

Field Experience 1: Teaching Philosophy

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Why become a teacher? We all had that one teacher who had a great impact on our lives. For me, I had about 3, my Secondary 2 math teacher, my Secondary 3-5 history and psychology teacher and my guidance counsellor. As teachers we have a duty to foster an engaging, safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. My goal as a teacher is not only to make sure that each student has the proper knowledge and tools they need to be successful in the future but also to embrace, include and promote growth within each one of them despite their differences. As someone who has a learning disability and who has struggled in school because of this, I am a firm believer that all students should have equal opportunity regardless of their background, learning style or ability or disability and because of that I hope to become that teacher who makes a difference in their students lives.

My personal experience as a student has a significant impact on how I view my role as a future educator and my own personal teaching philosophy. In elementary I struggled a lot academically for the first few years which made me have a negative school experience and outlook. In the 4th grade I was assessed and was diagnosed with dyslexia. The only way that I was able to obtain resources was through a professional assessment. Unfortunately, I was only able to receive these resources as a direct result of said professional assessment. Not every family is financially able to acquire a professional assessment. After that, I was able to get the resources that I needed to succeed academically which followed me throughout high school and so on. Therefore, from my own personal experience my professional identity and teaching philosophy is to advocate for those who need that extra help and resources with or without that professional assessment. As a future educator my goal is to acknowledge when a student is struggling and to support students when they are having a difficult time in the classroom. Moreover, that support can make a huge difference in their lives and in their academic future.

During my experience working at a summer camp, I was able to interact with kids of different age groups, backgrounds and more. Although not in a classroom setting there were a number of campers who were clearly on the spectrum or who had ADHD. It was interesting to see how they are in informal learning environments where they have the chance to interact and communicate with others and participate in activities that they may or may not be interested in. Further showing that different environments can foster different learning styles and engagement. Since it is a summer camp and academic resources are not required, it would have been helpful to have been trained on how to handle certain situations like when a camper or student who are on the spectrum is having a meltdown, since at the camp we had an incident. I find it equally important to have some kind of training in order to appropriately manage a child who is on the spectrum when they are in “that state”. In my field experience, there were no such incidents but I do not think that the school and teachers would be prepared to handle such incidents. As a future teacher I find this kind of training is crucial for all teachers and all schools, private, public, alternative and special needs for the student in need and the teachers involved.

In my opinion, schools should motivate and support students of all means. In my future classrooms I plan to incorporate and accommodate to my students different learning styles and teaching techniques as a part of my personal teaching philosophy. Ensuring that the classroom and that school is a safe, comfortable and positive environment for all students. In the context of a high school history class and CCQ, I plan to connect teaching materials to real world contexts to ensure students' understanding. Also with the help of extra class time for assignments, being available for one-on-one tutoring sessions for students and providing them with the tools required to succeed. Furthermore, I see my role not only as an educator but as an advocate for those students who need that extra support and/or resources as well as an advocate for the school

system and board to ensure that resources are available for those students who need the said resources without the costly assessment done by the professional.

Over the course of my education, future field experiences and teaching opportunities my teaching philosophy will evolve and improve but will always have the same main goals of being an advocate for the students who need support and to help students to redefine their view of education. Giving students an environment where they feel safe and accepted for their “differences” and supporting them so they could succeed in the future. My experience working at a summer camp and my own personal struggles with a learning disability give me an extra level of understanding on what students may be feeling and to what they may be going through. This allows me to relate and build confidence with my students who will in turn show trust and embrace the tools offered to them.