

Student Directions for Writing the Teaching Philosophy Statement

Begin this section of your portfolio with a philosophical statement that will give the reader a good idea of who you are and what you value as a professional. The statement should reveal how you think about teaching and help the reader envision how you will teach.

In a unified composition of about 1,000-1,250 words:

1. identify the 2-3 most important purposes of teaching;
2. address the educational principles that guide you as an educator;
3. explain what it means for someone truly to learn something; and
4. based on these purposes, guiding principles, and understanding of learning, describe what you think are the most appropriate strategies for teaching.

Suggestions:

- Introduce your statement with a single image, incident, quotation, or metaphor that encapsulates your philosophy and that can serve to unify your essay.
- While using an appropriate academic style, write in a way that reflects your own voice and personality.
- Seek to inspire the reader. Identify what you believe are the primary purposes of education, and explain your mission as an educator.
- Discuss the most important principles that will guide your actions as a teacher. Emphasize principles as well as knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are referred to elsewhere in the portfolio.
- Include specific *examples* from your experience to illustrate and support your ideas.
- Logically develop your ideas. While being careful to provide specific examples, relate ideas and examples to sound ethical or psychological arguments.
- Read the rubric before you write your philosophy statement. After you have written your philosophy statement use the rubric to score the draft as if you were an evaluator.

Criteria for evaluating Teaching Philosophy Statements

1. *Idea Development:*

- Relies on sound assumptions.
- Logically develop views about the purposes of education.
- Clarifies guiding educational principles.
- Discusses what it means to learn.
- Explains the best strategies for teaching and describes why these are the most appropriate ways to teach.
- Employs both practical arguments and ethical or psychological arguments.

2. *Illustrative Examples:*

- Provides specific examples from experience, academic work, or field experience.
- Illustrates points in a vivid or memorable way.

3. *Quality of Writing:*

- Clear
- Organized
- Free from errors of mechanics and usage
- Written in appropriate academic style
- Unifying theme
- Suggestive of the writer's voice

Philosophical Statement Rubric

Criterion	Undocumented 0 Unacceptable	Minimal 1 Unacceptable	Basic 2 Acceptable	Proficient 3 Acceptable	Advanced 4 Acceptable	Score
Idea Development	The statement does not address the author's views about the purposes of education, guiding educational principles, understanding of learning, and/or the most appropriate strategies for teaching. The statement is incoherent or extremely brief or contains major logical inconsistencies.	Statement expresses the author's views about the purposes of education, guiding educational principles, understanding of learning, and/or the most appropriate strategies for teaching, but is ambiguous or not connected.	Statement logically develops the author's views about the purposes of education, guiding educational principles, understanding of learning, and/or the most appropriate strategies for teaching. However, the statement is not always consistent and/or convincing.	Using generally sound assumptions and arguments, based in practical experience, the statement logically develops the author's views about the purposes of education, guiding educational principles, understanding of learning, and/or the most appropriate strategies for teaching.	Using sound assumptions and arguments, the statement logically develops the author's views about the purposes of education, guiding educational principles, understanding of learning, and/or the most appropriate strategies for teaching. Statement includes sound ethical or psychological arguments and not just practical ones.	Score: _____
Illustrative Examples	No illustrative examples are included.	Supporting examples are inadequate or of unclear relevance.	Examples in support of points are relevant but general or not based in experience.	Supporting examples from the writer's experience are specific and pertinent.	Specific examples from the writer's personal experience, academic work, or field experience illustrate points in a vivid or memorable way.	Score: _____
Quality of Writing	The statement is very difficult to read because of its style, usage, mechanics, or organization.	The statement, though comprehensible, has obvious problems in two of the following areas: style, usage and mechanics, or organization.	The statement is understandable plus two of the following: 1) organized, 2) free from errors of mechanics and usage, 3) in an appropriate academic style.	The statement is clear, well organized, free from errors of mechanics and usage, and written in an appropriate academic style.	In addition to being clear, well organized, free from errors of mechanics and usage, and written in an appropriate academic style, the statement 1) has a single, unifying theme and 2) is strongly suggestive of the writer's voice.	Score: _____

Comments:

Total: _____

Mean: _____

Evaluator: _____ **Date:** _____