

# TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENTS AND THE TEACHING DOSSIER

Academic Career Development

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he/she/they

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*I acknowledge, with respect, that I am a settler-scholar working at the University of Guelph, which is situated on the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit and on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people. Their historical relationships with the land continue to this day.*

# INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- **Interpret** your TPI (Teaching Perspectives Inventory) results and **situate** yourself within your own views and perceptions about teaching
- **Describe** the typical components of a teaching dossier; in particular, the statement of teaching philosophy
- **Begin to draft** a statement of teaching philosophy using reflective exercises

# TPI

## Teaching Perspectives Inventory

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# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

- Your teaching perspective reflects your own teaching philosophy
- Five perspectives on what good teaching is:
  - **Transmission** – mastery of subject matter and content
  - **Apprenticeship** – highly skilled practitioner
  - **Developmental** – understand how learners think and reason
  - **Nurturing** – care about students and motivate without fear of failure
  - **Social Reform** – change society in substantive ways

# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

### Transmission

**Effective teaching requires a substantial commitment to the content or subject matter.**

Good teaching means having mastery of the subject matter or content. Teachers' primary responsibilities are to represent the content accurately and efficiently. Learner's responsibilities are to learn that content in its authorized or legitimate forms. Good teachers take learners systematically through tasks leading to content mastery: providing clear objectives, adjusting the pace of lecturing, making efficient use of class time, clarifying misunderstandings, answering questions, providing timely feedback, correcting errors, providing reviews, summarizing what has been presented, directing students to appropriate resources, setting high standards for achievement and developing objective means of assessing learning. Good teachers are enthusiastic about their content and convey that enthusiasm to their students. For many learners, good transmission teachers are memorable presenters of their content.



# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

### Apprenticeship

Good teachers are highly skilled practitioners of what they teach. Whether in classrooms or at work sites, they are recognized for their expertise. Teachers must reveal the inner workings of skilled performance and must translate it into accessible language and an ordered set of tasks which usually proceed from simple to complex, allowing for different points of entry depending upon the learner's capability. Good teachers know what their learners can do on their own and where they need guidance and direction; they engage learners within their 'zone of development'. As learners mature and become more competent, the teacher's role changes; they offer less direction and give more responsibility as students progress from dependent learners to independent workers.

# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

### Developmental

**Effective teaching must be planned and conducted "from the learner's point of view."**

Good teachers must understand how their learners think and reason about the content. The primary goal is to help learners develop increasingly complex and sophisticated cognitive structures for comprehending the content. The key to changing those structures lies in a combination of two skills:

- (1) effective questioning that challenges learners to move from relatively simple to more complex forms of thinking, and
- (2) 'bridging knowledge' which provides examples that are meaningful to the learner.

Questions, problems, cases, and examples form these bridges that teachers use to transport learners from simpler ways of thinking and reasoning to new, more complex and sophisticated forms of reasoning. Good teachers adapt their knowledge to learners' levels of understanding and ways of thinking.



# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

### Nurturing

**Effective teaching assumes that long-term, hard, persistent effort to achieve comes from the heart, not the head.**

People become motivated and productive learners when they are working on issues or problems without fear of failure. Learners are nurtured in knowing that:

(a) they can succeed at learning if they give it a good try; (b) their achievement is a product of their own effort and ability, rather than the benevolence of a teacher; and (c) their learning efforts will be supported by both teacher and peers.

Good teachers care about their students and understand that some have histories of failure resulting in lowered self-confidence. However they make no excuses for learners. Rather, they encourage their efforts while challenging students to do their very best by promoting a climate of caring and trust, helping people set challenging but achievable goals, and supporting effort as well as achievement. Good teachers provide encouragement and support, along with clear expectations and reasonable goals for all learners but do not sacrifice self-efficacy or self-esteem for achievement. Their assessments of learning consider individual growth as well as absolute achievement.



# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

### Social Reform

**Effective teaching seeks to change society in substantive ways.**

From the Social Reform point of view, the object of teaching is the collective rather than the individual. Good teachers awaken students to values and ideologies that are embedded in texts and common practices within their disciplines. Good teachers challenge the status quo and encourage students to consider how learners are positioned and constructed in particular discourses and practices. To do so, they analyze and deconstruct common practices for ways in which such practices perpetuate conditions that are unacceptable. Class discussion is focused less on how knowledge has been created, and more by whom and for what purposes. Texts are interrogated for what is said and what is not said; what is included and what is excluded; who is represented and who is omitted from the dominant discourse. Students are encouraged to take critical stances to give them power to take social action to improve their own lives and the lives of others. Critical deconstruction, though central to this view, is not an end in itself.

# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Teaching Perspectives

- Most people have one (some times, two) **Dominant perspectives**  
\*at or above the “Dominant” line
- Most people have one or two **Back-up perspectives**  
\*above the Mean, but not “Dominant”
- Some people have perspectives that are **Recessive**  
\*at or below the “Recessive” line

# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

Teaching Perspectives

**Sub-scores – B, I, A**

- **Actions:** What you do as a teacher/in your teaching
- **Intentions:** What you want to accomplish as a teaching/in your teaching
- **Beliefs:** Why you feel that is important or justified



# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Journal Writing – Activity

We are going to free-write personal journal entries on our TPI results using the lined paper at our tables.

### Prompts to consider:

- How do our Dominant, Back-up, and Recessive perspectives inform our personal philosophies as teachers?
- How do our sub-scores inform our personal philosophies as teachers?
- Where do we agree, and where do we disagree, with our teaching perspectives?
- How do our draft statements of teaching philosophy align with our teaching perspectives?

# TPI: TEACHING PERSPECTIVES INVENTORY

## Journal Writing – Activity Debrief



# TDs + STPs

Teaching Dossiers and Statements of Teaching Philosophy



# SECTION OVERVIEW

## Part one: Teaching Dossiers

- Why we need them
- Their components
- Deciding what to include
- Best practices for teaching dossiers

## Part two: Statements of Teaching Philosophy

- Why we need them
- Their structure
- Best practices for teaching statements
- Starting to draft using reflective exercises

# PART ONE

## Teaching Dossiers

# WHAT IS A TEACHING DOSSIER?

A **catalogue** of your teaching experience...

- that demonstrates **your thoughtful and successful approach** to teaching...
- through **a statement of your overall beliefs** about teaching...
- that is linked to **specific practices and evidence** that these practices are successful.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Statement of Teaching Philosophy
2. Teaching Experience
3. Teaching Strategies
4. Evaluations of Teaching
5. Professional Development
6. Future Goals
7. Appendices



**Paragraph  
descriptions,  
not lists**

Appendix A: Course outline for course X

Appendix B: Teaching observation report from course Y

Appendix C: Student evaluations from course Z

# EVALUATION OF TEACHING EXAMPLE

The forty students in my Fall 2015 HIST\*2900: History of the British Empire course rated my teaching as follows:

Category	My score	Department average
Motivates best student work	4.45	4.05
Explains clearly	4.05	3.95
Interesting assignments	4.15	3.68
Best course in department	4.00	4.00
Best instructor in department	3.90	3.80

Scores are on a 5-point scale, with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest.

As I prepared to teach the course again the following term, I focused on assignment design . To engage students' interest and motivate them further, I revamped the major assignment to include two options so that students could select the one that interested them most. I also revised the assignment instructions for clarity.

# TEACHING DOSSIER APPENDICES

- **Teaching documents:** syllabi, annotated slides, assignments, handouts, etc.
- **Instructional materials:** case studies, concept maps, media, etc.
- **Academic products:** teaching-related publications, research, grants, etc.
- **Teaching evaluations:** from students, colleagues, professors, Educational Developers and OpenEd staff, etc.
- **Awards, professional development, and more...**

*Start collecting now! ...and keep collecting!*



# BEST PRACTICES FOR DOSSIERS

- Remember your audience, context, and purpose.
- Make specific claims backed up by detailed examples.
- Highlight the most interesting or impressive information.
- Provide descriptions to flesh out what's on your CV.
- Provide artifacts in your appendices as further evidence of your teaching effectiveness.
- Explain and reflect on your raw data.
- Edit for professional style and remove unnecessary words.
- Use only your own words.
- Proofread carefully—better yet, ask someone else to proofread for you.

# WHAT CAN I CLARIFY ABOUT TEACHING DOSSIERS?



# Let's take a short break!

# PART TWO

## Statements of Teaching Philosophy

# WHAT IS A STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY?

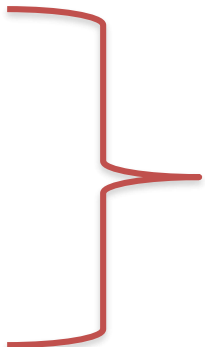
A statement of what **you believe about and value in teaching...**

...as demonstrated through **specific practices...**

...supported by **evidence of effectiveness.**



# EXAMPLE STRUCTURE

- Introductory paragraph: State three or four of your key teaching beliefs or values
  - Paragraph 1: Belief 1
  - Paragraph 2: Belief 2
  - Paragraph 3: Belief 3
- 
- State each belief in the same way as you did in your intro
  - Give one to two examples of how you put this belief into practice
  - Explain how you know this practice works
- Conclusion: End on a brief statement about your commitment to teaching.

# GUIDING METAPHORS

Consider using a metaphor to help structure your own beliefs about teaching and your identity as a teacher.

- Gardener
- Architect
- Chef
- Travel guide
- Stage performer

# BEST PRACTICES

## Content

- Make claims about your own teaching, not teaching in general
- Back up your claims with specific examples and evidence
- Stick to your authentic beliefs and practices – don't try to be something you're not!
- Ground your statement in your discipline

# BEST PRACTICES

## Structure

- Revise your statement into **one page** of three or four key beliefs
- Clearly state your beliefs in your intro and at the start of each paragraph
- Write in the first person, present tense, and active voice

# BEST PRACTICES

## Process

- Use self-reflective exercises to get started (or re-started)
- Revise, revise, revise (...and revise some more!)
- Don't be surprised if you want to redraft after completing a whole dossier
- Have fun!



# Q&A: WHAT CAN I CLARIFY?



# DRAFTING EXERCISES

## Peer Interviews

In pairs, you have ten minutes each to interview each other.

Ask your partner to write on **your** worksheet while you talk.

**To be clear:** Hand your handout package TO your partner so that they will be writing in yours. Then, when they hand it back, *you* have *their* notes in your worksheets.

# DRAFTING EXERCISES

## Reflecting and Organizing

- Look at both activities (pages 5 and 6 of your handout), then choose one to start with.
- Settle in and start reflecting!
- Once we've had some time to reflect and draft, you'll have time to share your ideas with a partner.

# INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this session, you now are able to:

- **Interpret** your TPI (Teaching Perspectives Inventory) results and **situate** yourself within your views and perceptions about teaching
- **Describe** the typical components of a teaching dossier; in particular, the statement of teaching philosophy
- **Draft** a statement of teaching philosophy using reflective exercises

# THANK YOU!



You are now all set  
and ready to go.

Good luck!

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