

Five Ways to Improve Your Teaching Dialogue and Feedback in the Classroom

by Linda von Hoene

Becoming an effective teacher involves seeking out multiple sites of input that can enable you to reflect on and improve the teaching and learning that takes place in your class. This article is designed to provide you with some suggestions about sources for dialogue and methods of feedback.

Dialoguing with Yourself Through a Teaching Log

One very important, but often overlooked, source of input on teaching is you, the teacher. A first step that can form the foundation for other critical reflection is to keep a daily teaching log or journal on your teaching. You could start by writing your lesson plan on the right-hand side of your teaching notebook and reserving the left-hand side for comments and reflection. Questions to ask yourself and reflect on in writing might include, What worked well in this class? What didn't? Where did the students seem to have difficulties? Were there any noticeable points where the students seemed very engaged with the material? What types of things may need greater clarification the next time? Were there any particular pedagogical strategies that seemed to work well? What will I change the next time I teach this topic?

In addition to informing your teaching on an ongoing basis, the reflection fostered by keeping a teaching log will greatly assist you in writing up a statement of teaching philosophy for your teaching portfolio.

For further information on how to keep a teaching log, see Stephen Brookfield's *Becoming a Reflective Practitioner*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995, pp. 72-75.

For more information about the teaching portfolio, see Peter Seldin's *The Teaching Portfolio*, second ed. Bolton, MA: Anker Press, 1997.

Feedback from Your Students

More often than not, we reflect on (or worry about!) our teaching in isolation, without realizing that our own

students can be a great source of feedback on the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. While end-of-semester evaluations tend to summarize the students' overall responses to the class, this type of input comes too late to be of use to you and your students during the current semester. There are several techniques you can use to solicit ongoing feedback from your students on the class in general or the learning that takes place around specific topics and activities. After the first couple of weeks of class, you could ask students to take out a piece of paper and write down three things that have helped their learning in the class and, on the other side of the paper, three things the students would like to change about the class to improve it. After reviewing their responses, decide what you can and will change and what you either cannot change or find pedagogically unwise to change. You can also let the students know what you will be changing based on their suggestions. This type of informal feedback can be gathered at different points over the semester.

Classroom assessment techniques (CATs) enable you to get feedback about the learning that has transpired in a particular class period or after a specific activity. Perhaps the most commonly used CAT is the "one-minute paper," where students are asked to write down answers to questions such as the following, "What was the most important thing you learned during this class?" and "What questions do you still have?" This type of technique enables you to find out how the students are processing and synthesizing material, as well as which points need to be reiterated or elaborated before going on.

Improving Your Teaching

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For an excellent discussion of various classroom assessment techniques, see the groundbreaking work, *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, second ed., by Thomas Angelo and K. Patricia Cross, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

Dialoguing with Faculty

The degree of dialogue between GSIs and faculty about teaching varies from department to department and from course to course. Many faculty teaching courses with GSIs hold weekly meetings. These meetings should cover not only course logistics, but also pedagogical strategies for teaching sections. (Your

Graduate Assistant can provide you with the Spring 1997 Policy on Appointments and Mentoring of GSIs.) You should consider asking the professor you are teaching with to observe your class. This formative classroom observation should not be a "critique" of your teaching, but a mutual exchange of ideas, in which both parties discuss what they have learned in the process of teaching and observation. We strongly suggest that GSIs use a tripartite structure for these observations, which includes a pre-observation discussion, a class visit, and a post-observation discussion. In the pre-observation meeting, you should discuss how the class is going; what you will be teaching and what pedagogical techniques you will be using; your goals for the class period and what you would like the students to take away from the class; and which areas of your teaching you would like feedback on. After the class visit, you should meet with the professor to discuss the class and to set goals for those areas of your teaching that need improvement.

For a concise description of these techniques, see LuAnn Wilkerson's article, "Classroom Observation: The Observer as Collaborator." In *POD: A Handbook for New Practitioners. Professional & Organizational Development Network in Higher Education*, 1988, pp. 95-98.

For additional articles on classroom observation, see Karron Lewis, ed., *Face to Face: A Sourcebook of Individual Consultation Techniques for Faculty/Instructional Developers*. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press, 1988.

Dialoguing with Peers

One of your greatest resources for reflecting on and improving your teaching is your peers. GSIs teaching sections of the same course should meet weekly with faculty to discuss ideas on how to teach specific topics, and to exchange materials, resources, and suggestions on how to promote a stimulating learning environment in the classroom. GSIs are also encouraged to pair up with a peer to do classroom observations. Many GSIs who have visited each other's classes have reported that observations and dialogues emanating from this type of peer collaboration provide them with an invaluable opportunity to learn from the teaching styles and techniques of other GSIs. Peer observations should follow the same procedures as those recommended above for faculty observation of GSIs.

GSIs can also dialogue with peers in departmental 300-level pedagogy seminars, at informal gatherings within their departments, and across disciplinary and department borders at the GSI Teaching and Resource Center.

Consultation

Staff at the GSI Teaching and Resource Center provide confidential individual consultation for GSIs. Consultants assist GSIs in developing specific teaching strategies, reviewing feedback received from students, and finding ways to improve teaching and learning.

Consultants are also available to conduct classroom observations and videotaping, together with preparatory and follow-up discussions when these programs are not available in the department. Videotaping is an effective tool for reflecting on teaching, as it enables GSIs to see themselves in action and to develop strategies, in dialogue with a consultant, on how to improve teaching. Please arrange for observations and taping at least two weeks in advance.

Articles GSIs may wish to read in conjunction with videotaping include: David Taylor-Way, "Consultation Through Video: Memory Management Through Stimulated Recall," in *Face to Face*, ed. Karron Lewis, Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press, 1988, pp. 159-191. Barbara Davis, "Watching Yourself on Videotape," in *Tools for Teaching*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993, pp. 355-61. ☸

**Activities to Promote Reflection on Teaching and to
Assist You in Developing a Teaching Portfolio**

1. Keep a daily teaching log (you can also consider it a type of lab notebook) and take 15 minutes after each class to answer questions such as these: What worked well and why? What didn't work well, why not? What should I change for the next time I teach this topic? (You can also simply make these comments on your lesson plan or in your teaching notebook.)
 2. Get ongoing feedback from students (e.g., Classroom Assessment Techniques, mid-semester evaluations).
 3. Consider being videotaped and discussing your teaching with a consultant.
 4. Set up peer observation opportunities where you and a colleague visit each other's classes and then dialogue about your teaching.
 5. Attend conferences on teaching.
 6. Read around in the general and discipline-specific pedagogical literature.
 7. Publish on teaching.
 8. Review your student evaluations from the past few semesters and note what students consistently said helped their learning and which aspects of your teaching needed to be improved.
 9. Open up a computer folder and create files for the sections of your teaching portfolio.
-

QUESTIONS TO PROMOTE INITIAL REFLECTION

1. What teaching methods do you use and why? *INVOLVEMENT*
2. What theoretical discourses inform your teaching and why?
3. What does "learning" mean to you as applied to your discipline?
4. What specific practices do you use to motivate students? *POSITIVE FEEDBACK
RELEVANT*
5. How would you describe the relationships fostered in the process of teaching and learning between you and your students and among your students? *CLOSE*
6. If you were to write your own teaching biography, how would you say your teaching has changed over time and why? *FUNKLEINEN NICH AN BAILEYMAN, SEITEN ANKIDENTEN, FOCUS, LITFANDEN, ICHEN LAFNE BANT ANKIDENTEN*
7. If you overheard students talking about you, what adjectives do you think they would use to describe you as a teacher and why? *ENGASMENT*
What adjectives would you want to hear them use to describe you as a teacher and why?
8. How is the teaching you do related to the research that you do in your discipline? *INGEN FANSEN*
9. Describe the best course you ever took and explain why it was stellar.
Describe the worst course you took and why it was so bad.
10. If someone were to ask you why it is important to study your discipline, what would you say?
11. What metaphor would you choose to describe who you are as a teacher?
What associations do you make with that metaphor?
12. What metaphor would you use to describe the learning environment that you attempt to foster in the courses you teach?
What associations do you make with that metaphor?
13. Think about the best and worst teachers you have ever had.
What did they do that either helped or hindered your learning?

Professional Portfolio
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University of California, Berkeley

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② FNA KOMPETENZENTWICKLUNG
+ LIEBE MACHEN ANKIDENTHIERAR

③ FNA SPARK BEIHEM — PEDAGOGIE — SE LIT
DOKUMENTATION HOS LEON V. SCHAIN SELFCHARTER
EINGETRICKEN HOKO TIC PROFESSORAL EINGETRICKEN

④ EVALUATIONEN

⑤ CV — LIT TYNT HEN

⑥ TYNT

⑦ BEIHEM + LIT — WIKI + BAWENHARTIG

⑧ ANKIDENTHIERAR — INNOVATIONSWIRTSCHAFT

NAME B.

How To Produce A Teaching Portfolio

The following are extracts from Peter Seldin's book

"The Teaching Portfolio - A practical guide to improved performance and promotion/tenure decisions, 2nd Ed."

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Choosing Items For The Portfolio (Chapter 2)

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Chapter 1: The Teaching Portfolio

An historic change is taking place in higher education: teaching is being taken more seriously. At long last, after years of criticism and cries for reform, more and more colleges and universities are reexamining their commitment to teaching and exploring ways to improve and reward it.

As for faculty, they are being held accountable, as never before, to provide clear and concise evidence of the quality of their classroom teaching. Why? Perhaps it is the result of the growing chorus of complaints from those who serve on tenure and promotion review committees that they are given little factual information about teaching performance. They argue that the typical curriculum vitae describes publications, research grants, and other scholarly accomplishments but says very little about teaching.

It is no surprise that committee members are pressing for more information about what professors do in the classroom and why they do it. Without such meaningful information, they argue, how can they be expected to judge a professor's performance? And how can they give the teaching function its rightful value?

Is there a way for colleges and universities to respond simultaneously to the movement to take teaching seriously and to the pressures to improve systems of teaching accountability? The answer is yes. A solution can be found by looking outside higher education.

Artists, photographers, architects all have portfolios in which they display their best work. The portfolio concept can be adapted to higher education. A teaching portfolio would enable faculty members to display their teaching accomplishments for the record. And, at the same time, it would contribute to more sound personnel decisions and to the professional development and growth of individual faculty members.

What is a teaching portfolio? It is a factual description of a professor's teaching strengths and accomplishments. It includes documents and materials which collectively suggest the scope and quality of a professor's teaching performance. It is to teaching what lists of publications, grants, and honors are to research and scholarship.

Why would very busy-even harried-faculty members want to take the time and trouble to prepare a teaching portfolio? They might do so in order to gather and present hard evidence and specific data about their teaching effectiveness to tenure and promotion committees. Or they might do so in order to provide the needed structure for self-reflection about areas of their teaching needing improvement. Are there other purposes for which professors might prepare a portfolio? The answer is yes. They might do so in order to: a) document for themselves how their teaching has evolved over time; b) prepare materials about their teaching effectiveness when applying for a new position or for post-tenure review; c) share their expertise and experience with younger faculty members; d) provide teaching tips about a specific course for new or part-time faculty; e) seek teaching awards or grants relating to teaching; f) leave a written legacy within the department so that future generations of teachers who will be taking over the courses of about-to-retire professors will have the benefit of their thinking and experience.

An important point: the portfolio is not an exhaustive compilation of all of the documents and materials that bear on teaching performance. Instead, it presents selected information on teaching activities and solid evidence of their effectiveness. Just as statements in a curriculum vitae should be supported by convincing evidence (such as published articles or invitations to present a paper at an academic conference), so claims in the teaching portfolio should be supported by firm empirical evidence.

The teaching portfolio concept has gone well beyond the point of theoretical possibility. It has been used in Canada (where it is called a teaching dossier) for nearly twenty years. Today it is being adopted or pilot-tested in various forms by a rapidly increasing number of American institutions. Although reliable numbers are hard to come by, it is estimated that as many as 1,000 colleges and universities in the United States are now using or experimenting with portfolios. That is a stunning jump from the approximately ten institutions thought to be using portfolios in 1990. Among the many current users or experimenters with portfolios are Hobart and William Smith Colleges (New York), Clemson University (South Carolina), Georgia Southern University, The College of William and Mary (Virginia), Rhodes College (Tennessee), Valencia Community College (Florida),

Chapter 2: Choosing Items For The Portfolio

Because the portfolio is a highly personalized product, no two are exactly alike. Both content and organization differ widely from one faculty member to another. (See the sample portfolios in this volume.) Different fields and courses cater to different types of documentation. For example, an introductory economics course is world's apart from a studio arts course. A graduate seminar in organizational theory is far removed from a freshman biology course. The items chosen for the portfolio depend on the teaching style of the professor, the purpose for which the portfolio is prepared, and any content requirements of a professor's department or institution. Individual differences in portfolio content and organization should be encouraged so long as they are allowed by the department and institution.

Based on empirical evidence, certain items clearly turn up in portfolios with much more frequency than others. From personal review of hundreds of portfolios prepared by professors in institutions representing all sectors of higher education, the writer can assert that certain items appear again and again, falling into three broad categories.

Material from Oneself

- Statement of teaching responsibilities, including course titles, numbers, enrollments, and a brief statement about whether the course is required or elective, graduate or undergraduate.
- A reflective statement by the faculty member, describing his or her personal teaching philosophy, strategies and objectives, methodologies.
- Representative course syllabi detailing course content and objectives, teaching methods, readings, homework assignments.
- Participation in programs on sharpening instructional skill.
- Description of curricular revisions, including new course projects, materials, and class assignments.
- Instructional innovations and assessment of their effectiveness.
- A personal statement by the professor, describing teaching goals for the next five years.
- Description of steps taken to evaluate and improve one's teaching, including changes resulting from self-evaluation, time spent reading journals on improving teaching.

Material from Others

- Statements from colleagues who have observed the professor in the classroom.
- Statements from colleagues who have reviewed the professor's teaching materials, such as course syllabi, assignments, testing and grading practices.
- Student course or teaching evaluation data which produce an overall rating of effectiveness or suggest improvements.
- Honors or other recognition from colleagues, such as a distinguished teaching or student advising award.
- Documentation of teaching development activity through the campus center for teaching and learning.
- Statements by alumni on the quality of instruction.

The Products of Teaching/Student Learning

- Student scores on pre- and post-course examinations.
- Examples of graded student essays along with the professor's comments on why they were so graded.
- A record of students who succeed in advanced study in the field.
- Student publications or conference presentations on course-related work.
- Successive drafts of student papers along with the professor's comments on how each draft could be improved.

- Information about the effect of the professor and his or her courses on student career choices or help given by the professor to secure student employment or graduate school admission.
- These are the most commonly selected items, but they are not the only ones to appear in portfolios. Some professors, for reasons of academic discipline, teaching style, or institutional preference, choose a different content mix.

Some Items that Sometimes Appear in Portfolios

- Evidence of help given to colleagues leading to improvement of their teaching.
- A videotape of the professor teaching a typical class.
- Invitations to present a paper on teaching one's discipline.
- Self-evaluation of teaching-related activities.
- Participation in off-campus activities relating to teaching.
- A statement by the department chair, assessing the faculty member's teaching contribution to the department.
- Description of how computers, films, and other non-print materials are used in teaching.
- Contributing to, or editing, a professional journal on teaching the professor's discipline.
- Performance reviews as a faculty advisor.

How much information is needed to represent a professor's teaching performance fairly and completely? Experience suggests that a selective document of eight to ten pages plus supporting appendix materials is sufficient for the vast majority of faculty members. (Some institutions put a ceiling on the number of pages or number of pounds they permit in order to prevent data overkill in the portfolio.)

Being selective does not mean constructing a biased picture of one's teaching but rather providing a fair and accurate representation of it. As Zubizarreta (1994, p. 324) points out, "Even the occasional flop is worthy material for a ... portfolio if it reveals a process of genuine adjustment and growth, if the teacher has articulated innovation and risk as key components of a teaching philosophy, and if the institution recognizes experimentation and change as signals of vitality in teaching."

Integrating the Items in a Portfolio

A sound portfolio integrates documents and materials from oneself and others as well as the products of teaching (student learning). It offers a coherent teaching profile in which all parts support the whole. For example, a statement of philosophy might reflect an emphasis on scholarship in teaching while methods and materials will reveal a complementary focus on scholarship through rigorous library assignments. Another example: not only will comments from faculty observers bolster a claim of effective active learning strategies but student evaluations will as well (Seldin, Annis, Zubizarreta, 1996).

The Appendix

Just as information in the narrative part of the portfolio should be selective, so, too, the appendices should consist of judiciously chosen evidence that adequately supports the narrative section of the portfolio. Should the portfolio require additional appendix space—for supplemental descriptions, hard copy disks, or audio or video tapes, for example—then the professor may briefly discuss such materials in the narrative and make them available for review upon request.

Rather than offer a separate, isolated commentary for each appendix item, many professors weave references to appendices within unified essays. Why? Because this approach strengthens coherence. (See sample portfolios, this volume.) Further, many faculty include in their appendices supporting documents such as syllabi, student evaluations, peer reviews, graded student papers, and invitations to speak at a conference on teaching their discipline.

The appendices must be of manageable size if they are to be read. Millis (1995) encourages faculty to organize their appendices with two directives in mind: integrity and lucidity. By integrity, she means that certain key

Items, such as syllabi and student ratings, are expected and must be included to support the validity of the portfolio. These key supporting documents must be presented in a manner that reflects a discernable pattern, such as all evaluations for one course for the past three years or all syllabi for all courses taught for the past two years. Further, says Millis, a key test of the lucidity of the appendices is if they are clear to potential readers, especially those outside of the department or discipline.

A word of caution: sometimes faculty preparing portfolios fall into the trap of permitting the appendices-the supporting documents-to determine the portfolio creation. Should that happen, professors may find themselves focusing on a shopping list of possible portfolio items, determining which are easily accessible, and then creating the reflective section of their portfolios around the evidence they have at hand. The result? Unfortunately they end up focusing on the "what" rather than the "why."

A far better approach is to first reflect about one's underlying philosophy of teaching, then describe the teaching strategies and methodologies that flow from that philosophy (why you do what you do in the classroom), and only then to select documents and materials which provide the hard evidence of one's teaching activities and their effectiveness.

The Value of Self-Reflection

In truth, one of the most significant parts of the portfolio is the faculty member's self-reflection on his or her teaching. Preparing it can help professors unearth new discoveries about themselves years? Are these changes for the better? What do your syllabi say about your teaching style? What do they say about your interest in students (Rehnke, 1994)?

A Typical Table of Contents

A table of contents identifies the major headings of the portfolio. When the purpose is to improve teaching, a typical table of contents might look like this:

TEACHING PORTFOLIO

Faculty Member's Name

Department/College

Institution

Date Table of Contents

1. Teaching Responsibilities
2. Statement of Teaching Philosophy
3. Teaching Methodology, Strategies, Objectives
4. Description of Course Materials (Syllabi, Handouts, Assignments)
5. Efforts to Improve Teaching
 - a) Conferences/Workshops Attended
 - b) Curricular Revisions
 - c) Innovations in Teaching
6. Student Ratings on Diagnostic Questions
7. Products of Teaching (Evidence of Student Learning)
8. Teaching Goals: Short- and Long-Term
9. Appendices

One element of the portfolio which may go unnoticed is the date, an item important to any portfolio because it helps the faculty member establish a base line from which to measure actual development in teaching performance. Such growth can be gauged by the degree to which the portfolio demonstrates instructional improvement resulting from the faculty member's reexamination of his or her philosophy, strategies, objectives, and methodologies (Seldin, Annis, and Zubizarreta, 1996). A typical table of contents for a portfolio prepared for evaluation purposes might include the following entries:

TEACHING PORTFOLIO

The Teaching Portfolio Selected Bibliography

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- Bruff, D. (2007). Valuing and evaluating teaching in the mathematics faculty hiring process. *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*, 54(10), 1308-1315
- Chism, N.v.N. (1998). Developing a philosophy of teaching statement. *Essays on Teaching Excellence: Toward the Best in the Academy*, 9, 3.
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16

A Research-Based Rubric for Developing Statements of Teaching Philosophy

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Despite its ubiquity as the way that instructors represent their views on teaching and learning, the statement of teaching philosophy can be a frustrating document to write and the results are often uneven. This chapter describes a rubric created at the University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching to help faculty and graduate students craft teaching statements. We describe the research that informed the creation of the rubric, talk about how we use the rubric in our consultations and workshops, and present an assessment that validates the use of the rubric to improve instructors' teaching statements.

The statement of teaching philosophy or teaching statement has emerged as a standard piece of academic writing in which instructors articulate their beliefs about, approaches to, and accomplishments in teaching and learning. Numerous resources are available about how to write teaching statements, both in print form (e.g., Chism, 1997–1998; Coppola, 2000; Ellis & Griffin, 2000; Goodyear & Allchin, 1998) and on teaching center web sites across the country. These articles also point out the practical benefits of teaching statements (e.g., for job searches and as part of teaching portfolios) and their potential for enhancing reflective practice, making implicit ideas about teaching and student learning explicit, and helping college teachers align their beliefs and their pedagogical practices.

Consultants at our teaching center have helped hundreds of graduate students and faculty write their own statements. As a result, we have come to agree that the process of writing a teaching statement can be quite valuable and lead to a document that provides needed insight into an instructor's pedagogical beliefs and behaviors. However, our experience has also shown that faculty and graduate students often find teaching statements difficult and frustrating to write and evaluate, and the quality of their efforts can be uneven despite the availability of resources and the genre's ubiquity. This frustration has led some academics to question the utility of teaching statements, criticizing them as empty, boilerplate, and uninformative (Montell, 2003; Pratt, 2005).

To remedy the problems associated with teaching statements, we crafted a rubric designed to guide authors through writing and editing their teaching statements and to help them give feedback to colleagues in workshops and seminars conducted by our center. The rubric's construction was informed by our own perceptions of what made for effective teaching statements and was later refined by a survey of search committee chairs' perceptions of the successful and unsuccessful qualities of teaching statements. The rubric has made the writing process more manageable by demystifying an unfamiliar genre that can seem overwhelming: The rubric's delineation of a fixed number of topics, along with clear criteria for each, helps writers focus their efforts.

In this chapter, we present evidence demonstrating the widespread use of teaching statements, discuss the development of the rubric, and then describe the various ways we use the rubric to help graduate students and faculty write their own teaching statements. We end with data from a brief assessment comparing clients' teaching philosophies in the pre-rubric and post-rubric eras, which appear to validate our approach.

Research Overview

Uses of Teaching Statements

Teaching statements can be used for both formative and summative evaluation. As just described, writing a teaching statement entails reflection on current practice, a necessary part of formative evaluation and a prerequisite for deciding on areas for improvement. However, statements of teaching philosophy are better known for their use in summative types of evaluation, in particular in vetting job candidates for faculty positions and evaluating faculty work in teaching for promotion and tenure.

In an attempt to learn more about teaching evaluation practices, we gathered information in spring 2006 from peer institutions concerning teaching

evaluation methods mandated by their central administrations (i.e., provosts). For the purposes of this study, we defined peer institutions as those campuses with whom the University of Michigan collaborates in consortia of teaching center directors—members of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation and the Ivy Plus groups—as well as other flagship state universities. For a full list, see Figure 16.1.

FIGURE 16.1

Peer Institutions for Teaching Evaluation Survey

Berkeley	Illinois	Northwestern	UNC
Brown	Indiana	Ohio State	UVA
Chicago	Iowa	Penn	Washington
Columbia	Michigan	Penn State	Wisconsin
Cornell	Minnesota	Princeton	Yale
Dartmouth	MIT	Purdue	
Harvard	Michigan State	Stanford	

We gathered data from university web sites and then asked colleagues at teaching centers on those campuses to check and supplement the information. In all, we collected data from 26 institutions, 14 of which (53%) required some type of teaching statement for promotion and tenure (exact definitions and terminology varied and included self-evaluations, teaching philosophies, and comprehensive statements of a candidate's accomplishments in research, teaching, and service). Student ratings are the only type of evaluation required more frequently (18 universities, or 69%). Replicating this process on our own campus, we learned that all schools and colleges required some form of teaching statement. While there are obvious limitations to this study in terms of scope, it is clear that including some form of teaching statement in the review process has become standard practice, even at research-extensive universities.

Writing a statement of teaching philosophy has also become an integral part of the faculty job search. Our teaching center, like others around the country, includes sessions on the teaching statement in our campus-wide Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Seminar as well as in customized, discipline-specific seminars. We also conduct numerous consultations with graduate students as they prepare their job applications.

To learn more about how graduate students use their statements, we did a follow-up survey of participants in our PFF Seminar, an intensive, month-long program with a particular emphasis on preparing documents for the

job search. The results of that survey indicated that 90% of seminar participants used their teaching statements for the job market (Cook, Kaplan, Nidiffer, & Wright, 2001).

To determine the extent to which faculty search committees requested statements, two of the authors (Meizlish and Kaplan) conducted a survey of search committee chairs at colleges and universities across the country in spring and summer 2005. This survey was part of a larger project to examine the relative importance of teaching in faculty searches (for additional information on this study, see Meizlish & Kaplan, 2007). We began by collecting job ads from disciplinary databases for tenure-track assistant professors or open-rank positions in six disciplines (biology, chemistry, English, history, political science, and psychology), and then drew a random sample of those ads in each discipline for our follow-up survey. Of the 755 committee chairs who received the survey, 457 responded, a 61% response rate. Of those surveyed, 57% overall indicated that they requested a teaching statement at some point in the job search. Tables 16.1 and 16.2 report percentages by institutional type and disciplinary division. Differences by institutional type were not statistically significant: 60% of master's and bachelor's institutions and approximately 54% of doctoral universities requested statements. The disciplinary differences were statistically significant and somewhat surprising: Approximately 50% of humanities and social sciences committees requested statements, while close to 75% of natural sciences committees did so.

TABLE 16.1

Percentage of Respondents Requesting Statements of Teaching Philosophy During the Hiring Process, by Institutional Type

Requested Teaching Philosophy During Hiring Process	Doctoral	Master's	Bachelor's
Yes	53.6%	61.5%	61.5%
No	46.4%	38.5%	38.5%

Note. Significance testing revealed no significant differences ($p < .05$) by institutional type.

TABLE 16.2

Percentage of Respondents Requesting Statements of Teaching Philosophy During the Hiring Process, by Division

Requested Teaching Philosophy During Hiring Process	Humanities	Social Sciences	Natural Sciences*
Yes	50.2%	49.6%	79.8%
No	49.8%	50.4%	20.2%

*Note. Results for the natural sciences are significantly different from those in the humanities and social sciences ($p < .05$).

It is clear from these responses that teaching statements are now commonly requested across the disciplinary and institutional spectrum. However, graduate students in our PFF Seminar often ask about the wisdom of sending an unsolicited teaching statement, and so our survey asked: "Based on your experience, how do you think a search committee would respond if the applicant submitted a statement of teaching philosophy even though a statement was not requested?" Respondents answered using a 6-point rating scale (from 1 = Extremely Unfavorable to 6 = Extremely Favorable) to express their views of unsolicited statements at three stages, the initial application, first-round interviews, and campus visits. Tables 16.3 and 16.4 report mean responses by institutional type and disciplinary division. At each stage, faculty viewed submission of an unsolicited statement in a generally positive light, with median responses of approximately 4.9 at each stage (5 = Favorable). Although there were slight differences by institutional type and disciplinary division, the overall conclusion remains unchanged: Submission of an unsolicited teaching statement is viewed quite positively by search committee chairs in our sample.

What Makes a Successful Statement?

In our survey, we asked search committee chairs to tell us what makes a statement of teaching philosophy successful or unsuccessful. Based on the responses, this is a topic of great interest to those who read teaching statements: 78% of respondents provided open-ended responses about successful statements and 76% about the unsuccessful ones.

In analyzing the 356 responses to the question "What makes a teaching statement successful?" we looked for common themes and language. We divided

TABLE 16.3

Mean Favorability of a Candidate's Submission of an Unsolicited Teaching Philosophy, by Institutional Type

Respondents rated each item on a 6-point Likert scale (6 = Extremely Favorable to 1 = Extremely Unfavorable)

Institutional Type [^]	Initial Application	First-Round Interview	Campus Visit
Doctoral extensive	4.73	4.70	4.79
Doctoral intensive	5.05*	5.12*	5.05
Master's	4.93*	4.93*	4.99
Bachelor's	5.00*	4.89	4.90
Overall	4.88	4.85	4.90

[^]Note. Only differences between doctoral-extensive and other institutions were statistically significant at the ($p < .05$) level. These are indicated by an *.

TABLE 16.4

Mean Favorability of a Candidate's Submission of an Unsolicited Teaching Philosophy, by Disciplinary Division

Respondents rated each item on a 6-point Likert scale (6 = Extremely Favorable to 1 = Extremely Unfavorable)

Division [^]	Initial Application	First-Round Interview	Campus Visit
Humanities	4.81	4.90	4.98
Social sciences	4.95	4.86	4.82
Natural sciences	4.88	4.68*	4.80
Overall	4.87	4.84	4.89

[^]Note. Difference of means tests revealed statistically significant differences between the natural sciences and humanities during the first round ($p < .05$).

these themes into five major categories and then coded each response based on these categories:

- *Offers evidence of practice.* Search committees wanted to see how effectively a candidate could instantiate the philosophy of teaching. They sought specific examples of how the applicant linked theory with their actual teaching experiences (110 responses). This was by far the most commonly cited trait of successful statements. For example, a respondent in political science said the following: "Statements are most effective when they include specific and personal examples, experiences, etc. It makes the statement seem more than merely perfunctory." Similarly, a faculty member in psychology valued statements that were "Succinct; included examples of enactment of the philosophy."
- *Is student centered, attuned to differences in student ability, learning styles, or level* (65 responses). For example, a faculty member in biology was looking for "Clear expression of methods of instruction that go beyond the traditional lecture and testing methodology. Active learning and group problem solving appreciation are two valued components."
- *Demonstrates reflectiveness.* Search committees sought evidence that the writer was a thoughtful instructor. They looked for examples about how changes had been made in the classroom, how the instructor had grappled with instructional challenges, and how the applicant outlined his or her future development as a teacher (53 responses). For example, "They showed that the candidate had given much thought to their goals and approaches to teaching" (chemistry); "Indications that the candidate had reflected on his/her past experiences" (English).
- *Conveys valuing of teaching.* Survey respondents appreciated a tone or language that conveyed an enthusiasm for teaching or a vision of the applicant as a teacher. Conversely, they devalued philosophies that conceptualized teaching as a burden, a requirement, or as less of a priority than research (50 responses). For example "Successful statements demonstrated the candidate's enthusiasm for teaching" (chemistry); "Enthusiasm for teaching usually manifests itself as well as indications that it is as serious an undertaking as one's scholarly pursuits" (English).
- *Is well written, clear, readable* (39 responses).

In our analysis of the 347 responses to the question "What makes a teaching statement unsuccessful?" two characteristics were mentioned most fre-

- *Is generic, full of boilerplate language, does not appear to be taken seriously.* By far the most commonly cited complaint was the use of jargon, buzzwords, or "teaching-philosophy speak" that made all statements sound alike and rather generic (134 responses). For example, "Failure to realize that much of what was in the statement was cliché" (history); "Tended to include all of the right 'buzz words' which made me wonder about the sincerity of the statement" (psychology); "Those that were formulaic, that seemed to include as many buzzwords as possible" (English).
- *Provides no evidence of practice.* Faculty wanted some sense that the ideas presented in the statement were actually grounded in the candidate's experience (74 responses). For example, "Most of it sounded highly theoretical and idealistic. I am not sure that the writers had ever tried some of those things with live students in actual classrooms" (history); "Global, vague statements that were not specific enough about exactly how the person would implement a teaching style" (psychology).

The Rubric

Clearly, the teaching statement is now a common part of faculty and graduate student work life. Just as obvious to us from our experience is the fact that academics are not prepared for this type of writing and, as a result, they find it difficult. The majority of our work on teaching statements occurs within the context of our month-long PFF Seminar, where one of the main requirements is the writing of a statement of teaching philosophy.

Unfortunately, during the first three years of the program (2000–2002) we were frequently disappointed with the quality of the statements participants were producing. These statements often sounded generic and theoretical, failing to convey the experiences and disciplinary contexts that emerged in discussions among the very talented graduate students in our program. Problems we were noting echoed issues raised by the faculty in our survey. The situation was particularly disheartening because the seminar already included several mechanisms to help participants develop successful statements, including readings, exercises for getting started, and feedback from peers in the seminar.

We began working on a rubric to make explicit to our PFF students our own perceptions of the strengths characteristic of effective teaching statements and the pitfalls to be avoided. Our assumption was that having a set of criteria would make the writing process more manageable.

Research on rubrics supports our approach. A rubric can be defined as “a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics divide an assignment into its component parts and provide detailed description of what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable levels of performance for each of those parts” (Stevens & Levi, 2005, p. 3). Andrade (1997) outlines four reasons why rubrics are effective, two of which are particularly applicable to our work with teaching statements. First, rubrics are useful for both teaching and assessment: “Rubrics can improve student performance . . . by making teachers’ expectations clear and by showing students how to meet these expectations.” Second, rubrics promote self-regulated learning and help students to develop their own judgment: “When rubrics are used to guide self- and peer-assessment, students become increasingly able to spot and solve problems in their own and one another’s work” (Andrade, 1997). Rubrics have been shown to have positive impacts on high school and undergraduate students’ writing and achievement (Andrade & Du, 2005). One may reasonably expect that students’ uses of rubrics—to determine expectations, plan production, facilitate revision, and guide and prompt reflection (Andrade & Du, 2005)—would be mirrored by graduate students and faculty as they learn to write in this unfamiliar genre.

As mentioned earlier, the rubric we constructed drew on our own experience critiquing hundreds of teaching philosophies as well as the survey of search committee members. Our primary goals when writing it were 1) to provide a concrete structure that prompted and facilitated reflection on the key components of an instructor’s philosophy and the articulation of that philosophy, and 2) to bring to the fore those characteristics that search committees found most meaningful and successful.

As we worked to refine and improve the rubric over different iterations, we also kept in mind those qualities that define successful rubrics. Mullinix (2003) presents a “rubric for rubrics” that we found informative in judging our own. We aimed for a rubric that could be called “exemplary” in all the criteria presented: clarity of criteria and expectations, distinction between levels of achievement, inter-rater reliability, support of metacognition, and ease of use in peer and self-evaluation (see also Popham, 1997, for an excellent discussion of the qualities of effective and ineffective rubrics).

We should note here that ours is not the first rubric created for the evaluation of teaching statements. Schönwetter, Sokal, Friesen, and Taylor (2002) outline a rubric in their paper on the development and evaluation of teaching statements. However, this rubric focuses on the statement as an articulation of instructors’ understanding of the teaching and learning literature, rather than

the areas highlighted by our survey research (e.g., the importance of specific evidence of practice).

The rubric (see Appendix 16.1) provides weak, average, and excellent descriptors of five categories of teaching philosophy characteristics:

1. Goals for student learning
2. Enactment of goals
3. Assessment of goals
4. Creating an inclusive learning environment
5. Structure, rhetoric, and language

The first three categories of the rubric were framed by theories of alignment across instructor goals, methods, and assessments. Alignment is a major focus of our PFF Seminar, and we have found that this approach leads to teaching statements that offer the fullest picture of an instructor’s approach to teaching and learning. This model has the added benefit of prompting instructors to reflect on the degree to which their methods and assessments actually do align with their goals. As one seminar participant wrote,

The rubric has actually gotten me thinking about my teaching and what I concentrate on in the classroom, in addition to developing a teaching philosophy statement. For example, how to reach all students in the class and how evaluation techniques tell me whether students are achieving goals.

Category 4 reflects our center’s commitment to diversity and our belief that teaching that reaches students at the margins of the classroom is good for all students in the classroom. We have found this to be the most neglected component of teaching statements, and we have chosen to highlight this issue in its own category to draw particular attention to it. Descriptors for this category emphasize the integration of inclusive teaching and learning throughout the statement, thereby avoiding the isolated “diversity paragraph,” another common weakness of teaching statements.

The last category (structure, rhetoric, and language) addresses some of the most common complaints about teaching statements. Descriptors for this category stress the elimination of teaching jargon that alienates many readers and weak thematic structures that make reading difficult.

A focus on specificity and disciplinary context is built into all of the categories in the rubric, and rich, illustrative examples are emphasized as well. For example, under “Enactment,” the “Excellent” category includes the following

descriptor: "Specific examples of the methods in use within the disciplinary context are given." A statement "needs work" in this category when "Methods are described but generically, [with] no example of the instructor's use of the methods within the discipline." Under "Structure, rhetoric, and language," excellence includes "Jargon is avoided and teaching terms (e.g., critical thinking) are given specific definitions that apply to the instructor's disciplinary context. Specific, rich examples are used to bolster statements of goals, methods, and assessments."

How Is the Rubric Used?

Because clients' needs differ depending on their rank and experience, as well as their disposition and ability to commit time to writing their teaching statement, the rubric is used as a consulting tool in a variety of different settings.

In *individual consultations* with graduate students and faculty, clients are typically interested in feedback on a teaching statement that they have already started. In this case, we typically ask clients to self-evaluate their own statement using the rubric. The consultant also evaluates the teaching statement before meeting the client, and the resulting consultation focuses on areas where the instructor and consultant agree and disagree and what the instructor needs to do to improve the statement in different categories of the rubric and holistically. Since beginning to use the rubric in this way we have noticed a drop in clients' anxiety about writing the statement and an increase in the quality of the teaching statements, even when our consultation clients were pressed for time (as is often the case).

The teaching philosophy rubric also forms the cornerstone of our 90-minute *Teaching Philosophy Workshop*. This workshop begins with a general introduction to the characteristics of the teaching statement, but then quickly introduces participants to the rubric. Within the first 15 minutes of the workshop, participants use the rubric to evaluate a sample teaching statement and use electronic classroom voting devices to rank the statement on each category of the rubric. We find that this anonymous voting helps workshop participants develop a shared understanding of how to use the rubric while leaving space for individual priorities and judgments as to the qualities of the statement most important to them. Due to the short length of this workshop, participants only have time to begin outlining their own teaching statements, but they have been effectively coached in using the rubric for evaluating their own statements.

The rubric is used most rigorously in our month-long *PFF Seminar*, held for 50 hours over 10 days in May each year. In this intensive workshop, 40–50

advanced graduate students learn about higher education, participate in and reflect on advanced teaching techniques, and write a statement of teaching philosophy and a sample syllabus, both for use in job applications. The seminar's coverage of the teaching statement begins in much the same way as the Teaching Philosophy Workshop. We introduce the characteristics of the teaching statement and the rubric. Participants then use the rubric and electronic voting devices to evaluate sample teaching statements. Thanks to the length of the seminar, participants are able to write and receive feedback from colleagues on multiple drafts of their teaching statements. The rubric guides this feedback, especially during earlier drafts. In all iterations, drafts and feedback are posted online for the benefit of all seminar participants.

Validation

To assess potential differences in the quality of teaching statements before and after the implementation of the rubric, philosophies from two years of the PFF Seminar were chosen for evaluation. A random sample of 20 philosophies was selected from the pool of all 80 statements, stratified by usage of the rubric (pre- and post-implementation) and discipline (see Table 16.5).

TABLE 16.5
Disciplinary Representation of Teaching Statements
in the Study Sample

Disciplinary Grouping	Pre-Rubric (2002)		Post-Rubric (2006)	
	Number of All Statements	Number in Study Sample	Number of All Statements	Number in Study Sample
Science, technology, engineering, and math	16	4	18	4
Social sciences	11	4	9	2
Arts and humanities	4	2	15	4
Totals	31	10	42	10

there are some examples, they are not nearly as rich or well developed, and they are not as firmly grounded in the discipline:

Humor: I do not mean that all learning sessions must require "fun and games." Rather I use humor as a way of setting the tone for a session, or as a device to break the tension and frustration when the going gets rough. My use of humor has evolved over the years, relying less on "jokes" and more on an overall sense of good nature . . .

Core courses: Students from these courses come from a variety of backgrounds and, for the most part, are highly motivated to learn. We require students to quickly learn concepts from a variety of disciplines and this can lead to frustration. . . . At times I have acted as a "translator" between disciplines explaining concepts in plain terms and helping students to draw connections between disciplines. I have found myself needing to explain basic computer data structures to students with humanities backgrounds, or introducing the basic components of a particular sociological theory to computer scientists.

Conclusion

Not surprisingly (for anyone who has used rubrics in their own teaching and assessment), the rubric-based consulting approach results in teaching statements that are more closely aligned with search committees' judgments of quality. Anecdotally, we can also report that authors' anxiety in writing statements is greatly reduced when they can rely on the concrete guidance of the rubric. As with many other instructional development interactions, we have found that a consulting approach focused on reflection and self-discovery is much more effective than just telling instructors what makes for a good statement. The rubric is a useful tool for facilitating this reflection and growth, as it provides an obvious structure for framing and gauging that reflection.

We do not, however, claim that the rubric offers a one-size-fits-all solution. Institutions, disciplines, and individuals differ in how they envision effective teaching and learning and its articulation. Consultants should see the rubric as a flexible tool that they can shape to their institution's or individual client's needs. Likewise, instructors must attain some degree of comfort with the ambiguities of the genre.

Finally, much, if not most, of our work on teaching statements has been with graduate students preparing for the job market. When applied to faculty teaching statements, the rubric-based approach raises some challenging questions for institutions. Should departments agree on a standard for teaching statements? How should statements be evaluated in tenure and promotion decisions? Should all faculty receive training in how to write in this unfamiliar genre? While it is unrealistic to expect that diverse and decentralized institutions such as ours could (or would want to) develop a uniform standard, individual departments might attempt to create their own rubrics for faculty teaching statements. This would provide faculty with a context-specific set of criteria and it would also open up a very significant conversation about the department's pedagogical values.

Appendix 16.1

Rubric for Statements of Teaching Philosophy

Developed by Matt Kaplan, Rosario Carillo,
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Possible Components	Excellent	Needs Work	Weak
Goals for Student Learning: What knowledge, skills, and attitudes are important for student success in your discipline? What are you preparing students for? What are key challenges in the teaching-learning process?	Goals are clearly articulated and specific and go beyond the knowledge level, including skills, attitudes, career goals, etc. Goals are sensitive to the context of the instructor's discipline. They are concise but not exhaustive.	Goals are articulated although they may be too broad or not specific to the discipline. Goals focus on basic knowledge, ignoring skills acquisition and affective change.	Articulation of goals is unfocused, incomplete, or missing.
Enactment of Goals (teaching methods): What teaching methods do you use? How do these methods contribute to your goals for students? Why are these methods appropriate for use in your discipline?	Enactment of goals is specific and thoughtful. Includes details and rationale about teaching methods. The methods are clearly connected to specific goals and are appropriate for those goals. Specific examples of the method in use within the disciplinary context are given.	Description of teaching methods not clearly connected to goals or if connected, not well developed (seems like a list of what is done in the classroom). Methods are described but generically, no example of the instructor's use of the methods within the discipline is communicated.	Enactment of goals is not articulated. If there is an attempt at articulating teaching methods, it is basic and unreflective.

Possible Components	Excellent	Needs Work	Weak
Assessment of Goals (measuring student learning): How do you know your goals for students are being met? What sorts of assessment tools do you use (e.g., tests, papers, portfolios, journals), and why? How do assessments contribute to student learning? How do assessments communicate disciplinary priorities?	Specific examples of assessment tools are clearly described. Assessment tools are aligned with teaching goals and teaching methods. Assessments reinforce the priorities and context of the discipline both in content and type.	Assessments are described, but not in connection to goals and teaching methods. Description is too general, with no reference to the motivation behind the assessments. There is no clear connection between the assessments and the priorities of the discipline.	Assessment of goals is not articulated or mentioned only in passing.
Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment, Addressing One or More of the Following Questions: How do your own and your students' identities (e.g., race, gender, class, background, experience, and levels of privilege) affect the classroom? How do you account for diverse learning styles? How do you integrate diverse perspectives into your teaching?	Portrays a coherent philosophy of inclusive education that is integrated throughout the philosophy. Makes space for diverse ways of knowing and/or learning styles. Discussion of roles is sensitive to historically underrepresented students. Demonstrates awareness of issues of equity within the discipline.	Inclusive teaching is addressed but in a cursory manner or in a way that isolates it from the rest of the philosophy. Author briefly connects identity issues to aspects of his or her teaching.	Issues of inclusion are not addressed or addressed in an awkward manner. There is no connection to teaching practices.

Possible Components	Excellent	Needs Work	Weak
Structure, Rhetoric, and Language: How is the reader engaged? Is the language used appropriate to the discipline? How is the statement thematically structured?	The statement has a guiding structure and/or theme that engages the reader and organizes the goals, methods, and assessments articulated in the statement. Jargon is avoided and teaching terms (e.g., critical thinking) are given specific definitions that apply to the instructor's disciplinary context. Specific, rich examples are used to bolster statements of goals, methods, and assessments. Grammar and spelling are correct.	The statement has a structure and/or theme that is not connected to the ideas actually discussed in the statement, or organizing structure is weak and does not resonate within the disciplinary context. Examples are used but seem generic. May contain some jargon.	No overall structure present. Statement is a collection of disconnected thoughts about teaching. Jargon is used liberally and not supported by specific definitions or examples. Needs much revision.

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Meeting the Challenges of Integrative Learning: The Nexia Concept

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Integrative learning challenges faculty developers to facilitate integrative and connective experiences not only for students, but for faculty as well. For many faculty, curricular requirements impede connective teaching, and the widespread assumption that connectivity must be taught on the course level also limits their ability to enrich students' learning through diverse perspectives and interactions. Nexia is an approach to this problem based on the concept of ad hoc connectivity, or small-scale, focused, short-term connections that allow students from two or more courses to interact around points of interest to both classes. By releasing connective teaching from expensive curricular constraints, the Nexia approach enables faculty and students to share interdisciplinary, integrative learning experiences within existing curricula.

The courses being given at any moment on a campus represent any number of rich potential conversations within and across the disciplines. But since students experience these conversations only as a series of monologues, the conversations become actual only for the minority who can reconstruct them on their own. (Graff, 1992, p. 106)

Coming to Furman University from teaching at a community college and a large research institution, I first encountered the phrase *liberal arts moment* as used by both faculty and students to refer to just such an experience as Graff describes. What struck me about the usage of this phrase was the aura of preciousness surrounding it: For students, it was accompanied by surprise and delight, and for faculty as well, but for the latter these feelings were cast in

**Statements of Teaching Philosophy
Feedback Form**

1. What does this instructor value in the teaching and learning process?
2. What beliefs does this instructor have about student learning?
3. What goals does this instructor have for student learning in the discipline?
4. What metaphor would you use to describe this teacher? What evidence is there to support your choice?
5. What relationship do you think this teacher has to his or her students? How can you tell that?
6. What teaching methods would you expect to find in this instructor's classroom?
7. Would you want to take a class from this teacher? Why or why not?
8. Are there other things you would like to know about this teacher that are not reflected in this statement?
9. What specific changes should this instructor make to improve this statement?

“THE PRIVILEGE OF TEACHING”

ANANYA ROY

Statement of Teaching Philosophy for the Distinguished Teaching Award, 2006

To teach is a great privilege. When I am immersed in the flow of the semester, enthralled by a particularly lively seminar session or by an especially smart set of questions and conversations after lecture, I stop for a moment to read Adrienne Rich:

We move but our words stand
become responsible
for more than we intended
and this is verbal privilege...
Words are found responsible
all you can do is choose them
or choose
to remain silent...
and this is verbal privilege...
and I start to speak again.

And I start to speak again, with an acute sense of my privilege and of how the privilege to teach implies responsibility.

I am especially privileged to teach in what I believe is one of the world's greatest public universities. We have a public mandate for inclusive education and a long history of transformative education. I feel this, in palpable fashion, when I read and grade the student research papers for my large undergraduate classes (I have stubbornly continued to grade the 200+ or 100+ papers each semester). It is CP 115, Fall 2005, and a student writes in his term paper that a great change is in the making, because here at UC Berkeley, in a class such as this, students not only study economic globalization, but also that he, son of a sweatshop worker, the first in his family to get a college education, is present. His mother, her body bent over her sewing machine in Los Angeles, he, in the classroom writing a structural analysis of postfordist production. He is not alone. In a discussion of social movements, I broach the issue with the class. I find a few students waiting for me after the session, each sharing how he is the son of the slum dweller, she too is the daughter of the sweatshop worker. Another student writes in her term paper that a great change is in the making, because here at UC Berkeley, in a class such as this, she learns about enclave urbanism and begins to map the geographies of disadvantage and inequality that shape our cities. She believes that a change is in the making when the daughter of opportunity graduates from Berkeley with the ability to dismantle the gated bastions of wealth and power within which she was raised. This is the privilege, and responsibility, of teaching at Berkeley.

I teach a wide range of subjects and enjoy a variety of teaching formats. But three principles remain central and consistent in all of my teaching. First, I seek to globalize the curriculum of urban studies and planning, educating students about the great cities that lie outside the domain of their EuroAmerican experiences: Calcutta, Cairo, Rio de Janeiro, Manila, Nairobi. I want my students to rethink their pre-conceived atlases: to not just fit these urbanisms into what they already know but rather to craft entirely new paradigms of urban order and function. And more boldly, I want them to call into question the geopolitical hierarchies, such as First World and Third World, through which we have ordered the world. I suggest to them the ways in which “elsewhere” might allow us to interrogate the certainties of “home,” of how a “Third World”

lens on "First World" prosperity might make possible a more acute analysis of poverty, deprivation, and inequality and how it might also make possible a more interesting repertoire of concepts of democracy, citizenship, and social change.

Second, in my courses, I seek to link knowledge to action. Our graduate city planning students train to be professionals but in doing so they aim to be much more than technocrats. I teach my graduate students the value of critique, doubt, and deconstruction, knowing that rather being paralyzed by such epistemologies they will use them to craft spaces of negotiability and terrains of ethical action in the context of professional practice. Similarly, with my undergraduates who are eager to change the world but often eschew status quo institutions, I challenge them to write their research papers as briefing memos addressed to the president of the World Bank, thereby encouraging them to speak to those in power and to engage with powerful institutions.

Third, in allowing students to learn about and rewrite the rules of the game, I am committed to the teaching of theory. I take great delight in the material realities of cities. I am, in many ways, an empiricist. But theory is crucial. Ideas matter. Last week, in my The City class as I started teaching urban theory to over a hundred undergraduates from at least 10 different disciplines, I received an email from a student. She said that the work we were doing reminded her of Audre Lorde's essay, "Poetry is Not a Luxury." She was right for "theory" could stand in for the "poetry" of which Lorde writes: "Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought... Poetry is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before." Theory/ Poetry.

I am a teacher, and I am therefore also a mentor and advisor. I take pride in my graduate students who develop their own identities and voices as teachers. I am delighted as my undergraduates find their way to prestigious jobs, fellowships, and graduate programs. But I also believe that teaching requires something more than individual mentorship, that it requires institution-building. To this end, I have worked with my colleagues in City & Regional Planning to establish a new undergraduate, interdisciplinary major in Urban Studies, a program that I now chair. In 2005, I accepted a compelling offer to serve as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the Division of International & Area Studies. In this capacity, I now oversee various undergraduate majors (e.g. Development Studies, Peace & Conflict Studies) and a graduate M.A. program as well as UC Berkeley's Study Abroad office. There are days now spent in programmatic review, committee meetings, fund-raising, meetings, proposal-writing, resource allocation, more meetings. But when I am in my classroom it all makes sense. For how can I challenge my students to open up new terrains of action and negotiability in powerful institutions if I cannot insist on a more equitable and accessible academy? How can I challenge my students to craft new paradigms of knowledge if I cannot imagine ways to implement and institutionalize new epistemologies, new scholarship, and new traditions of excellence? We have to earn the privilege to teach and I am paying my dues.