

MARCOS FELIPE NAZARETH GALLO

Teaching Statement

Teaching is central to my professional goals and values. As a social neuroscientist focused on outgroup discrimination and the psychology of poverty, I firmly believe that effective teaching is a changing force in the world. My main objectives as a teacher are to help students understand principles, apply them in their work and lives, and become independent, creative thinkers who critique current concepts and develop new ones. As a Brazilian, my pedagogy is heavily influenced by Freire's concept of "dialogue." I strive to build (1) a teaching environment of kindness, (2) the development of students, (3) a personal link to the discipline, and (4) metacognition.

Dialogue occurs when critical thinkers collectively think about an important topic together. It demands equality among participants, including the teacher. It depends on mutual trust, respect, and kindness. Such philosophy requires (1) deliberate attempts to include a variety of perspectives in the material, making uncertainty safe (); (2) diminishing stereotype threat (Steele...); (3) encouraging students by using inclusive language, positive tone, and setting proper ground rules; (4) creating a sense of comradery by learning student's names (Ishiyama and Hartlaub, 2002).

My pedagogy implies transformation. Every participant must have a realization that current knowledge most likely will change. The focus of my teaching is not to deliver grades or to cover a certain amount of material but to foster student development. It requires appropriate planning and backward design. Ultimately, I aim for students to achieve the highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy, develop proper assessments of these skills, and finally craft activities to prepare students to grow towards these goals. Individualized learning experiences are welcome as technology allows (e.g., providing a variety of resources and tailoring activities to build weak skills of each individual).

Personal involvement with the subject is essential for creating dialogue. Activities should help students discover in what ways the topic interests them. This goal requires me to know the students (i.e., professional goals, intellectual interests) and provide authentic, real-world tasks. Students should also learn to combine their knowledge appropriately to create unexpected connections. I aim to fill this need by frequently sharing concept maps that organize concepts and creating reflection activities that ask students to find parallels and contrasts. I always strive to show enthusiasm, helping students find appreciation for my field, even when not directly related to their work.

Students involved in an environment of dialogue need to be independent thinkers. An important aspect of my teaching is helping students recognize how they learn. The process starts by modeling metacognition in examples, then asking students to explain their thought process. It continues as I provide clear rubrics for grading and helpful feedback. Most importantly, I strive to ask effective, thoughtful questions that make students reflect on their knowledge and expose their thought organization.