

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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A teaching philosophy

- states your beliefs about teaching and learning;
- provides a critical rationale for why you hold those beliefs;
- describes your teaching goals and methods and the principles or values that guide them; and
- reflects a sensitivity to the contextual factors in which the teaching and learning takes place.

When writing your teaching philosophy

- be brief – one to two pages
- avoid technical terms and jargon – use language and concepts that can be broadly understood and appreciated
- be reflective and personal – provide a creative, vivid portrait of yourself as a person who is intentional about teaching and committed to student learning
- use first-person, narrative approach

To get started try

- using a quote about teaching and/or learning;
- telling a story or describing a critical incident related to teaching or learning;
- developing a metaphor for your teaching; or
- developing personal thesis statement about the nature of teaching and learning.

Guiding Questions

Those who have researched statements of teaching philosophy have found similarities in the components contained within the statements (Chism, 1998; Goodyear & Allchin, 1998; Schönwetter et al., 2002). The below list identifies the common components and presents some question to help stimulate your thinking about that component. You are not meant to answer all these questions in a teaching philosophy. They are provided as a reflective tool only.

1. Conceptualization of Learning

- How do I believe learning occurs?
- Why do I believe my students want to learn?
- How should I intervene in the learning process?
- What role do students play in my classroom?
- How do I measure learning outcomes?

2. Conceptualization of Teaching

- What is my definition of teaching?
- Why do I teach? What do I value about teaching?
- What are my teaching goals?
- What personal characteristics influence the way I approach teaching?
- Which aspects of teaching do I enjoy most or find most rewarding? Why?
- How do I facilitate the learning process?
- How do I intellectually challenge students?

3. Goals for Students

- What knowledge, skills and attitudes do I expect my students to obtain?
- What is the rationale behind these expectations?
- What role do student play in my classroom?
- How do I prepare students to use the knowledge learned in class to solve real-world problems?

4. Student-Teacher Relationship

- What kind of student-teacher relationship do I strive to achieve?
- How do I interact with students in and outside of the classroom?
- How do I encourage students to connect with me?
- How am I a role model for students?
- How do I motivate students?
- How do I support students in their learning?
- How do I give students feedback?
- What values do I impart to my students?
- How do I want to make a difference in the lives of my students?

5. Integration of Responsibilities

- How has my research influenced my teaching?
- How has my teaching influenced my research?
- How do I disseminate what I have learned?
- Why is it important for me to keep current in my discipline?
- What excites me about my discipline?
- Why do I want my students to be excited about my discipline?
- Why is the study of my discipline important?
- In what ways do I want to improve the education of students in my discipline?

6. Implementation of the Philosophy

- What is the link between my teaching philosophy and classroom activities?
- What kinds of activities take place in my classroom?
- How do I make decisions about content, resources, and methods?
- How do my teaching strategies help me achieve my teaching goals?
- How do I create a safe and supportive learning environment for students?
- How is my teaching philosophy integrated in my student assessment strategies?

7. Professional Growth Plan

- What have I learned about myself as a teacher?
- How has my approach to teaching changed? Why?
- How do I evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching and other interactions with students?
- How do I plan to grow and develop in teaching over the years?
- What goals have I set for myself as a teacher? How will I achieve these goals?

References

The above information was adapted from the following sources:

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