CREATING YOUR TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

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MiALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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CREDITS

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A DEFINITION

"A teaching philosophy statement is a concise, compelling illustration of you as an instructor, a useful reflexive examination of your teaching." University Center for Teaching & Learning, University of Pittsburgh

CREATING YOUR STATEMENT

PROCESS

- Reflect on your own, but also with peers
- Usually intended for a wider audience
    - But is very useful for you personally
- Written in the first person, typically 1-2 pages long
- Includes the context of your work, with personal examples and references

CREATING YOUR STATEMENT

CONTENT
- Describe
  - your approach as a teacher
  - why you teach the way you do
  - who influenced you
  - where you focus your teaching efforts
  - what learners gain by working with you

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who or what has influenced, informed, or inspired your approach to teaching?

- How can you, as a teacher, facilitate or intervene in the learning process to help learning occur?

- What goals do you have for students as learners?

- How do you see your relationship with the learners you work with?

- What methods do you use to support and assess learning and to evaluate your teaching?

- What metaphor could you use to describe your teaching role to someone outside the field?

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TEACHING CENTERED OR LEARNING CENTERED?

Orientation of teachers	Desired learning outcomes	Expected use of knowledge
Imparting information	Recall of atomized information	Within subject
Transmitting structured knowledge	Reproductive understanding	Within subject for future use
Providing and facilitating understanding		
Helping students to develop expertise	Change in ways of thinking	Interpretation of reality
Preventing misunderstandings		
Negotiating understanding		
Encouraging knowledge creation		

Adapted from Samuelowicz and Bain, 2008, p. 306

ACTIVITY 1 Begin to articulate your beliefs about learning and teaching

Take a few minutes to write down some words or sentences that reflect your responses to the previous few slides.

INTENTION AND STRATEGY COMPONENTS FOR APPROACHES TO TEACHING

Intention	Strategy		
	Teacher-focused	Student-teacher interaction	Student-focused
Information transmission	X		
Concept acquisition	X	X	
Conceptual development			X
Conceptual change			X

Trigwell and Prosser, 2004, p. 413

WHAT WORDS CHARACTERIZE YOUR TEACHING?

- **Sheila Corrall**
  - Flexibility, Personalization, Real-world engagement, Co-curricular activities
  - "Modelling the process of research within the student learning experience."

- **For me**
  - Learner centered, Connected to their goals (for a class or life)
  - Active engagement whenever possible

EXPRESSING YOUR GOALS

"In your statement of teaching philosophy, you should not only consider what subject matter items you think students should learn, but also some of the broader issues that add value to the education students can expect to obtain by working with you. You might also consider the question of why these goals might be important." Coppola 202, p.409

Consider how your goals should be expressed:

- What students *should know*
- What students *should be able to do*
- How they *will use* their knowledge, skills, and abilities

INFLUENCES ON MY APPROACHES TO TEACHING

- Ian Cunningham (self-managed learning)
- Robert Talbert (flipped learning)
- Meyer & Land (threshold concepts)
- Wiggins & McTighe (backward design)

INFLUENCES ON TEACHING FROM SHEILA CORRALL

- Ian Cunningham (self-managed learning)
- David Kolb (experiential learning and education)
- John Biggs (constructive alignment)
- Wiggins & McTighe (backward design)
- TOP/Vai & Sosulski (reflective online discussion)
- Mary-Ann Winkelmes (transparency in teaching)

ACTIVITIES

BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING AND TEACHING

Activity 1 – What do you believe about learning and teaching?

For me, learning occurs best when it:

- *Starts with a learner's experience, integrates new concepts into existing mental models, is situated in the real world, and is supported by explicit standards, continual practice, low stakes assignments, and frequent, constructive feedback.*

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS FOR LEARNERS

Activity 2 – What goals do you have for students as learners in your specific subject and more generally?

As a result of working with me, my students:

- *Acquire a knowledge of library resources and the techniques to properly use them; develop skills in critical analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; and develop the ability to become flexible and creative evidence-based researchers and lifelong learners.*

STYLE OF TEACHING OR LEARNING FACILITATION

Activity 3 – What is your teaching style? How do you see your relationship with the learners you work with and interact with?

As a teacher, I prefer to be:

- *an authoritative source of expertise, who facilitates learning by identifying, selecting, and organizing the best possible resources for learners; explaining and demonstrating key concepts/terms and core competencies; and offering individual advice and feedback.*

ARTICULATING YOUR PRACTICES

Activity 4 – What are your teaching practices? That is, what methods do you use to support and assess learning?

The methods I use often include:

- *Pretests, Canvas modules, and exercises before class*

- *Quizzes, small group exercises, games, and post-tests in class*

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT, MICH ST UNIV LIBRARIES

Our unit philosophy incorporates the following beliefs about learning and how those beliefs are implemented, including our role as facilitators of analytical thinking, integrative reasoning, effective communication, recursivity in research and guided inquiry.

Our beliefs about learning

- Learning must always be student-centered and contextual, demonstrating relevance to identified student needs

- Guided inquiry is integral to engaging students in the process of making and negotiating meaning

- Coordination of learning outcomes, pedagogy, and assessment of student needs ensures the highest quality of information literacy teaching and learning Information literacy is an essential component of analytical thinking, integrated reasoning, and effective communication.

How our beliefs are implemented

- We seek to facilitate inquiry by creating opportunities for meaningful engagement with information, drawing out questions about its nature, creation and functions

- We seek to create learning environments based on the cycle of inquiry —response, seeking out new information, and creating new knowledge —fostering skills for iterative and recursive approaches to research

- We seek to facilitate students' discovery of information, stimulate inquiry, and provide support for integration and use of information toward the goal of effective communication

- Leading out in support of institutional excellence, we work toward interdisciplinary efforts in highlighting information literacy's role in undergraduate education

https://lib.msu.edu/infolit/teachingstatement/

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT, Lilly Library, Indiana Univ

At its core, the Lilly Library is a site of teaching and learning. The teaching that takes place in its classrooms and galleries is grounded in lifelong learning, primary source literacy, and the history of the book. We encourage curiosity and interrogation of the collections and the spaces where they are preserved and exhibited, recognizing that libraries and archives are not neutral, but the result of hundreds of intentional choices made by human beings with conscious and unconscious biases. The Lilly Library and its staff prioritize transparency in discussing how and why collections and individual items are present and the contexts around their creation, preservation, and acquisition.

The Lilly Library centers hands-on, experiential learning with the collections, encouraging students and guests to engage with these materials on their own terms, to bring their whole selves into the library, and to exchange knowledge and insight with others respectfully and kindly. We emphasize the development of critical thinking, analytical, and research skills for both undergraduates and graduate students. We work with a wide range of departments on the IUB campus, as well classes and groups unaffiliated with the university.

Teaching at the Lilly Library also centers people, relationships, and connections. First, in collaboration with instructors to develop class sessions and inclusive learning environments, and then with students, as we prioritize the individuality, perspective, and experience of those engaging with the collections. Second, we emphasize the lives and stories contained within the physical collections we steward, the humanity within these objects. Third, each class session held at the Lilly Library includes an orientation to the world of rare books and manuscripts, including special collections libraries and archives. This introduction emphasizes the labor of library and archives workers, booksellers, and collectors, as well as the living, breathing practices of curation, cataloging, archival processing, bookselling, collecting, and interpretation.

https://libraries.indiana.edu/lilly-library/teaching-philosophy-lilly

EXAMPLES OF BELIEFS, GOALS, STYLES, AND PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH EDUCATOR ROLES

Educator role	**Beliefs:** Learning occurs when	**Goals:** My students develop	**Style:** As a teacher, I prefer to be	**Practices:** Instructional forms I often use include
Facilitator	It begins with the learners experience	Empathy and understanding of others	Creative, warm, affirming	Class discussion, journals, personal stories
Expert	New concepts inte-grated into existing mental frameworks	Analytic and conceptual abilities	Logical, authoritative	Lectures, readings, written assignments
Evaluator	Clear standards and feedback are provided	Problem-solving skills	Structured, outcome oriented, objective	Laboratories, graded homework
Coach	It takes place in a real-life context	Ability to work pro-ductively with others	Applied, collaborative, risk taking	Field projects, role plays, simulations

MY REFERENCES

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■ Jan Meyer and Ray Land. 2003. Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practicing within Disciplines. Enhancing Teaching – Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses, Occasional Report 4. http://ww2.dkit.ie/content/download/14622/88534/file/Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge by Professor Ray Land.

   ■ See also work by Townsend, Brunetti, & Hofer on threshold concepts & information literacy

■ Robert Talbert. 2017. Flipped Learning: A Guide for Higher Education Faculty. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing. LB1029 .F55 T35 2017

■ Amanda Hess. 2020. Academic Librarians' Teaching Identities and Work Experiences: Exploring Relationships to Support Perspective Transformation in Information Literacy Instruction. Journal of Library Administration. https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2020.1721939

■ Slides and CRLT handouts: https://tinyurl.com/yx2pcwjj

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WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?