

Writing: Via Learning, Caring, Sharing, & Growing

STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Suzanne Webb :: September 20, 2012

Writing

In the writing classroom, we write to who students are, whom they read, whom they write for, where we come from, what cultures we belong to, and how different cultures view things differently. When negotiating a discussion through cultural twists and turns, students discover that, although they may be a single community in our classroom, even our classroom community has many diverse beliefs and experiences, and we can all *learn from one another*. While I do not strive to change *what they believe*, I do strive to have them grow in *how they think* and how they receive and respond to one another's views. I plan for the students' growth in this way as we write together. I foster a writing environment in which students feel comfortable to share, to question, to respond, and in these ways, learn.

Learning

Far too many students don't ask questions. I endeavor for them to be comfortable enough to ask me anything. I try to establish an air of acceptance and approachability immediately as each semester begins. I offer myself and what I know to my students; but more, I offer them *what I don't know but am willing to learn with them*. I have never been afraid to say to students "I don't know, but let's look it up." And, although Erika Lindemann says, "even teachers need to be learners from time to time." I say teachers need to be learners *all of the time*.

"Ms. Webb, you seem cool and all, but like you won't take any crap."

Anon. Student
August 2006

Caring

Sometimes we work as a class or in teams, and other times we work one-on-one through conferences and emails. There may be a room of 27 students, sometimes roughly the same age, but there the similarities stop and individual needs take over. I care about individual needs as well as the needs of the collective. When students realize that I care, they begin to care about themselves, the course, and each other. When we take the time to care inside the classroom, we become better listeners, better writers, and better citizens outside of the classroom.

Sharing

Students read and discuss nonfiction essays then explore multiple modes of inquiry they find within those essays. They observe. They interview. They survey. They look things up. They think. They write. They revise. They write some more. Then, they share their findings through audio/visual presentations at semester's end, enriching their peers while they also become acquainted with the rhetorical canon of delivery. Students produce works from standard, traditional persuasive essays, to creative nonfiction, small web sites, YouTube videos, Facebook

pages, and even once, an amazing song. The result of sharing these projects do not stop within our classroom—they enhance the world outside of academia as students finish with their studies and become the leaders, the decision makers, of tomorrow.

Growing

I offer my classroom as a place of listening, guiding, and nurturing. And, while some would say this is too much to take on in a writing class, I say it's really the bare minimum. Students in my courses work toward being successful writers, readers, and researchers across different mediums and for varying audiences. I guide students to engage in these processes of writing whether in the traditional classroom or through distance learning. These interactions allow both teacher and student alike to grow and hone their communication and problem solving skills. My students will grow in reading and writing skills, in computer skills, in thinking skills, in inquiry practices, and in life skills. I know all of these skills are intertwined, relevant, and necessary for success in the university, in the workforce, and in everyday life.

[Statement of Teach*n*ology](#)