WRITING THE TEACHING STATEMENT

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SESSION OVERVIEW

- Defining the Teaching Statement
- Best Practices
- Samples
Additional information about Butler University may be found at
https://www.butler.edu/.

Butler University is a comprehensive, liberal arts-based institution with over
4,400 students, located in a residential area of Indianapolis.

Candidates should submit the following to CHsearch@butler.edu

- CV
- Statement of teaching philosophy
- Statement of research interests and
- Three (3) letters of recommendation

Consideration will begin on September 15, 2016 and will continue until the position
is filled.

Butler University is committed to enhancing the diversity of the student body and our
faculty and staff. In addition, hiring and other employment-related decisions are
made on the basis of an individual’s qualifications, past experience, overall
performance and other employment-related criteria. It is the policy of the University to
provide equal opportunities for employment and advancement for all individuals
regardless of age, gender, race, religion, color, disability, veteran status, sexual
orientation, national origin, or any other legally-protected category.
TEACHING STATEMENTS

- A rose by any other name:
  - Teaching Statement
  - Teaching Philosophy
  - Statement of Teaching Experience

- Common component of academic job applications

- Disciplines vary in terms of content: always do your research!

- Note that this is just ONE part of an application packet for an academic job.
WHAT IS A TEACHING STATEMENT?

- YOUR perspectives on teaching and learning.
- A description of how you teach.
- Justification for why you teach that way.
PURPOSE OF A TEACHING STATEMENT

- Conveys your teaching values, beliefs, and goals to a broader audience (hiring committee).
- Provides a set of criteria and/or standards to judge the quality of your teaching.
- Provides evidence of your teaching effectiveness.
FORMAT

- Usually 1-3 pages.**
- Typically written as a narrative but you can use subheadings to divide the content.
- Should always address any specific requests by the hiring institution.
- Should always be tailored to the hiring institution.

**Be sure to ask to see an example from a faculty member in your department.
COMPONENTS OF A TEACHING STATEMENT

- Educational purpose and learning goals for students
- Teaching methods you prefer
- Methods for assessing student learning (ideally, this is more than just tests!)
- Assessment of teaching
OTHER POTENTIAL CONTENT

- List of courses you have taught
- Sample course syllabi and/or assignments
- Teaching evaluations
Teaching statements are personal documents; consult others but do not copy someone else’s philosophy. Develop your own!

- Use present tense and first person (usually).
- Write with your audience in mind: the institution, the department, your field.
“How to Write a Teaching Philosophy Statement When You Don’t Have a Lot of Classroom Experience (Or Even if You Do)” by Joseph Provost
WRITING STRATEGIES (PROVOST)

- Identify a Strong Thread
  - Development plan for your teaching
  - Keep your statement student-centered
- Be Fairly Specific
- Include Teaching Laboratories
Emphasize Your Experience
- Avoid laundry lists of teaching assistant duties
- With limited experience, focus on what you want to do, your observations about what works and what doesn’t

Think Like a Scholar
- Explore education journals in your field
- Research your teaching!

Show Your Passion
Avoid generalizations: “Students don’t learn through lecture.” or “I want to connect to students.”

- Don’t simply repeat information found in your CV.
- Conduct research on the institution and the department. This means you will have multiple versions of your teaching statement.
- Consider discussion the connection between your teaching and research.
SAMPLE STATEMENTS

- University of California, San Francisco Office of Career and Professional Development*
  - [https://career.ucsf.edu/grad-students-postdocs/career-planning/academic-jobs/applying/academic-samples](https://career.ucsf.edu/grad-students-postdocs/career-planning/academic-jobs/applying/academic-samples)

- University of Pennsylvania
TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant. At Indiana University I was a teaching assistant for one semester of Freshman Physical Chemistry Laboratory (Chem 131L) and for two semesters of General Chemistry Laboratory (Chem 116L). I was one of only twenty-two Teaching Fellows nominated by students across the whole university for the prestigious Julius Childs Teaching Fellowship for my teaching in Chem 131L. And, for Chem 116L, I received the Indiana University’s Chemistry Department’s Julius Childs Teaching Award.

Guest Lectures. At UCSF I have continued to hone my teaching skills by giving guest lectures in Computation of Biological Molecules (Biophysics 298), Introduction to Pharmacy Informatics (RPS114), and Quantum Mechanics (Chem222). For the Quantum Mechanics course I also developed several homework problems. I also invited lectures to me the opportunity to teach classes ranging in size from 5 to 100 students using different media such as traditional lecture notes, overhead transparencies, and Power Point presentations.

Instructor. I am currently an instructor at UCSF for a laboratory section of Thermodynamics (Chem111). The seminar is designed for students enrolled in the PharmD (Doctor of Pharmacy) degree program at the UCSF School of Pharmacy. I have two teaching assistants under my supervision and the lab section contains 20 graduate level students. Prior to each lab, I give a 30 minute lecture describing the theory and mechanics of the day’s experiment. For the remainder of each class, the TAs and myself provide assistance by guiding the students through the data analysis necessary to answer specific questions about the experiment.

Mentoring. As a postdoctoral fellow at UCSF in the Josip group, I was given the opportunity to advise a visiting research scientist, Dr. Tony Blair, Director of Informatics at Amgen Pharmaceuticals Inc., and a senior level graduate student, Margaret Thatcher. As a graduate student at Indiana University in the Raffarl group, I was given the opportunity to supervise Winston Churchill, a visiting graduate student from Brazil, and help guide John Major, a graduate student in our lab. These mentoring duties have included giving informational lectures on topics of interest related to structure-based drug design, providing one-on-one tutorials for the setup, and analysis of computational experiments, directing software development, and overseeing manuscript layout and revision.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My previous roles as a teaching assistant, instructor, guest lecturer, and mentor have been overwhelmingly positive. These teaching roles, coupled with my undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral experiences in which I was a student have formed my teaching philosophy. In short, my philosophy is to foster an environment that promotes: (1) enthusiasm, (2) life-long learning, (3) connection to the real world, (4) organized study, (5) student and teacher accountability, and (6) confidence building. I have great enthusiasm for science and I look forward to teaching both traditional courses in Chemistry and developing other courses as outlined below. Knowing through experience the profound impact that one good teacher can have toward a student's overall development, I will strive to incorporate my teaching beliefs, principles and interests, into day-to-day routines and my overall teaching plan. I am committed to becoming the best teacher I can be.
RESOURCES


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Your feedback on this session is greatly appreciated!