



## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

After 20 years in the college classroom I am convinced that conceptual understanding should always underpin learning, from the conceptual, introductory level through to calculus-based courses. Without clearly understood concepts learning is hollow. I actively incorporate physics pedagogy research in all my classes. My favorite technique (based on Eric Mazur, Harvard University) involves posing scenarios for my students to discuss. I concentrate on being a facilitator, not a “sage on the stage”. It is important to me that all students learn what they are capable of learning in a friendly environment that fosters questioning and risk-taking.

This area of physics pedagogy research is vital and, in my opinion, the best way forward in attracting more students to the physical sciences. Once there they can learn how to appreciate the beauty and order of the physical universe.

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### EAGLE NEBULA

<http://imgsrc.hubblesite.org/hu/db/1995/44/images/a/formats/full.tif>