

Teaching Philosophy Statement

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As a teacher-scholar within the field of public relations, I believe my mission and commitment to students both in and outside of the classroom as a teacher and mentor is threefold:

- (1) To provide students with the components of a classic liberal arts education, including strong critical thinking skills, the rationale and tools for being informed citizens, an appreciation for diverse viewpoints, and the frameworks for ethically-sound and socially-responsible decision making;
- (2) To foster in students an appreciation and understanding of the empowering process of social science research and theory, including observation, testing, analysis and the sharing of knowledge; and
- (3) To supply students with the practical knowledge and skills needed to succeed within the profession of public relations and adjacent communication-oriented fields.

Ethically-Sound and Socially-Responsible Decision Making

First and foremost, I believe my job as a professor is to prepare students to be productive members of society that learn to think for themselves, identify solutions to problems, build consensus, and contribute to the public good. Regardless of whether students choose to pursue a career in public relations or an entirely different profession, a strong foundation in liberal arts will provide them with the critical thinking and consensus building tools needed for successfully navigating through their careers and life.

Connecting Research and Theory with the Real-World

I believe fostering within students an appreciation and understanding of research and theory is also critical, as the joy of discovery, and developing and testing ideas, is empowering and encourages students to become lifelong learners. To make research and theory less abstract, I connect the concepts in the course materials with tangible real-world examples of these concepts in use by professionals. If a student can see how the knowledge gained in class will improve their internship or job prospects, and help them responsibly contribute to society, they will stop memorizing for a test and start learning for their future.

Imparting Practical Communication Knowledge and Skills

Finally, I do not believe I have done my job as a professor of public relations, a discipline that is closely linked to a profession, unless students are prepared to fully use the most current communication strategies, tactics, and technologies to responsibly contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. My students gain experience working with real clients using real tools on real-world challenges.

Interactive Classroom that Respects Diverse Viewpoints

I am passionate about this field and come to class each day eager to share my knowledge and enthusiasm for public relations. Course materials and assignments emphasize current news and trends. I try to create an open classroom environment that fosters healthy discussion and respects a diversity of viewpoints, which is when I feel the best learning often occurs. An interactive classroom is a two-way street and I encourage student and peer feedback so that I may continue to learn and grow as an instructor. Both my teaching and research is informed through my interactions with students.

In closing, I am committed to teaching, research, and service to my institution and community.

I never lose sight of the fact that each day in the classroom “what we say and do” has the potential to last a lifetime. Teaching is a privilege and I respect this opportunity.