

## **Teaching and Learning Philosophy**

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### Teaching and Learning Philosophy

I believe creating a healthy classroom community is paramount to the teaching and learning process. It needs to be created upfront and will support all teaching and learning for the remainder of the course. Therefore, intentionally developing a positive classroom environment is essential to the teaching and learning process.

Developing a positive classroom environment begins prior to the beginning of the semester. An instructor's first impression of students begins with his or her welcome email. Initial correspondence should be positive and inform the students what to expect on the first day of class. Initial correspondence also provides a means for the instructor to collect information on the learners in the classroom, what they know briefly about the subject matter in what they hope to learn during the semester. The instructor can incorporate this information in developing course activities. This opportunity and exchange of that information begins to build a mutual positive relationship between the students and the instructor. Hence, creating a positive classroom environment begins prior to the beginning of the semester.

On the first day of class the instructor has one main goal: to create a positive classroom environment where the students feel comfortable. The instructor needs to be aware of the physical environment of the classroom and intentionally arrange the room to encourage collaboration. The instructor should arrive early on the first day to greet and welcome students. Time should be spent on icebreaker activities to introduce students to each other and for the instructor to introduce herself to the students. Furthermore, time should be spent reviewing classroom expectations so that all learners are aware of classroom rules and expectations. This aids in creating the foundation of a respectful and positive environment so students will be able to flourish and feel safe to take risks during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, creating a positive classroom environment is the goal of the instructor on the first day of class to encourage students to feel comfortable at the beginning of their journey of time together.

Another way an instructor can create a positive classroom environment is to allow for opportunities for collaboration for students. An instructor should intentionally design lessons using current curriculum and teaching instructional methods to allow students to work together to process, explore, and discuss concepts. During the learning opportunities, the teacher should act as the facilitator of resources and orchestrator of learning experiences. Their role is to plan and execute learning experiences, not giving information, the one who does the work does the learning. Students should collaborate and learn together using relevant topics that include real-world situations. The instructor should provide opportunities for all students to contribute to the classroom community by providing educational learning experiences that encourage collaboration. This allows for more reserved students to share in a smaller setting and also encourages additional opportunities to build relationships among students. Opportunities to collaborate during class sessions help students feel that they are valued members of the classroom community.

Instructors can also create a healthy learning environment by providing support to students. They can provide support to students in a myriad of ways. Instructors can provide

academic support by intentionally designing lessons and assessments that support the needs of their students. They can provide time to review and answer questions before moving on to new concepts and skills. This allows the instructor to meet the students' learning needs where they are, and it helps students maximize their learning potential. Another way instructors can provide support to their students is by providing opportunities for student choice. By providing opportunities for student choice, students are more willing to buy in and be engaged in learning. One easy way for an instructor to provide choice is by allowing students to select who they work with. Another option to incorporate student choice is by product. Students would be provided with necessary criteria for success but would be given the opportunity to select which product they would create. An example of this would be having a simple choice board where students could select how they will demonstrate their knowledge by writing a paragraph, developing a pamphlet, creating a cartoon, developing a presentation, or recording an oral presentation. There should be multiple ways to evaluate student learning and the variety of assessment should be utilized to inform future instruction. Providing student choice supports students' learning differences. Furthermore, instructors can support their students by showing they care and by listening to students. By listening to students and demonstrating care, this further enhances the relationship between the instructor and the student which encourages a positive relationship that supports a positive teaching and learning environment.

Lastly an instructor needs to be reflective and evaluate the path to learning for the students they serve. Being reflective supports a positive teaching and learning environment. Reflection is crucial for student learning and success. Reflective practices help instructors understand how students learn and how to best support their learning needs. It helps identify barriers students have with learning and also assess the instructors' teaching and teaching practices. Taking time to reflect provides opportunities for an instructor to reteach content to support student needs as well as reflect on their individual strengths and weaknesses in practice. This practice promotes growth and encourages lifelong learning. Being reflective creates a student-centered learning environment. Being reflective creates positive relationships that are respectful as well as a healthy learning environment therefore, an instructor needs to be reflective.

I believe that creating a healthy classroom community is essential to the teaching and learning process. Time spent upfront and will support all teaching and learning for the remainder of the semester. Therefore, I believe intentionally developing a positive classroom environment is crucial in the teaching and learning process.