

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
TEACHING PEDAGOGY AT AN HSI

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The University of Texas
Rio Grande Valley

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY - HSI

Recommended Length

- Typically, one to two pages.
- Tailor it to the context.
Syllabi statement – a paragraph or two

Are students our audience?

- At an HSI, our students are the audience.

Should a teaching philosophy be included in the syllabus?

- Yes, and your syllabus reflects your teaching philosophy

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AS A CULTURAL RESOURCE

- Drawing from W. E. B. Du Bois, Gloria Anzaldúa, Franz Fanon, Cynthia Dillard, Wanda Pillow, Cindy Cruz, Norma E. Gonzalez, Dolores Delgado Bernal, Maria Lugones – Lived Experiences

“We believe that cultural resources [for faculty of color] include the knowledge, practices, beliefs, norms, and values that are derived from culturally specific lessons within the home space and local communities of people who have been subordinated by dominant society. Cultural resources are often shaped by collective experiences and community memory and passed on from one generation to the next. These resources can be empowering and nurturing while also helping us survive in everyday life by providing strategies and skills to confront and overcome oppressive conditions.”
(Bernal and Villalpando, 2002)

- Our lived experiences inform our teaching philosophies and pedagogical approaches.
- Familial and Historical Relations
- Vulnerabilities
- Lessons

SHOULD A TEACHING PHILOSOPHY BE INCLUDED IN THE SYLLABUS?

UTRGV



Dr./Dra. Silvia Patricia Solís

REFERENCES |

This syllabus is an ongoing compilation of sources. You will find some as footnotes and the rest here.

Art

I first saw the banner art in Annemarie Pérez's [Chicana Feminisms](#) course.

The banner is by the late [Rini Templeton](#). A statement from their website,

“In the spirit of Rini Templeton's life and work, activists serving causes that Rini would have supported are invited to use drawings freely in their leaflets, newsletters, banners and picket signs or for similar non-commercial purposes.”

Teaching Statement

Teaching and learning for me is grounded in mutual respect, collaboration, deep engagement, and the formulation of critical questions from/and of the material we will be covering.

Participation and commitment are essential. I expect the utmost commitment, dedication and respect as we explore dense and at times, heavy concepts that have somehow impacted all of us, including the authors we are learning from. Participation is essential and magical to how we learn.

This course will be demanding in content. It consists of topics, issues, and concepts that are sometimes difficult to process (i.e. gender, patriarchy, misogyny, racism, classism, heterosexism, power, and violence). We will be learning about some of the worst parts of humanity: the ways we systematically choose to hurt each other.

I am here to help you process what you are learning. There may be times when you disagree with the ideas and perspectives of the readings and discussions. Be prepared to engage with and respect these sensitive issues in a well-informed manner.

My teaching approach assumes that every member can and will contribute in multiple ways by bringing her/his lived experience(s) and expertise into the teaching and learning process.

You will have the opportunity to learn with me, your peers, and different community members focusing on what impacts all of us across class, race, sex, gender, and ableness – the environment.

? I respect the professor and this class as a whole to be able to show us the uglier side of society and making us be more vulnerable to the issues as a whole. ✓

I am pleased to hear that Dr. Solis will be helping us process the cruel ways of the world around us. +2 ✓
As someone who is disabled, intersectionality becomes very crucial in that I cannot separate my identity from disability, race, and gender. It can become difficult to process the cruelty of others, even when we may be sharing disability, race, and/or gender. There are many ways in which we choose to hurt one another, and I am eager to learn more about these topics, to learn, but to also spread education and awareness.

? I really appreciate how you want to treat us as equals I think its really fair and effective for a successful course and relationship between students and teachers ✓

It is nice that we are not only learning about our cultures history but also giving our own experiences. +1 ✓

▲ WELCOME

Welcome to Introduction to Environmental Studies.

Thank you for considering this course as part of your educational path.

You can refer to me as Dr., Dra., Professor or Profesora Silvia Patricia Solís.

My pronouns are she/her/ella.

I was born and raised in Matamoros and Brownsville. In 1994, I graduated from Hanna High School and also attended Porter High School. After years of working and attending college, in 2004 I decided to attend full-time. I've received a BA in Anthropology, an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies and a Ph.D. in Social Foundations with a concentration in the Anthropology of Education.

This is my second-year teaching at UTRGV and I have been teaching undergraduates since 2010. Teaching at a different institution is having to relearn all systems and getting to know student needs and aspirations. I am still in that early stage of the process here at UTRGV. Therefore, I ask for your patience with me as I work on my teaching and learning to better serve you and those that come after you.

It is important that you read this entire document. You need to read this syllabus to its entirety so that you do not miss deadlines or get lost in Blackboard, and it is just a smart thing to do as you start a course.

Professors are not all cut from the same cloth so do not expect this course to be like all your other courses. My goal is for you to learn about the environment from different perspectives and to help you understand the situation we are currently in due to how we view and treat our environments.

I, not only ask that you work with me to help you thrive in this course, but that you also work on your well-being. I will provide resources throughout the course where you can learn more about taking care of yourself while attending school, working, and being part of families and communities. Drink water, eat well, get some movement, sleep, take naps, and rest. We must learn to value our time and others. The rest will fall into place.

If at any point you have a question related to the course, you need to seek out help from your peers and/or me. Do not sit on it for too long. I recommend that you create a WhatsApp chat or find one already out there and join to communicate with peers. Communication is important throughout the course.

Finally, and most importantly, I hope you enjoy the course and walk away with an action plan to incorporate environmental studies into your everyday, as well as in your professional aspiration and to understand why it is necessary for you to do so. Thank you and I look forward to collaborating with you.

Last semester I completely disregarded my mental health and well-being. I would pull multiple all-nighters reading chapters and doing quizzes. And it got so bad that I was doing school work every second of everyday and would go to work exhausted. I will definitely learn from that mistake and take much better care of myself +2 ✓

? Thank you for also thinking about the well-being of your students. I am also studying to be an educator and you are really inspiring to me to take care of my students. ✓

Thank you for this. I have had trouble trying to find the balance between school and mental health which led me to do poorly in my classes, so I am glad that you acknowledge our well being too. <3 +2 ✓

I appreciate that you are providing resources so we can take care of ourselves. I do believe that many students along with myself worry more about the work and grades than our well-being. +1 ✓

This little piece is absolutely worth commenting on because it is true. It doesn't matter how everything in our lives may be going because in the end everything will find a way to fall into place. +1 ✓

Gracias
Thank you

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