

Teaching Mission

It remains my mission to work with others to develop a critical understanding of our relationships to ourselves, our Others, and the structures through which those relationships are mediated, realized, and determined. I mean to continue to develop and invest my education, skills, talents, and experience toward this end.

An Elaboration and Clarification

I'd like to take the opportunity provided by this process to articulate the premises and warrants upon which this mission is founded.

At the core of this statement lies a simple assumption: **A pedagogy that fails to model, encourage, and rigorously enable free discourse and the liberation of the human spirit is an apparatus of oppression.**

This claim itself, of course, demands critical assessment of the assumptions that warrant it.

What follows, however, is an attempt to elaborate on the language used in the Mission Statement itself:

"...to work with others to develop a critical understanding..."

A teacher's role is always complex and often contradictory (we are mentors, role models, instructors, disciplinarians, observers, facilitators, participants, assessors, and students).

In spite of these contradictions, my mission demands that I am always a member of a cooperative learning community: An integral part of my mission, then, is to keep *student* as my "core" subject position. It is likewise mission critical that I continue to learn from the discourse and dialog created by my learning communities.

"...critical understanding of our relationships..."

This mission statement assumes that our meaningful and responsible participation in our cultures is predicated on our understanding of human relationships *and* our ability to question the terms that shape that understanding.

"...the structures through which those relationships are mediated, realized, and determined."

My mission takes for granted that human relationships are shaped, limited, or enabled only as a structure such as *language* allows.

Environment, noise, new media, communication channels, and social systems similarly define and delimit relationships.

The more we recognize the influence of such structures, the more we will determine the courses of our relationships.

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