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Teaching Philosophy Statement

*"The master's tools will never
dismantle the master's house."*

Audre Lorde

At the core of my teaching values lies flexibility and reciprocity. I adapt my courses and my teaching to each context and group of students I encounter. I aim to facilitate learning in any environment and create a safe space for a genuine exchange of ideas. I see learning as an ongoing experience where I bring my knowledge and experience to the table and ask the same from students. My teaching philosophy encourages students to develop, improve and nurture their critical thinking. As Lorde's quote says, we need to discover and sustain new ways to look at reality in order to transform human relationships with compassion, justice and affection. In this spirit, I have organized my teaching philosophy around four main principles: what I teach and why I teach; teaching and learning as an anti-colonial and collaborative practice; teaching must be accompanied by ongoing education and adapted methods; and teaching requires engaged pedagogy.

What do I teach, and why do I teach?

I have been teaching in the humanities field since 2009 in Brazil. My first position was as a Visual Art professor. After that, I started to teach Audiovisual Language, Culture and Media at Communication Courses and specialized in Photography, which was always linked to my primary research area - Gender and Sexuality Studies.

I believe that teaching about culture, image and gender can bring together theory and experiences. In the context of undergrad and graduate students, it is vital that the knowledge connects with reality and lived experience because it brings meaning and purpose to teaching-learning involvement. My position as a professor is that education is a holistic process that should be in a dynamic relationship with suffering, affections and dreams that come from the students and must be integrated by the educator. That is why I chose to teach what I teach, and that is why I chose an anti-colonial framework to develop my courses and research.

Teaching and learning as anti-colonial practice

As a professor coming from Global South, I always believed that situated knowledge is essential to developing belonging and self-esteem among students and educators. Coming to Canada, my vision of an anti-colonial pedagogy evolved. Today I am sure that giving space to the students to present their experiences, practices, and heritage is essential for teaching and has the potential to drive education to be a collaborative, conscious and deliberate process. While I recognize that the university is a colonial space, I believe that we can still decolonize our methods and reduce the power imbalance in the classroom.

This way of sharing the learning process is vital in my classrooms, where I nourish meaningful interactions among my students. My goal is to provide a safe space where people can share and collectively build knowledge while embracing and amplifying wisdom from lived experiences.

Ongoing and Adapted Methods

I use many strategies to keep students engaged. For example, I carefully organize my presentations and ensure that all the references would be available for the students if they want to go deeper into any subject. This care ensures that the learning does not stop when students leave the class. I also provide check-in and check-out in any course, as I used to establish "control points," opening space for the students to share doubts or impressions and how they feel about the sources and subjectivities involved in the content. I work with group dynamics and critical readings to improve their capacity for analysis and their ability to sustain and facilitate positive discussion - which I believe is one of the most important skills that high education can provide today. This methodology also provides resources to adapt courses to the student's needs if that is the case.

I have specialized education and experience in distance teaching. I recently received a Diploma in Education and Technologies from the Federal University of São Carlos (Brazil). I believe technology can improve teaching and learning by giving students more access and opportunities to learn and develop abilities that would not be available in person. On the other hand, remote teaching demands a unique perspective on what is vital in education and how to fill the gap that online interaction sometimes leaves.

The pedagogy of impossible

I believe that my way of teaching should be linked with my life and beliefs. Canada has shown that the educational system can welcome different points of view and lived experiences. I like to think that I can help my students build critical thought and independence by providing perspectives that could change our sense of "being in the world." Thinking about how education can help us as a collective to share this word is a dream that I have been pursuing and achieving by teaching for the last 13 years.

Some professions define us, and others are just jobs. I am a professor and a researcher, and I do not sit in a chair for 6 hours a day accomplishing tasks. I live my profession 24/7, and my life is devoted to promoting knowledge and, most of all, understanding. I did not believe I could continue my career in Brazil, so I decided to come to Canada. I genuinely want to continue my work in a receptive and supportive Institution, and I am sure that my teaching philosophy and lived experience can contribute to enriching any classroom.