

Philosophy of Teaching Statement

Teaching calls for a great deal of responsibility. Not only is the instructor responsible for the knowledge and understanding that the students will gain through course material, but the instructor is also responsible for handling the power their position holds. European and North American education distributes power unequally between students and teacher as the classroom and education are structured to focus on the instructor. For this reason, instructors should analyse their own philosophy of teaching and of education to be an effective instructor in a student-centred pedagogy.

Education should enlighten students and seek to improve the world that the students live in. By enlightening the students, the material in a course should seek to provide the students with knowledge of systems, worldviews, and problem-solving skills. This knowledge should be utilised for the second theme in my view of the ideal of education, improving the world. While it is often true that most people see education as a means to better generation of wealth, education in my philosophy is a means to self-improvement. Education seeks to equip people with the knowledge necessary to identify problems in the world and find solutions that remedy these problems.

Knowledge is in and of itself a form of societal perpetuation or at least, a perpetuation of learnings from other people. Every discovery is connected to every other discovery. Knowledge builds off itself as skyscraper is constructed. The entirety of the skyscraper is placed on top of the foundation, which requires the earth to anchor it. On top of the foundation, storey upon storey is placed until the tower is completed. The only place where my metaphor of the skyscraper fails is the limitations of the physical world. Knowledge has not encountered such limits as it consists immaterial understandings of the human mind. Further, knowledge finds its roots in diversity. It is for this reason that education must also be inclusive of diversity, for it is in diversity that we

discover new knowledge. Diversity allows for the discovery of new information from a multitude of worldviews that education must foster in order to nurture competencies and discover truth. Following this logic, I wish to expand on my reasoning for teaching.

The reason I teach is singular: I have a passion for knowledge and its perpetuation. Every author, scientist, theorist, academic, and activist builds off the last person that they follow; it is important that what I have learned goes out into the rest of world through my teaching. I do not claim that I alone am an integral part of the workings of the world and society, rather I believe that every person that I can teach and help them improve themselves adds to positive change in society; the ocean consists of a nearly infinite number of water droplets. Key here is the gestalt of teaching that seeks with every interaction to move towards a more inclusive and less hegemonic world.

I manifest my philosophy of teaching inclusive and empathetic tactics in the classroom. I seek to make the classroom a stress free and inclusive place through humour and barrier-free language. Making my students laugh and having them feel comfortable in the classroom allows them to better learn. In the literature on second language teaching there is the theory of the affective filter, which suggests that as a student is more stressed out, regardless of cause, has a harder time to learn the material at hand. I use this as a basis to be both inclusive and positive in my teaching practice. Looking at teaching for a new world, integrated use of technology encourages learning outside of the classroom. Technology is a ubiquitous phenomenon in the world that needs to be taught regardless of course material.

Education is the means of enlightening people for them to act better through the acquisition of knowledge. In my opinion, knowledge represents a perpetuation of what people have learned about humanity. Teaching evinces a care of those around me in that I both want to improve the world directly through teaching and indirectly through the actions of my students.