Aligning Your Teaching Philosophy

This exercise is an extension of the Drafting Your Teaching Philosophy exercise but can be used by teachers who already have a statement of teaching philosophy. This exercise can be performed many times by choosing a different combination of components. The goal here is to develop a stronger alignment between different aspects of your teaching philosophy (e.g. theory, goals, methods, design, evaluation, reflection).

Below is a list of components that would typically be found in a teaching philosophy. Read through them and choose TWO that you would like to focus on for the following exercise.

- **Theoretical framework**: a metaphor or anecdote that is relevant to your subject/discipline and that captures the spirit of successful learning experiences (e.g. teams /coaches, empty vessels, open books, time machines).

- **Goals**: what you hope to achieve by teaching your specific course material; your desired outcomes (for you and your students) for your specific subject.

- **Design/Implementation**: your teaching/learning environment (types of material studied, course delivery method, teaching resources, etc) and the role of you and your students in the learning environment.

- **Assessment/Evaluation**: your general approach to student assessment; your role and your students’ role in assessment; the aim of assessment tasks.

- **Documentation and Reflection**: what you have learned about teaching/learning from educational experiences, feedback and engagements with scholarly literature; how you have changed your methods/goals after critical reflection on teaching and learning.

Essential aspects of a teaching philosophy have been adapted from the following source:

1) From your written statement of teaching philosophy, identify the one sentence that most clearly states your overarching view of teaching and learning.

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2) Now write down a sentence from your statement of teaching philosophy that most clearly sums up your view on each of the two components of a teaching philosophy that you have chosen from the above list.

Component one: ______________________
Response: __________________________________________
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Component Two: ______________________
Response: __________________________________________
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3) Compare your sentence that outlines your beliefs about teaching and learning to your sentences addressing each of the components. Are the ideals inherent in the first sentence evident in the other two sentences? Write down the strongest consistencies, and identify any inconsistencies, between the three sentences.

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4) What can you do to create a stronger alignment between your overarching statement about teaching and learning and other components of your teaching philosophy? For example, do you need to refine your overarching statement (sentence one), or adjust your focus when discussing various components of your teaching philosophy (sentence two and three)? Write down some notes below that will help you in the redrafting of you teaching philosophy.

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