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Teaching Philosophy: An introspective examination based on personal reflection

Teaching is a deeply relational and transformative practice in my opinion, in which I view it as a way of creating a nuanced space where students have the ability to articulate their individualized ideas authentically. I view my role as what I would hope to be a *nourishing* presence in the classroom as an instructor who offers simultaneous structure and support in a manner that promotes the growth of students, where they are able to think critically alongside encouraging the exploration of their ideas through curiosity. Writing is primarily viewed as a technical skill, but it is easy for students to prioritize that particular aspect and bypass the creativity of it all, the allowance of writing being a form of self-expression with a powerful contentment of engagement with the world in its entirety. I attempt to approach each writing assignment with an open mindset, where it can be viewed as an opportunity in which students are able to engage more profoundly with their personal thoughts, experiences, and the broader community.

In my perspective, I view my students as individuals who hold the ability to unleash immense amounts of potential, with each being given space for their unique perspectives to be brought forth that promotes creativity in the classroom. This potential can be considered rich, multifaceted, which can aid when aiming to create a classroom environment for students to feel valued and heard, for them to feel encouraged to bring their full selves when participating in the writing process. I wish to build my teaching and center it on key elements, such as empathy, respect, and understanding based on equity, and I hope to ensure that each individual has the space to thrive and promote individualized learning. Along with this, there is the idea of implementing the crucial aspects of relationship building with my students, fostering trust as well as open dialogue that allows them to take risks in their writing where there is a lack of fear of judgment. In this, there is a great strive to be an active listener as well as being deeply attuned to the individualistic needs based on my students as they navigate through their academic and personal journeys.

A fundamental aspect of my teaching philosophy is a commitment to constructive and empathetic feedback that exists symbiotically. Feedback with the perception of it being an opportunity for meaningful dialogue is something I prioritize, rather than it being what can be considered a unilateral interaction. A goal of mine is to provide feedback that is encouraging, yet constructive, with the ability to highlight strengths as well as areas for growth with an equal amount of care. Writing is, in my opinion, a process that is able to be nurtured at every stage, whether students are brainstorming, drafting, or revising, and working alongside students with the aim to help them refine their ideas while developing their voices. Along with this, the creation of opportunities for students to review one another's creations, fostering a sense of collaboration through shared learning. This form of feedback process allocates for a sense of empowerment while developing their ability to self-reflect while engaging in meaningful dialogue about their work.

Teaching while incorporating discipline can be challenging to balance; however, the focal point of my approach is consistently in regard to the belief that knowledge and creativity are abundant and ever-evolving. Teaching is so should not be viewed simply a rigid set of standards, but instead a dynamic process that is meant to encourage exploration, experimentation, as well as personal growth. It serves as a vital tool pertaining to intellectual engagement, meant to allow students to explore ideas of complexity, express their beliefs and ideals, and critically engage with the world overall. Within my classroom, learning is consistently active with the integration of a variety of methods and approaches, offering students the freedom to experiment with numerous ways of thinking and a multitude of forms regarding self-expression.

I hope to achieve a nurturing environment, allocating emotions of support and openness. In doing so, I believe these students have the capability of thriving through learning, based on the idea of what can be considered a sense of belonging followed by a comforting form of emotional safety. This being a sort of 'outlet' is one of the main reasons I prioritize building culture within the classroom that has a basic foundation of empathy, equity and respect, usually encouraged through collaboration. There is a strong sense of power within features such as discussion, through the basis of interaction, in which students are able to engage with one another and incorporate one another's ideas in a meaningful, yet respectful way. Creating a space for students to share their work as well as their thoughts is critical, combined with the promotion of writing being viewed as a 'communal' act, which allows the connection to form into larger, deeper conversations. In doing so, my teaching methods emphasize active participation, self-reflection, and especially peer support, all of which allow students to develop confidence in their writing abilities.

The improvement of an individual's technical skills is highly critical, but I hope to aid them in the recognition of their own protentional while fostering their own forms of creativity and allocating for the development of the capacity of empathy coupled with critical thinking. In doing so, I want to instill the idea of allowing them to understand the overall significance of their own voice and allow them to embrace the vulnerability within their writing, which would allow them to take risks and realize mistakes are wonderful to make and are necessary to grow. I hope to instill that value to each of them, that mistakes are a part of writing, and rather than being fearful, just as I may be, find solace in the idea that mistakes are lovely to make because each 'mistake' only promotes growth as we are able to learn from each. Success cannot be created without failure, and this will require courage alongside an abundance of patience, but by cultivating such an environment within the classroom, I hope students become more comfortable, not only in writing, but all types or learning in a general sense, keeping an open mentality and combining their natural sense of curiosity and instilling dedication.

Upon doing so, when each student inevitably moves on from the course, I would like to think they have become more comfortable as learners, thinkers, and have grown overall, with the capability of using their voices individually and collaboratively in order to create a change in the world in its entirety.