

## Teaching Philosophy

Every student has the right to learn regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, race, gender, intelligence, and any other factor that might classify an individual as "other." As an educator, I will encourage and aid all my students whenever they come to me for assistance. I believe in the power of learning and knowledge; it is important to support the growth of students as they experience new concepts and ways of seeing the world. It is my responsibility to inspire, teach, learn, and, most important, to listen. Keeping these responsibilities in mind, my syllabus and course plan will be flexible and subject to change depending on the needs of my students. I will never drive them away from learning, but will offer safe opportunities to take risks, both in and out of the classroom, as they explore literature and life.

Literature is important to study, analyze, question, and learn. It reflects the history, politics, culture, and society of an author's lifetime. Literature not only reflects these elements but embodies them. Long after people have grown old and died, literature continues to stand as a testament to the accomplishments of humanity. Literature never lies; thus, it reflects both the positive creativeness and the negative destruction that has categorized centuries of human development.

As a writer, my pieces reflect the hardships of my youth, growing up in a poor, Mexican family, and the hopefulness of my future, furthered by the opportunities an education has afforded me. My views of the world take new shape with the wonder of words. Literacy, literature, composition—these are gifts that every individual should be comfortable utilizing whether they are reading, analyzing, or writing.

As a professor of literature, I will teach my students to critically analyze and question all types of writing. The hierarchy of literatures will be deconstructed and recreated within the minds of my students. Through exploration, we will realize that "great" literature does not have to be traditional literature. Instead, "greatness" is a term *we* will redefine. Through collective collaboration we will make an English literature class that is exciting for both majors and non-majors.

In order to stay current within my field of study, I will devote time to literary research. Though my research will reflect my personal interests, which include postcolonial and feminist literatures, I will use all that I learn to enhance the classes I teach. I am open to new ways of interpreting texts using different critical lenses, such as cultural criticism, and look forward to finding interdisciplinary connections between literature and other fields of study. I will utilize resources in the English department, as well as other departments, in order to gain new teaching methods or areas of focus that might interest my students. I will maintain a healthy balance between my personal interests and teaching through time management techniques.

Literature has always been the guiding light in my life. It is my passion, my first love, and my future career. My proclivity to the subject matter will make me a better teacher and researcher because I believe in the value and power of the written word. Salman Rushdie expresses my personal sentiments best: "Literature is where I go to explore the highest and lowest places in human society and in the human spirit, where I hope to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart." Literature, after all, is an expression of the human spirit—an element that binds all individuals.

Enter my classroom—a world of possibilities—and see the spirit of humanity come alive in the books we read, the discussions we share, and the writings we create. Our different experiences and ways of learning will enhance my literature classes as we explore unique individuals who add color to the kaleidoscope of life.