

I believe that education has the power to broaden perspectives, engage thinking, and create opportunities for student success. In my classroom, these goals are achieved by employing overarching tenets that shape the courses and learning environments that I develop. First, I believe learning happens when relationships can be built with students. Second, historic discrimination and continued biases require a critical lens to be embedded throughout teaching. Finally, students should have opportunities to play a role in their learning.

I have taught in a variety of capacities throughout my life and found that relationships remain a constant purpose that helps me to encourage student learning. While content is important, valuing and understanding my students is what makes a difference, as it helps me differentiate learning and be more responsive and compassionate to my students' needs. Moreover, as an educator, I see empathy as a priority; it helps me to understand student circumstances and journeys. It also helps me to find ways to support student success inside and outside of the classroom, taking time to recognize that success can look differently depending on the goals of each individual student. Building trust with students serves as a way to build community within the classroom to promote more open, honest discussions.

In addition to building community and relationship, I utilize a critical lens in my course development. My research has shaped my understanding of historic discrimination, as well as continued disproportionality, that I believe should be acknowledged and counteracted in order to promote equity and inclusion. Anti-racist practices shape the teaching and content within the classroom, using strategies such as representative literature and counternarrative storytelling. Utilizing works from authors with a variety of intersectional identities helps lift voices that are often erased and recognize perspectives that are not commonly explored. I also employ reflection opportunities as a way to challenge my students and myself to reflect on our thoughts and actions and the beliefs that we perpetuate through them. By embedding this critical lens across courses, it helps to influence students' awareness and ability to analyze situations. In particular, when educating future teachers, there is an opportunity for these skills to multiply and positively impact classrooms across the world.

Lastly, I believe that classrooms, in-person or online, should be a place where students come to be engaged in learning. This means that learning should be interactive and dynamic, iteratively changing and shifting to find methods that connect with students. This also requires that students have opportunities to apply their learning in practical ways. Building activities that let students analyze concepts creates an opportunity for them to establish their own belief and utilization of ideas and moves away from rote memorization and regurgitation to critical thinking and actionable application. Additionally, I believe that students should have a role in their learning. This looks differently across courses but includes strategies such as having students help set classroom expectations, allowing flexibility for students to explore topics of interest, and including opportunities for students to exhibit learning in a variety of ways. Tactics such as these help students take ownership of their learning and also have space to exercise creativity.

Together the tenets discussed above shape my teaching philosophy and the outcomes I hope to achieve with my students. Relationship-building with students serves as a way to exercise empathy and promote trust and community. Use of a critical lens designs anti-racist practices as a method for ensuring equity and inclusivity. Finally, engaging learning techniques help students have ownership of learning and options for analyzing their beliefs and exercising their creativity. Coupled with my research and service, these tenets shape a context that helps to achieve the goals of broadening student perspectives, engaging student thinking, and creating opportunities for students to take their learning into the world and succeed.