Teaching is a means of imparting knowledge through specific lessons. The martial arts teacher is a specialist who guides the students through the development of certain physical and mental skills. A teacher must be a person who is an “expert” in the subject he teaches. In the field of the martial arts, this expertise should be based on solid professional knowledge and experience in the martial art being taught.

Teaching is an integral part of the martial arts. Without “Qualified Instructors”, there can be no future for the martial arts. The spirit of the martial arts prospers through the student/teacher relationship. It is the passing of knowledge from one generation to the next that gives the martial arts its rich history and culture. For the serious martial artists, the student/teacher relationship becomes a bond for life and is highly respected.

When a student reaches a level at which he is qualified to teach, he often recognizes for the first time just how talented his teacher is. He realizes that being a good fighter does not automatically mean he is a qualified teacher. Without a certain degree of experience in all areas of the martial arts, it is difficult to teach. An instructor must be well-rounded and experienced in as many facets of his martial art as possible. This is the reason the Instructor Development Course was designed, so a “new” black belt could benefit from the knowledge of his master instructors and become a more qualified instructor.

If you flip through the ads of your local martial arts schools, you might get the impression that being some kind of champion is a pre-requisite for being an instructor. In reality, your teaching skills are more important for the growth of a student than the number of trophies you have won. A qualified instructor must have the proper tools to teach his students, knowledge and experience. Above all, he must be confident in his teaching skills; this develops with the proper amount of “seasoning-time”.

Teaching the martial arts involves giving others the knowledge required to perform specific physical movements and sharing the spirit of the martial arts with them. Unfortunately, there is not a secret method or trick that will make an instructor’s teaching style successful. Your method of teaching will be determined by your character, style, cultural heritage, personality and martial arts background. This means that there can be as many different teaching methods as there are teachers.

There are fundamental formulas that you can apply to your teaching style to make it as effective as possible. Listed below is the formula that we will be using. This formula has 5 principles of effective teaching: Planning, Motivation, Recognition of Individuality, Practice and Performance Assessment.
1. **Planning**

The foremost element in teaching is careful planning. Plan the objectives for each class and delegate the amount of practice time allotted for each objective. For effectiveness and safety, carefully consider the type and number of exercises and skills you have selected to teach in a particular class.

Set goals for each class. Students can perform better and learn more quickly when they have goals to work toward. Using the student testing requirements may serve as one method of goal setting. A qualified instructor will always assess the student’s strengths and weaknesses before setting classroom goals; this will avoid unnecessary frustration and promote student progress. For the greatest motivational value, goals must be specific and reasonably difficult to accomplish, but within the realm of the student’s capabilities.

With your curriculum structure in mind, it is easy to create a lesson plan. Daily planning is essential to effectively implement your ideas. To create a lesson plan, first consider your objectives. List your objectives for the class in a simple format. Based on your objectives, plan the subject material that will enhance those objectives for that particular class.

Highlight new skills and prepare a brief introduction for each. Be prepared to designate ample time for the practice of these new skills. Next, consider the rhythm of the class. You may want to alternate periods of activity with periods of rest for best results. There are two complementary methods of setting the rhythm:

1. “High intensity” with frequent rest periods
   - (high intensity training is best for reviewing skills and endurance training)

2. “Low intensity” with few rest periods
   - (low intensity training is recommended for new skills)

After you have considered your objectives, decide which new skills you will teach and determine the rhythm of the class. Now, it is time to create your “lesson plan”, step-by-step including subject material, teaching methods, training aids and the amount of time allocated to each subject.

There are 3 stages of the lesson plan:

1. Warm-up
2. Core training
3. Cool-down

The function of the warm-up period is to activate the body’s circulation, prepare the joints and muscles for activity and to raise the body’s core temperature.

The core training period consists of skill development, strategy and cognitive training. There are 5 significant elements included in the core training curriculum:

1. Techniques and strategy training
2. Speed training
3. Strength training
4. Endurance training
5. Integration of the physical & mental training
The function of the cool-down period is to allow the body time to return to its pre-exercise condition.

Slow stretching and easy exercises encourage circulation and assist in removing chemical build-up in the muscles, so the student will not feel sore and stiff after class.

Listed below are the Guide-lines for creating a Lesson Plan:

1. Consider your objectives
2. Select new skills to teach
3. Determine the rhythm of the class
4. Create the lesson plan
   a) Warm-up
   b) Core training
      - Technique and strategy training
      - Speed training
      - Strength training
      - Endurance training
      - Integration of the physical & mental training
   c) Cool-down
Sample Lesson Plan

Level: Beginner

I. Objectives
   A. Improve the general level of fitness
   B. Introduce: front snap kick
   C. Critique: stationary middle punch and sitting stance

II. Curriculum
   A. Stretching
   B. Front snap kick, stationary middle punch and sitting stance
   C. Meditation

III. Training intensity
   A. Low intensity

IV. Lesson plan
   A. Warm-up exercises
      1. (10) minutes
   B. Core training
      1. (30) minutes
         - Teach front snap kick
            a) Practice (group/individual)
            b) Review front snap kick
         - Critique stationary middle punch and sitting stance
            a) Practice (group/individual)
            b) Review stationary middle punch and sitting stance
   C. Cool-down
      1. (5) minutes
2. **Motivation**

Motivation is the mental spark that energizes a person for action. To energize your body, you must first open your mind. To open your mind, you must be aroused by an internal or external stimulus. This stimulus is known as “**Motivation**”.

In a teaching environment, the stimulus may be different for each individual or it may be a common factor in a group activity. To motivate your students, you must first discover what stimulates them to learn.

Students may be motivated if they want to achieve the superior performance levels and psychological rewards that the martial arts can offer. If they are not motivated, their training will become “*mechanical*” and their performance will be poor. *The single best way to motivate your students is to be a highly motivated person yourself.*

When a student reaches a designated goal, help him to establish the next goal immediately. Ongoing goals will encourage students to increase their efforts.

You can motivate students by creating a system of “*rewards*” and “*incentives*”.

- Material rewards may include: medals, achievement awards, trophies, promotional testing, etc.
- Non-material rewards are also important for the motivation of students.
- Verbal incentives and encouragement in a class setting are particularly effective for building student confidence and peer respect.

So we can conclude that “*motivated behavior*” is the direct result of the presence of proper student arousal and a goal oriented atmosphere created by the instructor.

Listed below are a few tips about motivating your students:

1. Never hesitate to encourage or praise students when they perform well.

2. Always encourage students to try again when they have made a mistake or experienced failure.

3. When setting goals clearly state:
   
   a) What the goal is
   
   b) How to proceed
   
   c) How the student will know when the goal is achieved

4. Present new tasks in small, easy to complete steps

5. “…*Failure is the predecessor of success*”

   *Students must learn to overcome failure and use it as:*

   “*a stepping stone, on the road to success*”…
3. Recognition of individuality

Every individual has a different way of perceiving and understanding the world around him. Since you are teaching a group of individuals, you must consider each person individually and as a part of the whole. Each individual learns at his own pace and to the best of his ability. Inherent to being a good instructor is the aptitude for teaching the class as a unified whole, while giving each individual the specific instruction he needs to improve.

You must master the ability to balance the need for individuality with the need for conformity. While there are many exercises that students perform uniformly, an “over-emphasis” on conformity can stifle a student’s natural talent. Because we are all unique individuals with unique physical and mental characteristics, we each have special strengths and weaknesses. By accurately recognizing these strengths and weaknesses, we can maximize our potential.

Yet, within the martial arts there is a special tradition and heritage that has been handed down to us. It is our duty to preserve the “character” of the martial arts and to pass it on to our students. Therefore, we require that students practice certain skills in a specifically designed way, without digression. A good example of this is the way we practice our “Patterns”. Every white belt student in a particular style practices the same pattern, in the same way that every white belt student before him practiced it. This is an example of preserving the “traditions” of the martial arts.

4. Practice

All students must invest a certain amount of time to practice what they have learned. “Repetition” is the best method of practice to perfect a skill. Supervise your student’s practice sessions whenever possible. This will prevent them from practicing flawed or incorrect techniques that may lead to forming bad habits or possible injuries. As students progress through the ranks, they tend to stop practicing their basic techniques, because the advanced techniques seem more appealing and challenging to them. Basic techniques are the “building blocks” of the martial arts and performing your basic techniques correctly is essential.

… “perfect practice develops perfect technique” …

A. Physical practice

A well balanced “practice program” should include physical and mental practice. For the best results, one day concentrate on the physical application of the skills and the next day emphasize the mental skills, such as: accuracy, reflexes, strategy, etc.

You can never over-emphasize the value of consistent practice. When students have learned a new technique, accentuate the importance of devoted practice. Before a student can absorb the value of a practice program, he must know what to do and how to do it. Always teach the “purpose of the movement” and the proper “mechanics” of a new technique. This will instill in the student’s minds a perfect image of the movement or new technique you want them to learn. If you are successful, your students will learn to develop a mental picture or “internalized impression” of what you are teaching them.
The ability to establish an internal impression of a movement or technique is important for several reasons:

1st. - It provides the basis for the student’s actions; their actions are guided by the images they hold in their mind.

2nd. - It produces the mechanics of the movement or technique necessary for the execution of the proper physical action.

3rd. - It allows the student to critique his own performance.

Once the students have learned the skill of internalized impressions, the next step is to understand the importance of consistent and intensive practice. The progress of the students will be a direct reflection of the consistency of the student’s practice and their intensity during practice, discipline is the key.

The progression of a physical practice program:

- Initial goal setting
- The formation of mental pictures
- Understanding the mechanics and purpose of each movement or technique
- Critique physical practice
- Speed and accuracy is developed
- Technique and movement become automatic
- Internalized impression is accomplished
- Consistent practice is established
- Intensity of practice is challenged
- A successful physical practice program is achieved

B. Mental practice

Perfect practice is possible only when your training has the proper balance of physical and mental practice. With physical practice alone, you may actually get tired of what you are doing, long before you
ever reach your desired level of performance. Mental practice allows the student to mentally practice a movement or technique by visualizing a perfect performance of the action.

Imagine yourself performing a flying side piercing kick. As you visualize yourself jumping, you may feel your leg muscles “twitch” and your heart rate “speed up”. The momentary rush of excitement you feel is caused by the electric impulses occurring in your brain.

If you create a vivid internalized impression in your mind, your brain will activate the same neural impulses in your body, as it does when you actually physically execute a flying side piercing kick. This is an effective way of preparing your body for an accurate and confident performance.

Mental practice is the most effective way to teach new skills. If you demonstrate the purpose of a movement or technique and explain the mechanics of the movement or technique, the students will be able to visualize an accurate mental picture of what to do.

By comparing the actual execution of a movement or technique with the accurate mental picture, the students can refine skills and remove bad habits.

- “Offensive visualization” may be used for analyzing a movement or technique by the student before it is executed, thus improving the student’s attacking skills.

- “Defensive visualization” may be used to improve interactive skills, such as self-defense and free-sparring by visualizing an opponent’s attack and how to react, thus improving the student’s response in blocking and counter-attacking skills.

You can lead your students in mental practice by creating hypothetical scenarios for them to be challenged by. Through mental practice your students will show more motivation and confidence in their physical performance.

In conclusion, a well-balanced practice program should be planned with “diversity”. The physical practice program should include training in the following areas:

- Power
- Speed
- Endurance
- Strength
- Flexibility
- Reflexes
- Mental development
5. **Performance assessment**

Performance assessment is a data collection process that is used to comprehensively check a student’s progress and correct errors in his performance. Performance assessment has four progressive steps:

- Appraisal and analysis
- Feedback
- Reinforcement
- Follow-up

A. **Appraisal and analysis**

The first step in performance assessment is appraisal and analysis. This is actually two separate but related steps. Appraisal takes place when you observe an individual student’s performance and determine the current skill level. In doing this, note the general condition and improvements made since the last performance assessment. The next step is to analyze the student’s performance. If you find the student is performing a specific movement or technique incorrectly or the student has developed a “bad habit”, you should analyze the problem and make the necessary adjustments. Accurate analysis is very important to the student’s progression; an incorrect analysis of the problem may allow the student to develop a bad habit and continue to perform the movement or technique incorrectly.

B. **Feedback**

The second step is feedback. Feedback simply means telling the student how he is progressing. It is the instructor’s responsibility to guide the student toward perfection through verbal and physical reminders. Students learning new skills require accurate adjustments to their movements and techniques. The instructor should thoroughly explain and show the student step-by-step instructions to allow the student to achieve his goal.

C. **Reinforcement**

The third step is reinforcement. For some students the enjoyment of performing well can be enough reinforcement to make them continue to improve. Generally, even highly motivated students occasionally need some kind of external reinforcement. There are two types of reinforcement, positive and negative.

- Positive reinforcement may include praise and material rewards.
- Negative reinforcement may be used to discourage undesirable behavior, when the safety of the student or other students are at risk. The instructor must know when to use negative reinforcement and the correct level of intensity to use.

D. **Follow-up**

The fourth step is follow-up. The instructor should check each student’s progress regularly with particular attention to the student’s previous problems. The follow-up is used to ensure that the student is performing his movements and techniques correctly. The follow-up will also prevent the student from slipping back into bad habits, which would result in a loss of effectiveness in training.
Qualified instructors

Out of the 100% of the students studying the Taekwon-Do today, only about 10% are taught by “Qualified Instructors”… What about the other 90% of the students that are studying Taekwon-Do? From the viewpoint of a Master Instructor, it seems that the other 90% of the students studying Taekwon-Do are divided into 3 categories:

- 30% of the students studying Taekwon-Do are being taught by “novice” 1st. dan black belts that has not completed any type of instructor training program ???

- 30% of the students studying Taekwon-Do are being taught by “black belts that just work-out with the student”, instead of preparing a lesson plan that addresses the individual and collective needs of the students ???

- 30% of the students studying Taekwon-Do are being taught “fighting skills only”, tournament and street fighting tactics seem to be the curriculum for each and every class ???
Lesson Plan

Level: ________

I. Objectives

A. _____________________________________________________________________
B. _____________________________________________________________________
C. _____________________________________________________________________
D. _____________________________________________________________________

II. Curriculum

A. Stretching
B. _____________________________________________________________________
C. _____________________________________________________________________
D. Meditation

III. Training intensity

A. _________ intensity

IV. Lesson plan

A. Warm-up exercises
   1. ( ) minutes

B. Core training
   1. ( ) minutes
      - ________________________________________________________________
        a) Practice (group/individual)
        b) Review ______________________________________________________
      - ______________________________________________________________
        a) Practice (group/individual)
        b) Review ______________________________________________________
      - ______________________________________________________________
        a) Practice (group/individual)
        b) Review ______________________________________________________

C. Cool-down
   1. ( ) minutes
Project Plan

Level: __________

I. Objectives

A. __________________________________________________________________
B. __________________________________________________________________
C. __________________________________________________________________
D. __________________________________________________________________

II. Curriculum

A. Stretching
B. __________________________________________________________________
C. __________________________________________________________________
D. Meditation

III. Training intensity

A. __________ intensity

IV. Practice plan

A. Warm-up exercises
   1. ( ) minutes

B. Core training
   1. ( ) minutes

   a) Practice (group/individual)
   b) Review ________________________________

   a) Practice (group/individual)
   b) Review ________________________________

   a) Practice (group/individual)
   b) Review ________________________________

   a) Practice (group/individual)
   b) Review ________________________________

C. Cool-down
   1. ( ) minutes