

Teaching Philosophy Statement Example #1

Section 1: Philosophy of Teaching and Goal Statement

I love teaching when the learning in my classroom is palpable: When I can sense it in the quickening pace of a roundtable discussion or a student's visible delight in using newly learned jargon; when I can hear the excitement in students' testimonials about mastering skills that "made a difference" or theories that transformed practices and perspectives. I count these as teaching successes and make it a habit to reflect on their origins so that I can recreate the conditions for their occurrence again and again. My philosophy of teaching is informed by the material I teach, relevant scholarship, and the lessons I have learned from personal teaching successes and failures.

I believe that learner-oriented teaching promotes learning that is both purposeful and enduring. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to know who my learners are, what kinds of knowledge and experience they bring to the group, and what they want to achieve so that I can tailor a curriculum that fits their needs and yet leaves enough room to accommodate topics that emerge from group discovery. By assessing where my learners are with respect to our mutual learning goals, I can provide the scaffolding they need to build connections between what they already know and the new understandings they seek to create. I embrace case based teaching and other active learning activities because they stimulate intellectual camaraderie, argumentation, and cooperative problem solving and lay the groundwork for life-long collaborative practice.

I believe that teachers who demonstrate curiosity and passion about a subject area motivate students to learn and so choose to co-teach with colleagues whose scholarship and expertise are complementary to mine. Collaborating with faculty who are enthusiastic about using instructional methods rooted in social constructivist principles models how scholarship, teaching, and learning are enhanced by diversity and teamwork. It is also great fun.

I believe that W.B. Yeats captured the exhilaration of teaching when he wrote: "*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.*" My goal as a 'teacher of teachers' is to ignite in my learners a passion to create an institutional teaching and learning environment that fosters a conflagration of educational experimentation and innovation at this academic health sciences center.