

## **Introduction to Teaching Statements**

Your teaching statement is a **persuasive essay** designed to persuade your readers that you are an excellent teacher. The teaching statement may be called a statement of teaching philosophy or a statement of teaching interests, and is typically part of your application materials, and part of your promotional review (tenure) package. As with any persuasive essay, the more **concrete examples** you can give to support your statements, the more persuasive it will be.

## **Explore the Philosophy Behind Your Teaching**

*Questions adapted from Mastering the Teaching of Adults, J. Apps, 1991, Kreiger Publishing, Malabar, FL, pp. 27-35.*

- ❖ Create a list in response to the following prompt: "When I teach, I:"
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- ❖ Look at the list you wrote, and consider why you do what you do.
- ❖ What do you hope to accomplish when you teach?
- ❖ Why do your students want to learn?
- ❖ How would you describe your thoughts on learning? Have any teachers, experiences, or resources influenced your thoughts?

## **Critical Moments**

*Exercise adapted from Good Talk About Teaching, by Parker Palmer, 1993, Change, v.25 (6), p. 8-13.*

Think about a course you have taught. What were the "critical moments" when, depending on your response, a learning opportunity either opened or closed for the students. Pick one or two moments that stand out for you and describe your response – for better or for worse. If you think your response was not ideal, what would you do differently if you encountered a similar situation? Would one of these critical moments work as an example in your teaching statement?

## **Examine what you do, or what you will be asked to do**

- ❖ What courses will you teach (from job announcement) or do you teach (for promotional review)?
- ❖ What type of institution is it?
- ❖ What size are the classes?
- ❖ Who are the students?