

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENTS

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The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching & Learning

Fall 2013 Academic Job Search Series

Sponsored by the Sheridan Center & CareerLAB



Today's presentation

- What is a teaching philosophy statement?
 - Why write one?
 - How do you write one?
 - How do you use one?
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What is a teaching philosophy statement?

- How do you teach?
 - Why do you teach the way you do?
 - How do you know that you're being effective?
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Considerations

- ❑ no required content or set format
 - ❑ ~ 1-2 pages long
 - ❑ your statement is a writing sample
 - ❑ different versions for different audiences?
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Why write a teaching philosophy statement?

- for an academic job application
 - to prepare for the interview process
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A well-written teaching philosophy statement...

...allows readers to “see” you in the classroom.

...is memorable and unique.

...shows that you are an effective teacher.

...shows that you are reflective.

How do you write a teaching philosophy statement?

- Organize your thoughts
 - Choose a format
 - Draft your statement
 - Show it to others
 - Revise your statement
-

Organize your thoughts

Consider your experiences as a teacher and a learner.

- What are your goals?
 - What are your strategies for realizing those goals?
 - What evidence do you have of your teaching effectiveness?
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Choose a format

□ Common formats:

- Essay/narrative

- Question and answer

- “Creative” (poem, extended metaphor)

Draft your statement

Include:

Your goals

- ❑ Your beliefs about effective teaching

Your strategies

- ❑ Include specific examples

Your evidence

- ❑ Proof that your students are learning
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Writing tips

- ❑ Use the personal voice – “own” your assertions.
 - ❑ Avoid grammatical/syntactical errors.
 - ❑ Use active verbs.
 - ❑ Be discipline specific.
 - ❑ Give specific examples.
 - ❑ Use the first sentence/paragraph to draw readers in.
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Use the first sentence/paragraph to draw readers in

“I was acting like an oyster when it happened. Ten weeks into my first semester teaching French at Brown University, instructing a beginning language course, and I had resorted to pantomime – the foreign language teacher’s dubious best friend...”

Show your statement to others

- ❑ Your faculty advisor/other faculty members
- ❑ Graduate student colleagues
- ❑ Sheridan Center staff

Humanities & Social Sciences: Laura Hess Laura_Hess@brown.edu

Life & Physical Sciences: Carie Cardamone Carie_Cardamone@brown.edu

- ❑ Writing Center staff
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Revise your statement

- Consider the suggestions of others.
 - Proofread, proofread, proofread.
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How do you use a teaching philosophy statement?

- Send it
 - Offer to send it
 - Bring it with you to interviews
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Online Resources

- [Sheridan Center's website](#)
 - Sheridan Center's Resource Library:
Teaching portfolio collection
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Get feedback next week

Tuesday, September 24th

12-1pm

4-5pm
