

Teacher Education

**Observation of a Geologic Time Lecture/Lab Class
with Dr. Dale Easley...December 1, 2005**

Prior to my observation, Dr. Easley e-mailed me his quiz, lab final review and geologic time lab that he was going to present to his class the day of the observation. We then discussed the probable relevance of the lab to the students (he used local geologic areas in part of the lab) and how he developed the entire lab book himself to help keep up the interest level of his students.

I came into Dr. Easley's class about 15 minutes after it began as we had overlapping class schedules. The students were finishing up a quiz and then Dr. Easley began his review for the final lab test. His questioning style (probing and extending) and student rapport are excellent and the review was interesting and informative. Dr. Easley would "jog" students' memories by repeating "remember when we..." and then would also reinforce that remembering with a story or way to retain the information. He really is an excellent story teller that uses the stories to bring home a point to his students while sticking to his learning objectives as he teaches.

The lab portion of the observation consisted of a short explanation followed by small lab groups working on a lab that was "forensic" in nature. They tried to "discover" the age of the rock layers in several different formation situations. The last part of the lab dealt with the dating of the rocks upon which the University of Dubuque sits and the area just south of Dubuque. The students appeared to both enjoy and understand what they were doing with few exceptions.

The strength of Dr. Easley's teaching style is that it's obvious that he works at really teaching his students and not simply presenting material to them. He is upbeat and fun both in class and outside of class, teaches with a strong and enthusiastic voice, and displays an energy and pace that keeps his students both engaged and active. His technology savvy allows him to create almost all of what he displays and works with during class while also challenging his students technologically through the use of his newly acquired laptop computers.

A suggestion to Dr. Easley after the class was to get (or make) a larger screen for his lab so that students sitting in the distant ("cheap") seats can also see without much effort. He stated that he doesn't use the screen that often in lab but thought it a reasonable suggestion (once the new labs are completed this probably will be a moot suggestion)

We discussed the observation after class for a brief period until we both had to leave. The final standard that I use when evaluating my student teachers is whether or not I would want my daughter(s) in their class. My only regret is that neither of them had the chance to be in Dr. Easley's Geology class during their college careers. With

student learning as his primary focus, Dr. Easley is a true educator and motivator of students...he was a pleasure to observe!

Brad Clarke

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

**Assistant Professor of Education
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