

# Teaching Philosophy Statement: Tips & Strategies

A workshop from the University of Pittsburgh's  
University Center for Teaching & Learning



## Teaching Philosophy Guidelines and “Dos and Don’ts”

- 1-1.5 page reflective, straightforward, well-organized statement describing teaching philosophy, objectives, and methodologies; system of motivating concepts, values, or principles; basic viewpoint
- Provide a description of strategies and methodologies that flow from your teaching goals and values.
- Provide hard evidence of your teaching and accomplishments—documents and materials—that support your teaching goals and values.
- Avoid technical terms and jargon – it is possible that not everyone reviewing your portfolio is from your discipline.
- Use narrative first-person approach
- Avoid weakening phrases like “I feel” or “I believe”.
- **Portfolio should include description of how philosophy statement is translated into action. How you conduct classes, develop teaching resources, grade performance and advise students. Teaching methodologies, classroom climate, etc.**

## Possible organizational structure of narrative:

1. Start with a hook
2. State WHY you teach, beyond the goal of imparting class information.
3. State HOW you teach, linking this to why you do it. Stating how you teach should give readers a snapshot of your classroom:
  - a. Teaching methodology
  - b. Classroom activities
  - c. Assignments and evaluations
4. End with a strong statement

## Teaching Philosophy Statement checklist:

- Include succinct statement of personal teaching goals and values, supported by specific examples.
- Introductory sentence that captures the readers’ attention
- Up to three main goals you want to accomplish with your teaching
- Concrete examples of the ways you have applied your methods and materials that support your specific goals and values.
- A conclusion that sums things up in a memorable way.
- 1-1.5 pages.