Notes to Get Started on Your Teaching Philosophy Statement

The questions below are designed to help you reflect on what you think is most important in teaching and learning, and identify what you do about those values and ideas when you teach. **The questions are not intended to be answered ‘in order’ in your Teaching Philosophy statement.** Each of us have our own trajectory in discovering what teaching means and how to engage students effectively. Your Teaching Philosophy statement needs to **tell your own ‘teaching story’**—how you developed your teaching values and ideas, what you do about them in the classroom, what you want to try next.

Use the questions below to get your ideas down on paper, and then revise to tell your story in such a way that your reader can get a flavour of who **you** are as a teacher, and how you came to these ideas.

1. What do you believe “good teaching” is? How would you describe that?

2. What do you believe your students need most in order to learn effectively?

3. How did you come to these beliefs about teaching and learning? (What is the ‘story’ of your thinking about teaching?)

4. Who are your students? What do they struggle with, what assets do they bring with them? (Anything particular about demographics, disciplinary orientations or teaching realities.)

5. How would you describe what you want your students to learn? (How you would like them to be different as a result of your courses?)

6. What have you done to adjust your teaching to attend to the learning needs of students and to achieve the intended learning you describe in #5?

7. Where/how did you learn about the strategies you have used to adjust your teaching?
8. Among the things you have tried, what seemed to work best when you implemented it?
   a. How do you know?
   b. Why do you think it worked?

9. What is next for your teaching; where would you like to develop your skills further? What else do you want to try?
   a. Why do you want to try that?
   b. What will be your first steps toward learning and implement these next steps?