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### **Teaching Philosophy Statement**

I strive to be both demanding and supportive as a teacher, and the guiding principle of my teaching philosophy is to promote *active learning*, as opposed to passive learning. Based on my own experience as an undergraduate and a 10-year one-on-one tutor, I have found that students retain material more effectively if they are actively participating and completing hands-on exercises, rather than passively listening to lectures and taking notes. Active learning not only boosts enthusiasm and interest, but also develops critical thinking and public speaking skills that are important for success both during and after college.

To facilitate participation during discussion sections, I employ *cold calling*, a pedagogical technique where instructors randomly call on students to answer questions without waiting for volunteers. The issue with waiting for volunteers is that participation almost always stagnates, with everyone sitting in tense silence, hoping that someone else will raise their hand. By contrast, cold calling normalizes in-class engagement, with each individual participating at least once in every session. Everyone is incentivized to be as attentive as possible, knowing that they could be called on at any point. An added benefit is that I can memorize everyone's names very quickly (by the second week of the quarter), thus developing a rapport with students and fostering an environment where they feel more comfortable reaching out for extra help.

For Introduction to Linguistics (LIN 001), I created my own set of slides for each discussion section (see [aokinb.github.io/teaching.html](http://aokinb.github.io/teaching.html) for details). The presentations largely shared the same format – I would first show students how to do a practice problem, and then call on one person or a small group to write the answer to a related homework question on the blackboard. If they gave the correct response, I would ask them to explain their reasoning out loud, and if they didn't know the answer, I would verbally walk them through the problem, while having the student write down each step. Although this method of teaching might sound intimidating, particularly if one makes a mistake, I found that students were much more excited to participate as the quarter progressed, especially after many received high scores on the midterm exam.

Fifty-minute discussion sections go by quickly, with some students needing more time to grasp the material. To support students outside of discussion, I filmed my own YouTube videos to supplement the homework (see [youtube.com/@naoki93](https://youtube.com/@naoki93) for details) and prepared study guides for both the midterm and final exams. In addition to providing 2 office hours per week, I offered 13 and 16 extra office hours before the midterm and final, respectively. 11 students met me privately for 1-hour appointments to go over their mistakes on the midterm exam and work on extra practice problems.

Active learning is not only beneficial in the short-term for success in a particular course, but is also useful in the long-term. By engaging in critical thinking (e.g., by explaining their reasoning for an answer to a question) and practicing public speaking (e.g., discussing homework questions in front of their peers), students are developing skills that could very likely be useful for future success, regardless of what career path they choose to take.