

As a communication professor, I believe that teaching is social and students, especially those who are first generational, as I am, benefit from learning how to amplify their voices and the power of creating networks for their success. These are imperatives in my classes and are the foundation of my philosophy of teaching:

Provide an Inclusive and Civil Classroom: The overarching mission of my teaching is to convince students that words and civility matter. Words matter to our campus community, students' personal and professional lives, and to all of society. I work to motivate students to develop intellectual tools for reading, speaking, thinking, and writing that will improve their lives and our world. With enthusiasm and civility about the course subject matter, my goal in the classroom is to create an environment of trust and respect. I share my own humble journey so that students know that it is OK not to have wealth or privilege to have success and to find value and joy in education and our work.

Create Understanding for All Learning Styles: My teaching objectives and philosophy are twofold: to teach students to think about themselves and the world in a rhetorical way, and to provide them with a good background in the fundamentals of rhetoric. I employ various teaching tools and methods to bring the course concepts to life in order to appeal to different learning styles. Through video, animated lectures, writing, all forms of media, small group activities, recording in the MIC to share on You Tube, writing and peer review, vibrant, engaged learning is the goal. All students can learn; however, learning takes hard work and dedication, both from the student and the instructor. Through adventures both inside class and out, my aim is to ignite in each student a strong moral compass, self-esteem, a passion for their life's work, and a way to create understanding through the lens of their own story.

Embrace the World as a Classroom: Learning outside of the classroom has been transformative for me and our students. We have gone to: Washington, DC to interview Supreme Court Justices for a book project, and to The Presidential inauguration for a two-week educational program; China, as part of a two-week, two-course experience; Spain and France with honors students; India, as part of a five-week honors experience; and this coming Spring Break, Peru, as part of CAS 352, business communication; and finally, my home. At the end of each semester, all students are invited to my home for "pie with your professor." It has been a wonderful way to connect and celebrate the semester. Education is social, and we live in a global society. I try to bravely role model that we must reach out beyond our comfort zones to learn and to understand the world.

Set up Courses for Student Success: I can still remember one of my professors starting her course with the affirmative phrase: "This course is set up for your success." I say the same thing at the beginning of every semester, and then I make sure it is true by providing students with clear instructions for assignments, grading rubrics, sample assignments, and prompt feedback.

After more than twenty years of full time teaching, I have discovered that teaching is social, and I strive to be a professor who not only teaches well, but encourages students to develop and amplify their voices in and out of the classroom, to create networks for their lifelong success.