

Documenting Your Teaching: Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement

A teaching philosophy statement is a reflective essay on your conception of teaching and learning and how you operationalize those beliefs.

Characteristics of a Teaching Philosophy Statement

- No one set format
- Generally 1 – 2 pages in length
- Use present tense and first person
- Write with the audience in mind
 - Who is going to read this and for what purpose?
 - Use technical terms and jargon judiciously
- Link your philosophy to your practice
 - Provide a few short and specific examples in the philosophy statement
 - Let the reader "see" you in the classroom
- Make it reflective and personal
- Make it memorable and unique
 - What sets your philosophy and practice apart?
- Own your philosophy
 - These are your beliefs about teaching and learning

A Good Teaching Philosophy Statement Contains

- Who and what you teach
- Your teaching goals
- Student learning outcomes
- How you conceptualize your role as a teacher
- How you teach and assess your students
- Why you teach as you do / How you think students learn best
- Specific examples of implementation of your philosophy
- Evidence of reflective practice/professional growth

Resources

These web sites give advice, provide examples, and link to other resources:

The Ohio State University
University Center for the
Advancement of Teaching
<http://ucat.osu.edu/read/teaching-portfolio>

University of Michigan
Center for Research in
Learning and Teaching
<http://crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tstpts>