introduced not only to the course material, but also to different aspects of life. Learning is a life-long endeavor; as educators, our goal is to prepare students for this by providing them with a base of information on which they can build, and encouraging in them attitudes and techniques for continued learning. In summary, I do apply ICARE principle (Interaction, Connect, Apply, Reflect, and Extend) in my teaching.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Naim Kapucu is a faculty member in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Central Florida (UCF). He received his Ph.D. in Public and International Affairs from the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs of the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 2003. Prior to that, he earned a Master of Public Policy and Management degree from H. John III School of Public Policy and Management, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1997.

His main research interests are homeland security and crisis management, public-nonprofit partnerships in emergencies, complex adaptive systems, dynamic network analysis, computational policy analysis, decision-making in complex environment, organizational learning and design, and academic service learning. His research seeks to understand how interorganizational networks, such as public-nonprofit partnerships, influence the public service delivery. In one of his current projects, he explores the problem of building cooperation among public and nonprofit organizations to achieve public service goals in emergencies and what factors contribute to successful public-nonprofit partnerships and factors that inhibit their development.

His work has been published in *Administration & Society*, *Journal of Public Administration Theory and Research (J-PART)*, the *American Review of Public Administration (ARPA)*, *Public Administration*, *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*, and *Disasters: The Journal of Disaster Studies, Policy, and Management*. Recent publications include, "Public-Nonprofit Partnerships for Collective Action in Dynamic Contexts," "Managing Public Nonprofit Partnerships in Emergencies: Role of Nonprofit Leadership." He is a reviewer for the program committee of the Public and Nonprofit (PNP) Division of the Academy of Management. He is also *Executive Council Member*, American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), Section on Emergency and Crisis Management. He is currently leading the UCF- Orange County Health Department Partnership Project. The project is hailed as a best-practice model and has significantly increased service capacity for the grassroots agencies participating in the project. He is a recipient of *Director's Award*, Orange County Health Department, for the excellent service provided to enhance services to all populations in Orange County as well as the success for federal Capacity Building Grant.

He teaches public policy analysis, organization theory, strategic management, nonprofit management, research design, and analytic techniques for public administration. He taught at the University of Pittsburgh (PA), Penn State University (PA), and Robert Morris University (PA) before coming to UCF in 2003. He is a recipient of the Teaching Faculty Leadership Award for 2004-2005 academic year and Service-Learning Faculty Recognition Award for the academic year 2006-2007 at the University of Central Florida.