MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

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Teaching Philosophy: Creating Possibilities for Learning and Transformation

Paulo Freire's view of education as a process in which learners actively participate in constructing knowledge, rather than simply receiving information, provides an important foundation for my teaching philosophy. Like Freire, I believe that education should be grounded in dialogue, critical reflection, and recognition of the experiences and perspectives learners bring to the classroom. I see teaching as a collaborative and transformative process in which students question assumptions, challenge established ways of thinking, consider alternative perspectives, and contribute meaningfully to the construction of knowledge. My responsibility, therefore, extends beyond facilitating an understanding of disciplinary content to creating purposeful experiences that nurture curiosity, intellectual independence, and the confidence to engage with complex problems. I want students to leave my classroom not merely knowing more, but better equipped to exercise sound judgement and apply their learning in their professions and communities.

Four interconnected principles guide my instructional decisions: enquiry and critical thinking; problem-solving and authentic learning; collaboration and active participation; and lifelong learning and personal growth. I translate these principles into learning activities and assessments that require students to investigate issues, articulate their reasoning, learn with others, and reflect on their progress. Teaching across undergraduate and graduate programmes has also reinforced my awareness that learners differ in their experiences, expectations, and confidence. I therefore seek to maintain high expectations while offering the guidance, feedback, and opportunities for practice that help students engage meaningfully. As a lifelong learner myself, I regard students' questions and perspectives as invitations to examine and improve my own practice.

Philosophy in Practice: Active Learning and Authentic Assessment

My teaching incorporates innovations such as case analyses, collaborative problem-solving challenges, simulations, interactive learning resources, and authentic assessments. These are not activities introduced merely for variety; each is intended to move students from recalling concepts towards evaluating evidence, defending decisions, and considering consequences. In management and educational leadership modules, for example, students engage with organisational situations that rarely have one uncomplicated answer. I encourage them to explain not only what they would recommend, but why, for whom, and with what potential implications. Structured discussion and formative feedback enable me to probe misconceptions while creating space for students to reconsider initial positions. In this way, critical thinking and collaboration become habits practised during learning rather than outcomes mentioned only in a syllabus.

I also design assessments that create opportunities to apply academic learning in professional and public contexts. In EDU6008: Leading and Managing Change, students draw on professional

learning resources, including LinkedIn Learning, and develop strategic plans that connect change theories with organisational challenges. One student, reflecting on the experience, wrote: 'I am noticing the flow and practicality of the assignments and how much I have learnt. It has truly opened my eyes and broadened my awareness.' This feedback is especially meaningful to me because it speaks to the coherence and perceived relevance of the learning experience. In EDU5023: Instructional Leadership and Supervision and EDU6012: PhD Seminar: Instructional Leadership, newspaper article development invites students to translate research-informed perspectives into writing for audiences beyond the university. In EDU6015: PhD Seminar: Studies in Educational Administration, student-led professional workshops and scholarly writing activities provide further opportunities to engage with academic and professional communities. Together, these examples illustrate my conviction that assessment can be a vehicle for communication, professional judgement, and contribution—not simply a means of assigning grades.

Academic Literacy, Innovation, and Student Development

In COM5000: Academic Literacy for Graduate Students and COM1024: Academic Literacy for Undergraduates, I work to make academic writing and referencing conventions approachable without diminishing their rigour. Students learn through identifying and correcting errors, analysing examples, practising conventions, and applying feedback to their own writing. APA 7 Academy extends these established interactive approaches into a digital learning environment intended to support independent practice and engagement with APA seventh-edition referencing. I regard technology as valuable when it responds to a genuine learning need, rather than as an achievement in itself. This principle also informs my interest in the responsible use of artificial intelligence and other emerging tools: their place in education must be evaluated against the quality of learning, academic integrity, and the development of students' own judgement.

I am equally attentive to changes in confidence and academic identity that may be less visible in conventional assessment results. I have seen students progress from struggling with coursework to producing stronger work while developing the discipline and belief in their own abilities to meet demanding expectations. Such experiences remind me that constructive feedback and encouragement can be as consequential as instructional content. The influence of academic guidance can also continue beyond a module: in one example shared with me, a student applied advice on responding to journal reviewers and subsequently received acceptance of a revised manuscript by the Journal of Arts, Science and Technology. I do not regard the student's achievement as my own; rather, it illustrates the kind of scholarly independence that thoughtful mentorship seeks to foster.

Mentorship, Professional Growth, and Instructional Leadership

My commitment to teaching extends to research supervision, scholarly guidance, and the professional development of colleagues. I helped develop and facilitate PROMOTE, a cohort-based academic development programme that supports participants in strengthening research identity, scholarly writing, professional visibility, and related academic capabilities. My

contributions to the Early Career Researcher Academy similarly reflect an interest in making scholarly development more accessible through structured guidance and practical resources. These initiatives draw on the same beliefs that shape my classroom practice: people learn through active participation, purposeful challenge, feedback, and opportunities to apply what they are learning. They also allow me to contribute to a wider culture in which colleagues share expertise and support one another's growth.

Sustaining instructional excellence requires me to remain reflective and responsive. Professional learning in educational leadership, academic writing, and technology-enhanced teaching, together with experience in curriculum development and research, informs how I plan, facilitate, and review learning. I continually consider whether an approach is helping students engage more deeply, communicate more effectively, or demonstrate greater independence. I do not equate innovation with excellence automatically; its value rests in its educational purpose and the quality of the opportunities it creates. For this reason, I seek to refine my teaching through reflection, student feedback, and engagement with emerging educational possibilities.

Continuing Commitment

For me, instructional excellence is an ongoing responsibility rather than a fixed accomplishment. It calls for intellectual openness, purposeful design, responsiveness to learners, and a willingness to challenge familiar practices when better approaches emerge. Across my teaching, assessment, mentorship, and academic leadership, my central aim remains consistent: to create opportunities for others to develop knowledge, confidence, sound judgement, and a sense of possibility. The most rewarding evidence of this work often comes when students recognise their own growth or later share how a learning experience influenced their academic or professional journey. I teach because I love learning, I believe in people, and I find joy in helping others discover what they are capable of achieving.