

Sample Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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The strongest belief which I hold with respect to teaching is that, as a professor, one never stops being a teacher. He or she should always be looked upon as a living embodiment of teaching. Teaching is not a 9 to 5 job and one does not punch a clock to start or end the day. The practice of teaching is not confined to the arbitrary walls of a classroom. Rather, it extends into the community in which we live. More often than not what we do outside the lecture theatre is as valuable, if not more valuable, than what we do inside the classroom. I have taken great joy in advising, mentoring and tutoring students in my office, in the hall way or even in a cafeteria. I have also enjoyed coaching students to do well in intercollegiate case and paper writing competition on both the national and international level, investing quality time outside the classroom on weekends and during academic holidays. The success of our students in these competition provides strong attestation of the high quality of the excellent teaching in the programs offered at Memorial. In this coaching role, the students are encouraged to develop to the fullest extent their innate abilities, providing both focus and clarity to many concepts which they have already acquired in the classroom. For the last two years, I have been called upon by the Associate Dean of our faculty to provide orientation seminars to the incoming MBA classes on the case method to demonstrate to students how to use this pedagogic tool to the fullest in the completion of the MBA program.

Teaching never stops. I have delivered seminars to the Certified General Accountants Association in the area of financial management, bankers from the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce to write the Canadian Securities Course, clergy from the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador on time management, Bible Study in my parish, and aspiring deacons on liturgical practices. The effective teacher must have an eclectic and diverse knowledge base to provide both stimulating and challenging lectures while motivating meaningful discussion. The ability to be conversant in different types of knowledge and to integrate it successfully through example, analogy and allegory is an important skill.

Part of the effective and dedicated teacher's time includes also motivating other colleagues to teach effectively. Teaching is a gift to be shared with one's colleagues. I have discharged this role by serving on Memorial's Faculty Development Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to make university professors into better teachers through seminars, guest speakers, a newsletter and workshops for existing and newly hired faculty members. I am also a resource person and mentor to the Graduate Program in Teaching at Memorial wherein the School of Graduate Studies provided a series of seminars to graduate students who are contemplating an academic career and wish to enhance their ability to deliver quality instruction before becoming professors. I have made several presentations to this group over the years. Aside from the formalized Graduate Program in Teaching I have also informally mentored graduate students from my Faculty, four of whom have subsequently joined our Faculty. These colleagues are at various stages of completing doctoral study and all have begun to publish. Currently, I serve on the Senate Committee on Course Evaluations. The mandate of this Committee is not only to administer an equitable questionnaire to measure teaching effectiveness across all academic departments at Memorial, but also to serve to inspire faculty members to put more emphasis and

care on the delivery of their courses. I also serve as Secretary for the committee which annually determines the award-recipients for the President's Award for Distinguished Teaching.

I would say that teaching and research are complementary. As evidence of this interrelationship I have contributed pedagogic pieces to refereed (*Quarterly Review of Finance*) and non-refereed (*Women in Management*) journals, as well as trade publications (*Canadian Treasurer*) to emphasize various topics, such as the effective teaching of the time value of money, the power of writing and competitiveness transcending gender differences. I am also in the midst of producing two pedagogic pieces. The first uses Markov Chains to describe option states while the second is on pedagogic strategies to teach the Greeks (partial derivatives) which arise from the Black-Scholes Option Pricing Model. Moreover, I have been very active in helping students, and in some cases newer colleagues, publish. Students have more than 30 publications under my tutelage largely in trade journals, such as the *Canadian Treasury Management Review* and *Canadian Treasurer*, as well as refereed journals. In other cases students have also produced conference papers and proceedings, including a Best Paper Award.

I believe that education should be a very participatory experience in that students should continually be an active participant in their acquisition of knowledge. One of my own mentors at Dalhousie, the late Dr. Cecil Dipchand, emphasized that students are not in the classroom to be stenographers, but that they should be challenged and contribute extensively to their own process of self-enhancement. Education should be challenging, while at the same time, strive towards leading students to achieve excellence. It cannot be an old and tired process, but should be one on the cutting edge of new knowledge and research. I have been responsible for adding four courses to Memorial's curriculum over the years and also redefined and changed the content and paradigms taught in existing courses. While I was Associate Dean, our Faculty undertook a major review of the offerings in our undergraduate program bringing them more in line with current offerings at other universities, as well as those demanded by an ever changing marketplace for our students. In my current capacity of Chair of the Accreditation Committee for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (formerly known as the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business), our team as part of its mandate conducted a review of our programs to ensure that our courses are of the highest possible calibre and that our methods of course delivery are very strong. Our Faculty has recently achieved AACSB Accreditation making it only the 426th business school worldwide and the eighth in Canada to receive this recognition.

In closing, the last point that I wish to state about my personal views on teaching is that it must be pragmatic and that we cannot think solely inside the box. A successful teaching strategy is tempered by the type of class (lecture vs. seminar), its class size (small vs. large), time of day (morning vs. evening or just before lunch), the nature of the student (part-time vs. full-time) and the nature of the material being covered (qualitative vs. quantitative). I make these distinctions as I firmly believe that there is no such thing as one perfect teaching style that would work in all situations. Overall, we, as educators, must maintain high standards while cultivating minds capable of asking demanding questions and framing creative solutions, but that flexibility, pragmatism and patience are very important attributes in delivering the highest possible quality of instruction.