

LISA R. BROWN, PH.D.
STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I entered the academe to facilitate teaching and learning that is targeted toward preparing adults in higher education as leaders and educators. Students who pursue higher education as a career should develop capacities to engage in complex thinking and problem-solving being responsive to their own lives, but also to that of a dynamically changing inter-connected world. As their professor, I create safe spaces for their open expression and my pedagogical approach is best realized when teaching controversial topics. Although an educational leader within my classroom environment my position as the instructor is that we learn from and with each other in developmental ways. My teaching space is designed to facilitate self-directed learning and reflexive engagement that supports practical learnedness. It is important to me that a multi-directional spirit of reciprocity exists between those who enter the field of higher education praxis and the potential community partners who reside in proximity to our campuses. My scholar-practitioner approach is at the core of my teaching mission. For example, I am a strong advocate for service-learning and research projects conducted with my students. I maintain that during the pursuit of higher education, one must have a sense of responsibility for the public good as an overarching goal. The public good mindset requires a high level of civic and democratic awareness that contributes to social justice consciousness. Ultimately, my students should seek to advocate for a healthy living environment for all people as they challenge political and economic dialogues and policies that exploit material goods and human capital.

Having experienced the world as an international scholar and online professor at the University of Talca in Chile—and being a woman of native Black American and native Indian (Creek) American ancestry—my contextual reality as a member of marginalized groups has given me an expanded epistemological lens for meaning-making and interpreting life. I hold to a constructivist philosophical perspective and bring to the academy (and my scholarship) a rich and unique way of both *knowing* and *being* in the world.

Maintaining a learning approach for students that support participatory and collaborative learning has been an integral part of my being able to bridge cultural divides. In my teaching, I welcome and honor diverse learning styles that are visual, aural, and kinesthetic. My teaching approach is student-centered and holds that all ideas are worthy of consideration and hold value toward critical deconstruction. To facilitate successful synchronous and asynchronous learning communities I encourage reflexivity among my students. This instructional path has led to their gaining increased capacities to anticipate likely reactions from their peers and allows students to frame questions and responses that lead to optimal academic engagement and mutual respect. My pedagogical delivery encourages the use of technology, student portfolios, essays, class presentations based on student research collaborations, roundtable discussions, reflection-in-action exercises, online breakout groups, and arts-based productions (e.g., poetry, music, movies, poster boards, and models). I am excited about the wonderful discoveries yet to unfold in my academic journey as a professor and involved citizen.