

Developing Your Teaching Philosophy

Reflections on Teaching and Learning

The most compelling teaching philosophies create a personal narrative about teaching and learning. To help develop a unique and reflective philosophy, it can be useful to reflect upon your experiences. Take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

If a student was asked to describe you as a teacher, what do you *think* they would say?

What would you *like* this student to say?

What will they say they *learned* in your class?

Reflections on Teaching and Learning in your Discipline

Articulating the ways in which you convey your discipline to your students can make for an effective teaching philosophy. In other words, what are the key elements of your field and how do you communicate them to your students?

In a few sentences, describe your discipline's unique perspectives and contributions as you would to someone who has no background in your field.

What motivates you to learn more about your discipline?

How do you convey a passion for your discipline?

What goals do you set for your students?

Developing Your Teaching Philosophy

Think about the kinds of statements you would like to use to structure your teaching philosophy, and compose 1-2 statements about teaching and learning. These statements can originate from the previous exercises, or from other thoughts you have about teaching.

In developing your statements, consider the following:

- What are your **beliefs** about how students learn? Why do you teach the way you do?

- What are your **intents** in teaching? In other words, what are you trying to accomplish through your teaching, and how do you achieve it?

- What are your **actions** in the classroom? What do you do when you teach? What techniques do you use, and what evidence do you have that they are effective?

Outlining Evidence for Your Statements about Teaching and Learning

Your teaching philosophy should be supported with reasoned evidence. For example if you state, “My role as an instructor is to find ways for students to take ownership of their learning,” you should include support for this statement. You might include *why* you believe this statement to be true, *how* you practice this in your current or future classroom, or *what this means* to you personally.

After you provide your reasoned evidence in support of your statement, consider the kinds of explicit examples you have or would need to have from your teaching that would support this statement.

Statement:

Reasoned evidence (beliefs, intents):

Explicit examples supporting statement (actions):