

ON TEACHING

Attila Maróti

I have been teaching mathematics at the graduate but mainly undergraduate levels in Hungary, England, and the USA (see enclosed cv). I mainly taught in the USA. Apart from covering different courses, I had the privilege to teach students from different cultural backgrounds and on various levels. My teaching duties involved the responsibility for preparing and presenting lectures, assigning and correcting homework, creating and grading exams, as well as determining final grades.

In the University of Southern California I taught Discrete Mathematics (Math 400), Combinatorial Analysis (for graduate students) (Math 532), Differential Equations and Linear Algebra (Math 125), Applied Combinatorics (Math 432), Calculus II (Math 126), Mathematics for the Social Sciences (Math 116), Applied Algebra (Math 370), Calculus I (Math 125), Character Theory of Finite Groups (for graduate students) (Math 610), and Algebra (for graduate students) (Math 510b). My student evaluations were good or excellent. See my web site <http://www-rcf.usc.edu/~maroti/> for a pdf version of my numerical teaching evaluations. For further information please contact the Head of Department at the University of Southern California or see my letters of recommendations.

At the University of Birmingham, England, I helped out in various tutorials, did a lot of marking/grading and did a small group teaching for engineer and mathematics undergraduate students. Many years ago, I ran a representation theory course for undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Szeged, Hungary.

Each time I teach a class, it is my goal to create a positive learning experience for my students. I teach them solid problem-solving techniques, as well as intuition about the material, in a challenging and enthusiastic environment.

Every student is capable of learning mathematics. My goal is to kindle the flame of learning about math and motivate each student to become an active learner. It is important to create an environment that provides each individual a place where he or she can be successful. My design is to challenge my more advanced students while de-mystifying the concepts for the rest of the class.

I usually spend a lot of time grading exams and homeworks. This is because I try to write a lot on the students' works to give them sufficient feedback. I try to write everything I say on the blackboard. Students

appreciate this very much. I also talk to students about mathematics outside the classroom (for example, during office hours).

I had the privilege to write letters of recommendations for eight of my students.

I have a stammer/stutter since childhood. As a result it requires more effort to teach. I realize that this may be a concern for the search committee. However I like to teach, I am able to teach, I think I am a good teacher and I have good student evaluations.

Let me make an important remark. The fluency of my speech is not constant. There are situations when I am almost always perfectly fluent, but there are speaking situations when my stammer is bad. It is very hard to make a general statement about my speech however I can say that if I am relaxed or feel comfortable then I tend to speak fluently, on the other hand when I am worried, anxious or stressed then my speech is generally worse. Having said that let me emphasize that I do not consider myself a nervous or an anxious individual. The causes of my stammer seem to differ from the psychological factors which seem to influence it. My native tongue is Hungarian. There is no significant difference in my stammer when speaking in English or in Hungarian.

Let me concentrate on teaching. I believe students always understood what I said or tried to say. There were lectures when I was slow, but there was no course where I actually ran out of time or could not finish the material. My lectures are well thought out, my courses are well paced. Students visit me during office hours. I assign a lot of homework. I mark some of these to see where the class stands.

The fluency of my speech does not depend on the level of course I teach, nor on the number of students in the classroom. (The largest class I taught had 72 students and the smallest had 5.)

I am more than willing to advise PhD students. I already have a topic.