

Statement of Teaching and Mentorship Philosophy

Whether I am lecturing in a large class setting, guiding a student in a one-on-one session, advising students on their research pursuits, providing clinical supervision to a novice therapist, teaching groups of professionals through educational seminars and workshops, or even providing psychoeducation to patients trying to understand the maintaining factors of their disorder for the first time, my overall approach to teaching stays constant: treat the learner as an equal contributor in the knowledge exchange. That is, my intention in any type of teaching is to empower the learner to come to an understanding of the information through his or her own individual process, and to learn how to wield that knowledge in order to meet his or her own goals.

One other important aspect to my teaching philosophy is the ability to give and receive critical feedback. This has been identified as one of my areas of strength by my own past supervisors and professors, and I strive to model this skill when I am in the teacher role. I welcome feedback, with use of formal feedback mechanisms and with regular informal check-ins with my students. When provided with areas in need of improvement or change, I am proactive about demonstrating that this feedback was valued and effectual in resulting in positive change. I also have been able to uphold my own limits by being transparent with students about which changes I can commit to that do not threaten the basic objectives of training I am trying to achieve with them. I believe this is a delicate balance that significant experience in a range of teaching interactions has helped me establish and hone. This philosophy has guided my past and current mentoring relationships, which I have been able to continue to practice here with my dozen full-time post-baccalaureate/undergraduate research assistants, and three doctoral students.

In addition, my previous teaching experiences have allowed me to take on a range of courses in the department during my time here. In the Fall of my first year, I was able to adopt and revamp the required diversity science course for the clinical area doctoral program. This was a great experience, one that allowed me to draw from several similar courses from other top programs around the country to round out the already strong course content and relevant readings. In addition, my extensive training experience with clinical professionals across the country allowed me to add experiential and applied pieces to my second iteration of the course last Fall, which were also integrated into my sole-authored book currently under review with Oxford University Press that I hope can serve as a textbook for this course in the future. I have also taught several rounds of the required research methods course for our clinical area doctoral program, which was already quite established by the previous instructors in my area (Drs. Smith and Crowell), retaining core crucial features while finding my own emphasis based on my experience in the field.

I have been thrilled to expand my teaching repertoire by teaching Abnormal Psychology to undergraduates in my second year, and while the unexpected feature of having to deliver this course in an online format was not without its challenges, it left me reenergized about undergraduate education and facilitated significant creativity within the current constraints. In fact, I have opted to teach this course again this year in a revised, live online format, in response to student feedback about how this format made the course incredibly accessible and interactive. I have also taught an advanced undergraduate contemporary seminar on myths about mental illness in the media. For my teaching efforts, I was honored to receive the Superior Teaching Award from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences in Spring 2022, which has only motivated me further to continue to expand my teaching in the department, to hopefully include courses in cross-cultural psychology, evidence-based psychotherapy approaches, experimental methods, and use of technology in psychology.