

Teaching Statement

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Communication is a basic constituent of our existence. Studying it can be transformational. One of the most powerful things we can offer any student is to support them in becoming scholars of their own lives, stepping outside their own immediate experience to think critically and creatively about the patterns we form and the choices we make.

Teaching in Communication is for me a practice of shared transformation and co-creation. Guided by a framework of mutual responsibilities, I work alongside my students to deepen practices, generate insights, and develop skills. Three themes align with this perspective on teaching and learning: an orientation to problems and projects, the embrace of self-direction and genuine inquiry, and engagement with the practical process of construction/co-construction itself.

By orienting the classroom toward problems and projects, I activate my students' existing knowledge and interests. This approach to teaching can be challenging and requires substantial planning for contingencies, but also offers significant rewards for students, who can present their coursework as part of a portfolio of accomplishments, exploring their interests while learning new ideas, and finding connections between their world and the academy. Example artifacts and projects include writing case studies, developing and presenting a social media strategy proposal, writing articles for Wikipedia, and conducting data analysis using both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

I have found that an embrace of self-directed learning and a spirit of genuine inquiry support this problem-centered approach. As a teacher I strive always to be deeply present in the moment, not only actively listening to students and encouraging them in their own listening practices, but also attending to what is going unsaid and whose voice is not being heard. Practices of genuine inquiry extend beyond discussion facilitation. I learn alongside my

students and often complete a version of the same assignments I ask of them: conducting experiments, gathering and analyzing information, and exploring my own projects within the frameworks I offer in the course. This approach challenges me to identify expressive tasks with impact outside the classroom.

Orienting the classroom to construction and co-construction of knowledge emphasizes mutual participation and commitment. Given my own grounding in research, my co-construction of knowledge takes the form of engaging students in the process of building new knowledge: an iterative process of inquiry, exploration, sensemaking, and critical reflection. Building from my past experiences in industry and leadership, I work to connect communication scholarship with high-demand skills and competencies including critical thinking, project management, and applied professional writing.

I believe my task as a teacher is to offer students structure and opportunities to engage with Communication scholarship, not only to support their success in any direction they choose, but also to enrich their perspective on themselves and others. Communication students are scholars reflecting on their own lives and practices. I am deeply fortunate to have the opportunity to offer them guidance in that process.