

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is based in my years as a learner, facilitator, educator, and community member. I believe in fostering community and connection through learning to ensure each student is met where they are. My goal is to foster a lifelong love of learning in everyone. I teach archaeology and historical ecology because I find it fascinating, and because I believe they are subjects that provide really unique and multidisciplinary approaches to the conservation and restoration of vulnerable ecosystems. I believe it is necessary to consider this in order to protect coastal communities and support Indigenous sovereignty and governance.

The purpose of education is to help people learn, grow, and challenge themselves. It is to provide opportunities, mentorship, guidance, and support through the process of learning. In some cases, it is to prepare learners for specific tasks, experiences, or processes. In all cases, I believe it is important to prioritize the journey and the process of learning. The skills and knowledge learners develop through the process of learning is what will stay with them and support their future learning and success. It prepares them for life outside of the classroom.

I aim to provide a safe, brave, challenging, and supportive environment in which learners can be themselves and reach their full potential. I provide opportunities for learners to stretch their abilities and question their existing knowledge. Learning is an unsettling, uncomfortable process, and this aspect can be celebrated and made positive through community. Through my Instructional and Facilitation training I have learned to hold space and work to help learners feel comfortable and supported through this process.

My teaching practice is reflective, which allows me to adjust to meet the needs of my learners and ensure they feel safe. This approach has been effective in my work as a Teaching Assistant, facilitating tutorials, lectures, workshops, and laboratory sessions, and as a dancing instructor. I review not only my learners but also my own actions, behaviours, and ideas. My learners and I grow through the process of learning and we show evidence of that growth through the hands-on, experiential tasks and projects I assign.

The most important aspects of my approach to teaching are my capacity for compassion, and my excitement and enthusiasm for what I teach. I put my students first, and try my best to ensure I am constantly learning how to be a better educator. My effectiveness is measured by my students, through their success, safety, and wellbeing, as well as their excitement for and engagement with the concepts, material, and topics we are working with.

One of the frameworks I use in lesson and course planning is Universal Design for Learning, or UDL. I build into each course and lesson multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression. I provide opportunities for choice and agency, and encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning. I work to diversify teaching resources, like syllabi and handouts, and make them more accessible. I employ multimedia sources and active learning strategies to engage my learners and provide multiple perspectives. Finally, I solicit feedback from my learners and colleagues to improve my teaching. I believe that, as a teacher, I am a facilitator and guide for learning.