

Teaching Statement for
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Experience

I have over a decade of demonstrated teaching success, at a variety of institutions – large and small; public and private; comprehensive, master’s, baccalaureate, and satellite; in Sociology, Communicatoin, and Psychology. I have also taken many opportunities to develop my instructional skills beyond teaching courses in the department. These include teaching short-courses through the Division of Information Technology and Communication Division (ITC) at the University of Virginia, the development of in-house training modules (“Stats Chats”) during positions in applied settings, and utilization of CSUN’s Center for Education Learning and Teaching (CELT).

Philosophy

I am interested in developing students’ critical thinking about their experiences and assumptions. For example, I want them to be aware both of the breadth of ideas and tools available within the discipline, as well as the breadth with which any of its ideas or tools might be applied. I want them to explore the boundaries on inquiry erected by academic disciplines, as well as those they erect themselves.

Approach

I actively adopt new examples and readings for each semester, and try to introduce new methods of conveying ideas and engaging students. I try to use examples that make ideas both more tangible and more practical. I am most interested that students will recognize some usefulness of the ideas beyond their studies. Efforts to facilitate that aim also help to improve students’ reading and writing skills, by allowing them to become tools for description and explanation rather than impediments to a grade and degree.

I am equally comfortable in traditional lecture and seminar formats. In both, I attempt to use innovative methods of instruction, demonstration, and interaction. These range from in-class exercises such as content analysis of personal advertisements, to adventurous homework assignments such as a bibliographic scavenger hunt through six different services on the Internet.

Advising

I have extensive experience supervising research, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as advising generally – both for majors within the department and for those seeking Sociology courses to fulfill their general education / core curriculum requirements. This includes holding typically twice the required office hours, writing five or more letters of recommendation each year (for graduate school admissions or post-degree/career employment), and serving on a variety of thesis committees, including twice as chair.