

Teaching Philosophy Statements

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Teaching Philosophy Statement

“A teaching philosophy statement is a systematic and critical rationale that focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and learning in a particular discipline and/or institutional context”

General Components of the Teaching Philosophy Statement:

- Definition of teaching
- Definition of learning
- View of the Learner
- Goals and expectations of the student-teacher relationship
- Discussion of teaching methods
- Discussion of evaluation

Questions to consider:

1. Is it logical? Is there connection between the ideas stated?
2. Is there a distinctive set of aims, values, beliefs and convictions that provide an organizing vision of the teacher’s direction?
3. Does it focus on specific components that the writer defines as critical to the teaching and learning process?
4. Is it sensitive to the contextual factors in which the teaching and learning takes place?

Schönwetter, D.J., Sokal, L., Friesen, M & Taylor, K.L. (2002). Teaching Philosophies reconsidered: A conceptual model for the development and evaluation of teaching philosophy statements. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 7, 83-97.

Getting Started on a Teaching Philosophy Statement

The following questions are intended as prompts to get you started writing a teaching philosophy statement.

1. What beliefs do you have about students as learners in your discipline?
2. How do students in your discipline learn best?
3. What role do you play in your students' learning?
4. What goals do you have for your students' learning?
5. What instructional and assessment strategies do you regularly employ to help your students reach those goals? What does your teaching look like?
6. What have you learned from your teaching and how have you changed?
7. What are your strengths as a teacher and how are you working to overcome your shortcomings?

Critical Moments in Your Teaching

Think about a recent teaching experience to help you discover what elements are important and work for you.

1. At what moment did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
2. At what moment did you feel most distanced from what was happening?
3. What happened that you found most helpful or affirming?
4. What happened that you found most confusing and distressing?
5. What surprised you the most?

Thoughts on Learning – From Our Own Experience

In order to help you understand how you are likely to teach think about the ways that you learn best.

1. When I was a student some things that really helped me learn were...

2. These helped me learn because....

3. Some things that my instructor did that helped students learn were.....

4. These helped me learn because....