

## ASSIGNMENT #1 A: DEVELOPING A REFLECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICE AND PHILOSOPHY

A teaching philosophy relays your thinking and beliefs about teaching and learning and situates these ideas in your discipline or across disciplines. In most applications, a teaching philosophy is a required component. Developing a teaching philosophy that relies on your own authentic abilities and goals can support your entire teaching portfolio.

### Elements of an Effective Teaching Statement (University of Washington CIDR)

There are many ways to develop and organize a teaching statement, but statements that communicate effectively often include elements that are:

- Descriptive: What you do when you teach; types of activities or thinking in which you engage your students.
- Analytical: Why you teach in the ways that you do; how your thinking about teaching has changed over time.
- Empirical: Experiences or observations of student learning on which your decisions about teaching are based.

### Goals: To engage questions as a centerpiece in developing a teaching philosophy.

- How can continued reflection on your teaching practice improve the learning environment in your classroom or studio?
- What are the greater aims of your teaching? What are the enduring understandings you hope the students will come away with and how can you bring these into your classroom?
- What methods do you use to implement your goals?

To advance their practices, college and university faculty members across academic disciplines discuss their thoughts on teaching and their own experiences as learners. Thinking and questioning one's practice as a teacher creates a setting for growth.

To question our goals in teaching, ask how they achieve learning outcomes, and to examine ways in which students learn effectively.

To begin to challenge oneself as a teacher.

In a broad sense, what does an effective teaching methodology involve? How do we implement this in the classroom? Communication well, planning goals and learning outcomes and teaching to a diverse body of learners and then assessing outcomes are essential components of effective teaching.

### Learning Outcomes:

- A solid base of ideas for your course descriptions, syllabus, class project and assessment forms.
- A generative document that will change over the semester and years to more accurately reflect the effective ways you may contribute to the cycle of teaching and learning.

## Methods and Assignment:

1. Review aspects of a reflective teaching approach discussed by any of your own past faculty which parallel your own philosophy or situation as a teacher. In what ways does this relate to your own classroom experiences?
2. List examples where an instructor has elicited feedback in the classroom to gauge students' understanding or lack thereof within a lecture or studio. How did the instructor then change teaching methods? Did this further the class's understanding of the material? If so how? If not, what would have been more effective?
3. Review philosophies by faculty and graduates on [www.collegiateteachinginartanddesign.com](http://www.collegiateteachinginartanddesign.com) tabs' Portfolios, or Seminars and Advice.
4. Read:
  - <https://cei.umn.edu/writing-your-teaching-philosophy>
  - <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/document-your-teaching/writing-a-teaching-philosophy-statement>
  - Lang, James M. "4 Steps to a Memorable Teaching Philosophy. The Chronicle of Higher of Education. 8/29/10 <https://www.chronicle.com/article/4-steps-to-a-memorable/124199>
  - Review: teaching philosophy articles from the global teaching and learning sites: <https://cte.ku.edu/other-teaching-centers>
5. Prepare a draft or an outline of your own teaching philosophy.

## Teaching Philosophy Statement Dos and Don'ts

(From Cornell University Center for Integrative Research, Teaching and Learning)

<https://gradschool.cornell.edu/career-and-professional-development/pathways-to-success/prepare-for-your-career/take-action/teaching-philosophy-statement/>

- **Don't** give idyllic BUT empty concepts.
- **Don't** repeat your CV.
- **Do** research on the teaching institution and disciplinary trends.
- **Do** keep it short (1-2 pages).
- **Do** provide concrete examples and evidence of usefulness of teaching concepts.
- **Do** discuss impact of methods, lessons learned, challenges and innovations—how did students learn?
- **Do** discuss connections between teaching, research, and service.

Answer these questions to get started:

- The purpose of education is to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Why do you want to teach your subject?
- Students learn best by \_\_\_\_\_.
- When you are teaching your subject, what are your goals?
- The most effective methods for teaching are \_\_\_\_\_.
- I know this because \_\_\_\_\_.
- The most important aspects of my teaching are \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Assessment:**

### Basic Competency

- The philosophy declares your point of view and your experiences in effective learning.
- You give evidence of your philosophy in examples in the classroom.
- You are able to state several components of your philosophy and transition between these.
- You are able to build on your principles and go into more detail as you move through the document.

### Advanced Competency

- The document includes descriptive, analytical, and empirical elements.
- Classroom implementation and examples are specific with the multi-layered components highlighted.
- Subdivisions or subsets of thoughts are categorized or clustered and are not scattered apart throughout the statement.
- Larger ideas are supported by individual experience or knowledge.
- One's own expertise and knowledge base are valued and incorporated into the teaching methodologies.