

Teaching Statement and Accomplishments

My primary pedagogical goals are: (i) to adapt and apply philosophy to the daily experiences of students; (ii) to help students practice those philosophical skills that matter to their professional careers; (iii) to teach students how to become independent learners; and (iv) to constantly reflect and improve my teaching skills. Below, I detail how I accomplish these goals in my work:

(i) *Philosophy in the daily experiences of students*: I have experience in teaching students at various levels and from different backgrounds. I taught Introduction to Philosophy at Brazilian high schools, Philosophy of Science at Brazilian Universities and Technological Institutes, and Applied Ethics, Philosophy of Race, Gender, Metaphysics, and Philosophy of Mind at the University of Calgary (Canada). From this experience, I have learned that effective philosophy classes should take into consideration students' socio-cultural background and daily experiences. I adopt the strategy of applying and adapting the course materials to current public debates and issues that impact student lives. For example, when I taught at the secondary level in Brazil, I had small groups evaluate arguments for/against affirmative action policies adopted by the regional government. As a teaching assistant for Introduction to Women Studies in Canada, I had small groups analyzing data about the current lives of Aboriginal women in the country and relating this data to philosophical readings about gender and feminism. As an instructor for Philosophy of Race, I gave students the opportunity to take racism bias tests and discussed how they perceive racism in Canada and at Canadian universities. To enrich the discussion, we contrasted their experiences with data about racism in the US and Brazil. Working with public issues increased the engagement of students with the course material, helped them to consolidate this material, and encouraged them to apply abstract philosophical ideas to their experiences.

(ii) *Developing relevant skills for future careers*: Philosophy offers training in critical thinking, but it also enhances other valuable skills, such as teamwork, public speaking, and leadership. My classes focus on the practice of these skills. For example, as an instructor of Introduction to Philosophy of Science and also Information technology Ethics, I developed a group activity with students throughout the entire semester. I divided students into small groups, and each group was responsible for becoming the 'experts' in one topic of the course. I provided the students with reading suggestions and weekly guidelines for researching and developing a presentation. In the last week of class, students had to conduct a session on their research and to moderate a class discussion about the topic. Students also had to provide self-evaluations and reports on the teamwork, which increased their accountability and leadership. As an instructor for Philosophy of Race, I provided students with a discussion rule: the only person talking in class is the one with a designated object (such as a plastic blowfish) in hand. This person is also in charge of deciding who will talk next. We applied this rule for every discussion period. This rule helped students to become mindful of all the participants in class discussion, how much time they needed to talk, and to the fact that diverse voices should be welcomed in discussions. These activities improved the students' ability to work in groups, as well as to exercise accountability, leadership, discussion facilitation, public speaking, and awareness of diversity in group settings.

(iii) *Becoming independent learners*: One of the central and long-lasting skills for students is the capacity to know how to learn. If students develop this capacity, then they can efficiently learn various contents and skills in the future without the need for a formal instructor. For this reason, my courses and tutorials give students the opportunity to practice different stages and strategies of critical reading, researching, writing, and elaborating constructive feedback to their peers. For example, as an instructor for Introduction to Scientific Methods, I had each student develop a written research project throughout the whole course. For each class, students had to bring a new portion of their research and report their development to the entire class. In each class, students were responsible for giving constructive

feedback on each other's projects, identifying problems and offering potential solutions. As a teaching assistant of Mind, Matter and God (Introduction to Metaphysics and Philosophy of Mind), I separated students into pairs and assigned them the task of researching and explaining to each other different concepts and arguments. I provided guidance in how to critically read key passages and how to construct "conceptual schemes" connecting the contents. Students and I constructed these schemes together in class. I also adopted these pedagogical practices when I was an instructor for Philosophy of Race, where we constructed handouts together. In this course, I supervised students in how to write papers from the narrowing down of a research question, to how to research literature online, how to write the first draft and how to revise this draft. I still work with one of my undergraduate students, acting informally as her supervisor to turn her final paper into a journal and conference submission. These activities encouraged students to become independent researchers, to learn how to give and receive constructive feedback, and how to organize their ideas in schemes that are easy to communicate and memorize. They learned how to conduct rigorous, publishable research. Additionally, students became increasingly engaged in these courses because they noticed their intellectual development along the way.

(iv) *Reflective teaching*: effective teaching requires constant reflection and improvement. For this reason, I adopt three basic principles as an instructor. First, I constantly take part in teaching workshops. At the University of Calgary, I received training in different aspects of teaching, such as Mental Health, Intercultural Communication, Teaching with Technology, Dynamic Learning Environments, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). I also acted as teaching award adjudicators, which made me aware of good teaching practices. Second, during my courses I am constantly re-thinking my pedagogies and adjusting them to the particular group of students I have. For instance, I give an informal, anonymous course evaluation to students halfway through the semester. These evaluations inspired me to make small positive changes in the organization of lectures and activities during the courses of Information Technology Ethics and the Philosophy of Race. I immediately noticed a positive response from the students. Third, throughout my courses I keep a reflective teaching notebook to compile notes on strategies that worked well in class. I summarize these notes at the end of every semester and revisit them when I have to teach again. These notes help me to easily learn and remember mistakes from past courses and keep track of my teaching development. Overall, these three principles have led me to be up-to-date with teaching pedagogies. They also make my classes responsive to students' needs and interests, as well as allow me to keep track of my development as an instructor. Interestingly, as students recognize my efforts in improving the course, they become more engaged and accountable in class.