STATEMENT OF
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

A Statement of Teaching Philosophy is a reflective document that is common in faculty job applications. Seek to create a strong image of who you are as a teacher, featuring your teaching beliefs and practices.

1 Know Your Audience

The members of the hiring committee are looking for their next colleague. Each have different ideas about whom that might be, with a shared desire to hire someone who feels like a "good fit." They are likely wondering:

- Will you be able to handle all aspects of the job?
- Do you really want to teach?
- What pedagogical or andragogical methods do you employ?
- What theories or practices influence your teaching?

- What do you bring to the department?
- What opportunities do you bring to the students?
- How will you respond to the day-to-day tasks associated with teaching?
- How will you navigate competing priorities?

Once in job search mode, conduct research about the institutions and departments to which you are applying.

- Visit the institution's web site and explore the words/phrases used to capture its mission and describe the educational experience and learning environment.
- Look at web pages in the department to glean which aspects of the academic experience are emphasized.
- View curricula vita of various faculty members within the department (often found on faculty web pages).
- Identify the professional associations in which faculty members have involvement and look for indications of expectations for involvement outside the department and classroom.
- Use LinkedIn or ResearchGate as a tool to learn more about your potential future colleagues.

2 What to Write About

Your Statement of Teaching Philosophy can be taken in many different directions, but there are also key questions around which you can focus your writing. Before writing your first draft, consider reflecting on the following questions:

About You

- What are your objectives as a teacher?
- What do you see as your responsibilities?
- What are the methods and technologies that you use to reach or exceed your goals?
- What are the methods you use when you encounter challenges in delivering content?
- Identify examples of how you utilized specific strategies, including the circumstances and the outcomes/results.
- How do you measure your effectiveness?
- What do you need to improve upon in your teaching?
- What is your view about your role outside the classroom?
- How would you approach teaching a course you have never taught before?
- What have you learned about teaching?
- What's your approach to diversity in the classroom?

About Your Students

- What have you learned about students?
- What skills do you desire to facilitate in your students?
- How does your teaching adapt to learners and environments?
- What have you learned about students?
- What mechanisms do you use to assess students and evaluate levels of performance?
- In what ways do you orient your students to the nuances of the academic field?

About Trends & Technology

- Are there national issues/trends that inform your teaching? What are they and what impact have they had?
- What is the role of academic technology in the classroom?

You won't write about each topic above, but as you take time to think about what defines you as a teacher and a candidate you can make note of content that you would like to include in your statement. This type of reflection will also enhance your ability to answer future interview questions.

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3 Content Areas

The most effective style for a Statement of Teaching Philosophy is narrative, example-based, and reveals both your development and competencies as a teacher.

- **Introductory Paragraph Content Suggestions**
  - Grab the attention of the reader with an impactful first sentence.
  - Project your enthusiasm and demonstrate your "fit."
  - In relationship to the position to which you are applying, consider featuring: overall teaching philosophy, goals in your role, sense of purpose, perspectives, and experiences that you bring.
- **Main Body Paragraph Content Suggestions**
  - Provide anecdotes demonstrating how you employ various teaching and classroom management strategies.
  - Share a teaching/classroom challenge and how you resolved it, highlighting a positive outcome and your own growth.
  - Share examples and their results/outcomes to help the reader to visualize the student experience in your classroom and understand the skills you possess.
- **Concluding Paragraph Content Suggestions**
  - Summarize and share where you are heading in the development of your teaching.
  - Mention future goals and what you intend to accomplish in the position to which you are applying. The reader wants to get a sense that your development as a teacher is always moving forward.
  - You may want to tailor this paragraph to the specific college/university to which you are applying by making a connection between what they value or are seeking in a candidate and your experience.

4 Tips

- Write multiple drafts well before you need your final version.
- Involve others who have experience in your discipline in reading your statement and ask for their input.
- Invite others who do not know you well to read your statement and ask them to share what they learned about you.
- Follow guidelines and page length, if provided (typically, not more than 1-2 pages).
- Focus on creating a vivid impression of what makes you unique.
- Make sure you have used evidence-based examples.
- Ask several people to proofread your writing.
- When applying to specific positions, research what the department and institution values in the education of students.

Schedule a review of your Statement of Teaching Philosophy at the Center for Career Development.

Resources

CCD Career Coaching	https://career.uconn.edu/career-coaching/
CCD Academic Job Search Webpage	https://career.uconn.edu/graduate-students/academic-job-search-2/
Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)	https://cetl.uconn.edu/teaching-philosophy/
UConn Writing (W) Center	https://writingcenter.uconn.edu/