



# Teaching Statements

AGEP California - Summer Teaching Institute 2019  
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# TEACHING STATEMENTS

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A REFLECTION OF WHO YOU ARE

# What is a teaching statement?

- Teaching statements are also known as teaching philosophies.
- Your teaching statement works to articulate who you are as an educator, what you prioritize in the classroom, and how effective you are as a teacher.
- The goal is not to make you sound like the most impressive educator who ever lived; you want to inspire confidence in the committee that should they throw you into a classroom, you are sufficiently able to succeed.

# Why do we have them?

- Why would you not have one given you will be working in education?
- Comparing teaching notes is a signal.
- Certain disciplines have high expectations when it comes to teaching, and these statements can help reviewers quickly discern who is pedagogically prepared to teach.
- No matter how research heavy a position might be, if there is any teaching component involved, your ability to teach will matter.

# What do they look like?

- 12 pt font
- One-inch margins
- Single space with line breaks between paragraphs
- 1- and 2-page versions
- Paginate with name when necessary

# Step 1.

What type of professor are you?

Take stock of what you have done in the classroom. Have you ever:

- Been an instructor of record?
- Designed a syllabus?
- Created a lesson plan?
- Taught above or below the tertiary level?
- Taken pedagogical training/certification?
- Given final grades?
- Taught a large lecture?



# Step 2.

Ideas to help you think:

- Are you teaching large or small classes? How do you engage those classes?
- When given the opportunity to design your own materials, what texts/assignments do you give students?
- What type of students do you teach, and how do you adjust for those students?
- Do you include your students in your own field and how so?
- What was a really challenging aspect of teaching, and how did you overcome it?
- What preparation have you undergone to be an effective educator, and how does that inform your teaching style?
- Why do you like teaching?
- Why do you hate teaching?

# Step 3.

To assemble all your thoughts into a convincing statement, you will need to:

- Discuss a class through specific examples.
- Frame your pedagogy.
- State your classroom goals and explain how you achieve them.
- Identify key texts, theorists, concepts, and so forth that you are teaching.
- Talk about your students and how they respond to your methods.
- Relate your teaching to your research interests.



## Step 4.

# DO NOT

- Talk about how much you care about your students.
- Explain how you meet with students in office hours even when they extend past your set time.
- Focus on the teachers that have inspired you.
- Discuss the various duties associated with your teaching (e.g., grading).
- State how much you love teaching.
- Give your philosophies on teaching and education



# The real Step 4.

- Focus on tangible, professional examples and language that illustrate your devotion to students through your good teaching.
- Keep in mind boundaries that delineate various balances.
- Stick to talking about yourself—this is not your mentor's statement.
- Refrain from exploring teaching topics in a way that anyone can talk about.
- Your commitment to teaching should be evident from the lesson due to the thought invested, not from blanket statements about what teaching means to you.
- The teaching philosophy is not a philosophy. It's a demo.

# Common missteps:

- You did not sound like you like teaching.
- Your philosophy sounded like it could belong to anyone else.
- You did not use examples to illustrate your points.
- You sounded more like a therapist than an educator.
- You did not target the job for the institution and its students.
- You did not inspire confidence in your teaching because it does not sound like you understand what goes into teaching.

The end! Teaching portfolios!!!



# What is a teaching portfolio?

- They represent more in-depth and holistic explorations of your performance in the classroom.
- They provide documentation of your teaching style, pedagogy, and performance.
- They encompass personal and external indicators of your quality.

# Why do we have them?

- In a position with a strong teaching component, the teaching philosophy is not sufficient to determine who is a strong candidate because it relies on hearsay.
- Portfolios offer a committee the chance to dissect your experiences in the classroom as well as see firsthand evidence of your stipulated teaching style.
- In evaluating classroom success, it is not enough to take your word on matters.

# What do they look like?

- 10-20 pages
- Table of contents
- Teaching philosophy
- Course syllabi with calendar (usually 2)
- Course lessons/rubrics (usually 2)
- Course Evaluations
- Letters of support
- Sample student writing (with permission)
- Teaching C.V.\*

# Tips

- Distill bulk information (e.g., evals) into pretty tables with select quotes made prominent.
- People like pretty pictures in assignments and syllabi.
- Your syllabi should include a description of the course, goals, stated evaluation criteria, university policy language, and due dates.
- Your sample assignments should demonstrate what you talked about in your teaching philosophy.
- Select student work that demonstrates your effectiveness.
- Match the materials to the described teaching position.



# Questions?



What do you think about that?