

  
January 3, 2019

### Statement of Teaching Philosophy

My approach to teaching has evolved over the year and I am committed to continuing to grow as an educator. This was the opening to my last teaching philosophy statement and this statement continues to describe my approach to teaching today. More than anything, I want students to feel comfortable to pushing beyond their comfort zone to experience real learning. To meet this goal, I never lose sight that the needs of my students change, the educational environment changes, and the nature of work in a global marketplace changes.

I use strategies both inside and outside the classroom to meet my goal. Inside the classroom my style of teaching and techniques evolve as I explore and incorporate new best teaching practices as indicated by monitoring student success and retention. For example, I remind students throughout the semester that my goal is to create a lab-like environment. This type of environment allows students to feel comfortable experimenting with different presentational styles and techniques, and to feel comfortable participating in class discussions about the connections between course concepts and their experiences. After each class meeting I take a moment to reflect on the classroom interactions so I can make any necessary immediate adjustments.

In addition, I provide students with an opportunity to participate in a *What Do You Think?* optional “debriefing” assignment that informs adjustments to my course design semester by semester. I begin every class period by asking students to reflect on the activities and discussions from the previous class meeting. Students are encouraged to write down whether they found them to be effective and to explain their responses. This assignment is completed

anonymously allowing students to feel more comfortable expressing their opinion. It also serves as an effective review of the material covered in the previous class meeting. At the end of the semester I collect the worksheets from the students and review them when I prep for the next semester.

Outside of the classroom environment I stay current in issues relating to student engagement, retention and success by attending conferences and participating in workshops. In addition, I have been a panelist on topics of Civic Engagement and the future role of outcomes coordinators. I have also attended several On Course workshops which use learner-centered instructional approaches. Upon completing the On Course II workshop I became an On Course ambassador and have led On-Course learner-centered instructional workshops at Shasta College. In May of 2019 I will be completing additional training to be a facilitator of Instructional Skills Workshops (ISW). ISW is a program designed for new and seasoned teachers to enhance teaching effectiveness.

At Shasta College, I developed a G.I.F.T.S. (Great Ideas for Teaching *Students*) professional development program modeled after the National Communication Association's G.I.F.T.S. (Great Ideas for Teaching *Speech*) workshops. These workshops have provided faculty across disciplines with opportunities to share and discuss innovative teaching tools they are using in their classrooms to increase student retention and engagement. These discussions with colleagues continually inspire me to try new principles of effective practices based on their experience and successes.

This program received a commendation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, a division of Western Association of Schools and Colleges, October, 2011.

I stay current with changes in the new world of work by researching the communication needs of different industries and developing educational materials to meet those needs.

Recently, I worked with three faculty on a two-year Healthcare Workforce Initiative (HWI) grant with the Chancellor's Office to develop and deliver communication training for incumbent health care workers, and to develop curriculum to meet the communication gaps identified by industry leaders.

I was reminded while obtaining my second master's degree (2015), that there is no greater experience for an educator than being on the other side of the lectern. To that end, it is my goal to take a least one class every few semesters to experience what it is like being a student today. The pedagogical training that I received in my second master's combined with my experience from years of teaching has reinforced my commitment to provide a rich and safe learning environment. In the words of Parker Palmer (1998) from *The Courage to Teach*, I want to develop a classroom that "honors one of the most vital needs our students have: to be introduced to a world larger than their own experiences and egos, a world that expands their personal boundaries and enlarges their sense of community" (p. 120).

Parker, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

