

TEACHING ASPIRATIONS

WHAT KIND OF TEACHING DO WE ASPIRE TO AT DU?

In 2015-16 the Office of Teaching and Learning sponsored a faculty learning community of 14 active members across disciplines to tackle the question...*What kind of teaching do we aspire to at DU?* The group engaged in a modified design thinking process to gather evidence from their own experiences, the educational literature, students, rapid prototypes, and interactive feedback sessions with at least 5 faculty groups.

Thirty statements about teaching emerged in four main categories that closely align with the teaching ideals espoused in DU's strategic planning documents. The categories and statements are considered a continually ongoing work-in-progress, meant to inform discussions and support of teaching rather than to define or summarize.

WE ASPIRE TO TEACH IN A WAY THAT IS...

- SIGNIFICANT AND IMPACTFUL
- LEARNING-CENTERED, MEANINGFUL AND ACTIVE
- INCLUSIVE, INVITING AND EMPATHETIC
- REFLECTIVE AND EVIDENCE-BASED

SIGNIFICANT / IMPACTFUL

- We prepare our students to have a positive impact on communities.
- We provide students with experiential learning opportunities to participate in addressing relevant, important, real world problems in their local and global communities.
- We prepare students to work collaboratively and learn in community with others.
- We explicitly support students in developing their ability to think critically.
- We encourage and support students in becoming innovators and knowledge creators, by providing opportunities to explore and create, as well as to learn from failure/mistakes.
- We teach students to be ethical and conduct their work with integrity.
- We articulate and model perspectives, skills, and ways of thinking that are unique to our respective disciplines.
- We support students in developing skills to integrate and apply perspectives across disciplines.
- We inspire and empower students to take responsibility for their learning and become lifelong learners.

LEARNING-CENTERED / MEANINGFUL / ACTIVE

- We create learning experiences that students perceive to be meaningful and relevant to their lives, passions, and goals.
- We engage students in active learning experiences.
- We focus on the mastery of essential understandings, abilities, and perspectives.
- We draw out and build upon students' existing knowledge and experiences.
- We provide timely, relevant, and productive feedback to students to support their learning.
- We are adaptable and responsive in our teaching practice.
- We clearly communicate the outcomes and processes of learning so students know what is expected of them.
- We design learning experiences intentionally, aligning our learning goals with appropriate teaching and assessment methods.

INCLUSIVE / INVITING / EMPATHETIC

- We aim to model and cultivate a culture of trust, empathy and inclusivity.
- We create a supportive learning climate where students are willing to take the risk of expressing themselves and to challenge their own ideas and those of others.
- We encourage students to share, explore and value multiple perspectives.
- We are approachable, and believe in and care about our students' learning.
- We strive to be responsive and flexible to students' individual needs while also holding them all to the same high standards.

REFLECTIVE / EVIDENCE-BASED

- We inspire students to engage in their learning by modeling our own passion and enthusiasm for learning.
- We are reflective practitioners who consistently improve our teaching practice through learning from our students, our peers, our experience, and our own research in service of these aspirations.
- Our teaching practice is based on knowledge of pedagogy, how people learn, and ways of teaching unique to our disciplines.
- We are lifelong learners ourselves, as individuals and in community.