

Philosophy of Teaching Statement
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My primary goal as an instructor is to engage students on a process of thinking and understanding the world, by embracing a holistic approach towards sustainable development and social justice. Our natural environment is an incredibly diverse and integrated system. Moreover, the economic, social, judicial and material aspects that globally impact our environment are increasingly intricate and difficult to manage. My teaching philosophy is grounded on an approach based on DIVERSITY. Diversity of disciplines, diversity of students, diversity of actors, diversity of teaching methods, and diversity of projects.

Although I praise the values of critical pedagogy and strongly believe on the importance of fostering students' critical consciousness and social responsibility in the educational process, I don't believe that there is such a thing as a single, universal, failure-proof pedagogical approach. Pedagogy specialists have been advocating the virtues of developing problem-based learning approaches as the solution to critically involve students in the educational process. While I also see many benefits of using such an approach, I do not think that an entire course grounded on problem-based learning would result on a successful educational experience.

As the attention span of today's students is rapidly decreasing, it is my objective to turn every class session into an unforgettable event for the students. My approach is based on the idea that every single class should feel like a complete new experience. Our students are different from each other; they do not all learn through the same methods; they do not all feel comfortable with certain approaches. My teaching philosophy is grounded on the belief that different teaching methods should be used in order to reach

the characteristics of each student, and also important, to make each class an interactive and new experience that will keep the students motivated and critically engaged. From direct to radical instruction, from teacher delivered to student-centered approaches, there is a right time and place for each approach in every classroom. Case studies, audio-video materials, guest speakers, simulations, new technologies, lectures, games, field trips... all have the potential to captivate students' curiosity and seek for knowledge.

The same concept applies to the students work outside the classroom. I don't expect my students to prepare for the class by spending time memorizing any materials. I also do not think that class time should be devoted to their individual evaluation assignments, as time spent in the classroom is to be used for interaction. I expect my students at the end of a semester to be more critical and active citizens, with polished analytical, communication and research skills. Therefore, their evaluation is based on a wide range of short assignments in order to allow a continuous evaluation of their work and to stimulate their development in different skills that are critical for their future professional careers.