

My Teaching Philosophy

The constancy of change in contemporary teaching and learning environments behooves one to think critically about a teaching philosophy. In the 21st century, a new literacy has emerged—the ability to use appropriate technological tools in an Information society. For example, the personal computer and associated technological innovations, e.g., the Internet and E-mail, have become commonplace.

"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn". School must critically examine and re-examine teaching philosophies, as the environments in which teaching and learning become increasingly diverse and varied.

FOR THE GOALS OF MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY TO ACHIEVE THE GOOD EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE DOES THE FOLLOWING:

- Encourages cooperation among students
- Encourages active learning
- Gives prompt feedback
- Emphasizes time on task
- Communicates high expectations
- Respects diverse talents and ways of learning

METHODOLOGY

In teaching, my overarching goal is to develop a student-centered environment. I want students to actively participate, rather than passively learn. When planning a course of instruction, I identify a set of objectives and skills. Next, I compile a rationale for each objective and skill. I design a course plan that emphasizes the application of critical thinking skills to foster deep learning, and the use of collaborative learning skills to facilitate “real-world” problem solving. I also embed activities in the instructional process that are designed to help students develop research and writing skills—readily transferable across disciplines—as they engage in learning of content material.

Throughout the teaching and learning process, I incorporate multiple choices and pathways through the learning materials. I encourage students to engage in open-ended formative and summative evaluation of the course (what’s working, what’s not). I also ask students to self-evaluate individual progress. Finally, my course design includes a data-driven evaluation component, which focuses on systematic outcomes and results, that are clearly tied to course goals and objectives.

EVALUATION

To measure student learning, I provide multiple assessments. These assessments have included:

- Collaborative research projects
- Portfolios
- Presentations (Speaking, Multimedia)
- Quizzes
- Review activities
- Traditional exams
- Writing Activities
- Written concept summaries

SUMMARY

My philosophy of teaching asserts that students are entitled to quality instruction in an active and stimulating learning environment. Students should experience frequent and repeated opportunities to act, react, and interact with each other and the professor. Curriculum materials should be timely and relevant. Standards of excellence—high, yet attainable—should be used to facilitate optimal student learning. Finally, as teaching is a process, not an activity, my teaching philosophy offers an invaluable reflective view on “how to” strive for instructional improvement.

