

Philosophy of Teaching

My goal is to teach with passion about the subjects of religious, theological, peace, justice, and conflict transformation studies. I recognize that due to my privileged place in society I have a responsibility to work for the just peace of the city by placing transformative theories and theologies into praxis. Education is not a morally nor a politically neutral endeavor, but one which should be directed toward learning the histories of past in order to rethink/recreate/rewrite the narrative structures of societies which have been used to create oppression and to deny life.

My mission as an educator is to share the possibility of social change and to empower my students. My role as educator is to help students to be social, political and educational critics, who can think analytically and respond socially. A student's motivation to engage course materials is impacted through a variety of means including intrinsic, extrinsic, and social goals but most importantly through feelings of connectedness to the professor. Connectedness can be fostered by the willingness of the professor to make himself or herself vulnerable in learning spaces and through attempts to recognize the gifts of each student inside and outside the classroom.

My role as an educator is to maintain the tension between co-learning with the students and sharing with them my knowledge/experience. Utilizing a variety of teaching techniques including: readings, films, simulations, lectures, small and large group discussions, objective tests, journaling and paper writing, students in my classes are asked to reflect upon and to speak from their personal and religious/theological histories while engaging in conversation with those traditions, histories and subjects to which they have had no previous exposure. When introducing students to new topics the role of the professor is speak from his or her own experiences and knowledge base whenever possible. When it is not possible to speak from personal experiences or knowledge, professors should speak in terms of how the issues impact public life utilizing supplemental materials so as not to speak on behalf of another group or their history.