

© E. MacGregor
Originated: March 2019
Updated: June 2022

Teaching-Learning Philosophy Statement

My teaching-learning philosophy can be described with the keywords: reflective, critical, experiential, creative, relational, and person-centred. As a spiritual and contemplative being, I cultivate my values through developing my sense of present moment self-awareness, self-knowledge, emotional intelligence, and personal knowing. I believe that we live life narratively, and thus attune myself to the living stories around me. Recognizing this, my personal-professional practice includes creative self-expression, journaling, and mindful practices. As an educator, I gratefully uphold the legacy of my own teachers, as I role model and live the very theories and approaches which contributed to my own flourishing in education.

My approach to teaching and learning is grounded in my values of respect, integrity, compassion, empathy, equity, and inclusion. I practice teaching and learning from a constructivist critical social paradigm, where multiple realities and truths co-exist, perceived differently in the context of socio-political factors. I approach this relative reality with a critical perspective, relying on rigorous empirical and contextual data to inform my views.

My philosophy of teaching and learning rests on the following assumptions: (a) individuals seek and deserve to flourish (b) culture and society create barriers to flourishing and (c) knowledge co-creation is an emancipatory and spiritual experience in support of human flourishing. These assumptions inform the three pillars of my philosophy of teaching and learning: experience, critical perspectives, and person-centredness. Together, these assumptions and perspectives guide my approach to new experiences and knowledge co-creation.

As an educator, I draw on Dewey's *continuity of experience* (1938), which explains that knowledge gained from prior experiences "becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow" (Dewey, 1938, p. 44). In education, this integration is a person-centred pedagogy, which draws on teacher's and student's prior experience and knowledge to co-create knowledge.

In my teaching encounters, I draw inspiration from holistic educator Miller in his model of teaching-learning: transmission, transaction, and transformation (Miller, 2018). In *transmission*, I facilitate active learning through conveying ideas. With *transaction*, I invite learners to reflect and share with one another about their knowledge, experiences, impressions of the ideas presented. I draw on the use of contemplative and creative reflective activities, such as aspects of Schwind's Narrative Reflective Process (2016). I encourage and invite appropriate, safe engagement with subject matter in the learning milieu.

Finally, in *transformation*, I support learners to integrate these ideas and knowledge into their inner lives, using contemplative and mindful practice activities. For me, such a transformation supports development of critical consciousness (Freire, 1968), honouring the critical pillar of my pedagogy.

My teaching-learning philosophy brings together my love for learning with rigorous educational theory towards promoting respect, integrity, compassion, empathy, equity, and inclusion.

© E. MacGregor
Originated: March 2019
Updated: June 2022

References

- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Macmillan.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary ed.) Continuum. (Original work published 1968).
- Miller, J. (2018). *Love and Compassion: Exploring Their Role in Education*. Toronto: UTPress.
- Schwind, J. K. (2016). Narrative Reflective Process: A creative experiential path to personal-knowing in teaching-learning scholarship. In J. Gingras, P. Robinson, J. Waddell, L. & Cooper (Eds.), *Teaching as scholarship: Preparing students for professional practice in community services*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press. (pp. 137-154)