Teaching Philosophy Statement

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My teaching philosophy is based on the idea of learning as a cumulative and reflective process: Learning occurs progressively from the simple to the complex and as it makes sense to the student. Therefore, the goal of my teaching is to help students to reflexively build bridges that connect their previous knowledge and experiences with what they are learning now. My teaching beliefs are linked to the conception of students as co-constructors of *what* their learning. These components of my teaching philosophy come from the experiences I have had as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) in several courses in quantitative methodology for social science research, which are part of the Educational Measurement and Statistics (EMS) program at the University of Iowa (in which I am pursuing a PhD).

My teaching practices are mainly focused on the comprehension of the course contents, the interiorization of what has been learned, and the development of skills. This is especially relevant at the beginning of each class, as prior knowledge of quantitative methods and the ability to adapt to the course may vary substantially across students. Often, I like to ask students about their area of work or study, what they know about quantitative methods, and whether they are familiar with any statistical software such as SPSS, R, Stata, or Mplus. With this information I can think about the students' perspective and how to facilitate some aspects of their learning. For example, at the beginning of the semester it is common for some students to have difficulty interpreting interactions between variables in a regression model. To work on this, I usually ask the student to think about an investigation they would like to conduct, what variables they would include, and what relationship there would be between these variables in the form of predictors and outcome (the conceptual definition of the regression model). Then, I ask whether the relationship between one of the predictors and the outcome might change due to variation in another of the predictors. The answer is usually positive, so I say: well, that *change* in the relationship between the first predictor and the outcome due to variation in the values of the second predictor is what we calculate through the interaction in the model. When students respond with a prolonged *ah!* and can talk about other hypothetical interactions in the model, then they feel more prepared to start with the practical part of the course, which involves the use of statistical software.

As the course progresses, students acquire basic knowledge and some skills that allow them to deepen some aspects of what they are learning. This is important so that students can interiorize the content and make sense of it according to the needs or demands of their context. Of the many options available, I believe that the research projects that are built during the semester are ideal to apply, reinforce, and expand on what is learned in class. As a student, these types of activities allowed me to understand the usefulness of quantitative methods and the specific advantages/disadvantages of some data analysis techniques. As a GTA, I have seen that these projects make students reflect on the relationship between the research process and quantitative methods and gain experience in how to design, develop, and present a research project. Although so far I have not been responsible for the design of evaluations like this one (my role has been to accompany students during the completion of their projects), in the future, I will incorporate research projects into my classes on quantitative methodology, evaluating some crucial stages such as problem statement, method, and preliminary analysis of results with rubrics that establish 'checkpoints' as students' learning progresses.

From the beginning to the end of a course, my teaching practices (mainly as a GTA) seek to facilitate learning. Through my pedagogical work inside and outside the classroom, I intend to give students what they need to understand, apply, and judge the use of quantitative methodology, which contributes to their autonomy and development.