TEACHING AND RESEARCH STATEMENTS AND OTHER TIPS FOR LANDING THE FIRST ACADEMIC JOB
OVERVIEW

The Application Package
Teaching Philosophy Statements and Research Statements
- Key components
- Steps in the process
- Examples
- Getting Started

Other Tips
JOB APPLICATIONS

- Cover letter
- CV
- Teaching Philosophy Statement
- Research/Creative Activities Statement
- Recommendation letters
- Sample publications
- Teaching portfolio
- Other requested materials
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

1-2 pages

Clear and concise account of your teaching approach, methods and expertise.

Answer these questions:

- Why do I teach?
- What do I teach?
- How do I teach?
- How do I measure my effectiveness?
“WHY DO I TEACH?”

Teaching is an integral part of my identity as an academic. Because we are scholars inside and outside of the classroom, my research informs my teaching and my teaching informs my research. Early in my career, I developed a passion for helping students to think critically about quantitative methods and child development. This desire grew out of my own experiences first as a student and then as an instructor. My professors’ enthusiasm for teaching was contagious and their uncompromising expectation for hard work was compelling. I also appreciated their constant availability to answer questions and their use of different strategies to engage us in learning. I have carried these qualities to my own classroom.
“WHAT DO I TEACH?”

One technique that has worked well in this regard is the “design an intervention” activity. For example, when I teach my undergraduate students about Hart and Risley’s (2002) study on the impact of family income on children’s language development, I have students evaluate current government initiatives to improve educational outcomes with respect to this finding. This activity leads students to reflect not only on their own early learning experiences, but to think critically about how this finding could be translated into programs aimed at reducing the disparities associated with early economic disadvantage.
Theories and practice coexist with each other in the era of education. It is imperative to teach students “what they are doing” and “why they are doing it”, but it is more important to teach the students “how to do it”. I strongly believe that teaching should be practical and linked to real world situations. By doing so, students will be mentally prepared for the challenges they might face in the future. They will also have a higher degree of self-awareness and understanding of the world and people around them. For example, Food Systems is an umbrella term that covers cost control, layout design, and food production management, etc. Classroom teaching is essential, but field trips and additional hands-on opportunities (i.e. meal service project) are helpful to develop the soft skills such as communication and leadership skills that are important in this field. In addition, I will challenge my students to explore outside of their comfort zones and take advantage of the opportunities available to them to gain new experiences. I will also encourage the students to get involved in voluntary work for the same reasons.
“HOW DO I TEACH?”

My teaching style combines innovation, enthusiasm, and critical analysis. I actively seek out up-to-date media clips, in-class simulations, and thought-provoking activities that challenge students’ thinking with the intent of making the class period engaging and memorable. For example, to challenge students’ common assumptions regarding family, support, and well-being, I show a news clip featuring a family with a young transgender son who likes to wear dresses. Throughout the clip, the students are taking notes on the positive and negative feedback loops between parent-child and siblings, but this news clip also exposes them to diverse family forms that they may encounter in their professional and social lives. These sorts of activities promote reflection, analysis, and great discussions that often seep into hallway discussions after class ends. If I adhere to my teaching goals of facilitating the ability to think, read, write, and speak critically and I am flexible and relatable as an instructor, I believe that I can create a challenging, stimulating, and enjoyable environment for students each semester.
“HOW DO I MEASURE MY EFFECTIVENESS?”

Does my approach to teaching work? I believe there are multiple ways to determine this. First, students’ numerical ratings of my classes have been very positive. These ratings have often been accompanied by comments from the students that expressed how my enthusiasm for the material increased their own interest in the course. Further, and in my view, more importantly, many students believed that their increased interest in the subject resulted in improved performance and learning. Second, I have been honored to receive awards for my teaching at the departmental, college, and university level. Finally, I have had the pleasure of interacting with many of my undergraduate and graduate students after their semester with me has ended. Over the past several years, I have integrated many students into my lab after they expressed interest in working with me in a research setting. Further, I have been happy to transition from being a teacher to being a mentor for many students, who have continued to contact me as they progress through their career for advice about their professional development and future plans.
GETTING STARTED....

With a partner:

- Generate ideas for your teaching philosophy.
  - Why do I teach?
  - What do I teach?
  - How do I teach?
  - How do I measure my effectiveness?

[as one person brainstorms, the other person takes notes]
A research statement is a summary of your research accomplishments, current work, and future direction and potential of your work.

Your research/creative activities statement helps departments learn more about your:

- Academic specialty and interests
- Passion for research/creative scholarship
- Compatibility with departmental/College/University research efforts
- Potential to earn grant money
- Ability to operate as a professional scholar, independent of your advisor
- Writing ability
AREAS TO ADDRESS IN YOUR RESEARCH STATEMENT:

- The **main themes** of your research/scholarship, why they are important (the “so what”).
- How your research/scholarship **contributes to your field**
- **Examples** of research problems/issues you have addressed in your work; convey connections among your projects
- Note any **significant recognition** your research has received - publications, presentations, grants, awards, etc.
- **Funding** history and potential (if relevant)
- Potential research and industrial **collaborations**
- **Future direction(s)** of your research/scholarship
- **Concluding paragraph** that gives a final overall good impression of your research
FORMAT

Your research statement should be brief and well-organized.
• Aim for 1-3 pages.
• Have a brief introduction that sets up the main points in the research statement.
• Have a conclusion that emphasizes the key content of the research statement.

Your research statement should be pleasing to the eye and easy to read.
• Single-spaced or 1.5 spaced
• Concise paragraphs
• Short bulleted lists
• Clear subject headings

No grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors!
One aspect of my programmatic research has been to understand how and why social and behavioral problems develop during early childhood, especially among higher-risk populations where the prevalence of these problems is high and early identification is critical. Evidence suggests that social-emotional and behavioral problems identified as early as preschool often persist into elementary school and beyond and the negative consequences of these early problems can be profound. I have found that factors including higher maternal education and family income, secure parent-child attachment relationships, more family routines, and better child self-regulatory skills are associated with lower levels and more rapid decreases in internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Further, although numerous classroom features are related to children’s behavior, the student-teacher relationship seems to be the single strongest predictor of positive mental health in the classroom context. I have also found evidence of cross-domain associations between indices of social-emotional well-being and children’s academic achievement such that better adjustment is linked with higher reading and mathematics scores (both concurrently and longitudinally). Importantly, links from social skills to achievement appear to be stronger than links from achievement to social skills, suggesting that social skills may lay a critical foundation for learning. As a PI on a grant from that National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, I have continued this line of work by exploring the factors that comprise social competence from early childhood through adolescence.
OVERVIEW, APPROACH, LINK TO FIELD

The broad objective of my research agenda is to contribute to the understanding of how affluent families and communities construct and manage private “family issues,” such as Domestic Violence (DV). To advance this objective, my research centers around two goals: (1) highlighting the role of community culture and expectations surrounding the management of private family issues and (2) exploring the roles of societal institutions, such as the legal and school systems, community professionals (e.g., health care professionals, police officers, mental health providers), and the media in the management of these private family issues.

Methods for Studying Family and Community Level Processes

To achieve these goals, I use qualitative research methods informed by a feminist theoretical framework. Given the lack of theoretical or empirical knowledge on private family issues (e.g., DV) in affluent families, qualitative data collection and analysis are especially well suited for examining this hidden topic. Further, qualitative research emphasizes treating the individuals they study as experts on their own lives and experiences, which is in line with feminist frameworks. My dissertation research seeks to advance existing knowledge by using grounded theory and ethnography in conjunction to examine how affluent families and communities construct and manage their experiences with DV. The use of grounded theory ethnography fosters conceptual and theoretical connections in a specific context; therefore, my research moves beyond superficial descriptions of a setting towards a theoretical understanding. While many of the characteristics of affluent families are understandably viewed as advantages in our society, my research examines ways in which privilege, social class, and status are potentially complicated for affluent families, especially affluent women who experience DV. In keeping with feminist research, my research agenda values feminist praxis that bridges research, advocacy, and the families impacted by DV. Through participation in community and professional seminars and workshops as well as dispersing information about my researching findings to members of the community, I am able to give back to those who have helped me with my research.
I attempt to incorporate emerging technologies to find solutions by looking at various views of collaboration with experts of different backgrounds to solve existing problems in our lives. I am researching with the Department of Material Sciences and Engineering and the Department of Physics on developing flexible fabric based sensors using nanotechnology and smart materials to monitor vital signals for healthcare and well-being, and a study on developing flexible organic light-emitting diode (OLED) for textiles. I introduce recent research about new technologies and materials and allow students to creatively apply these findings to the fashion discipline in a research-based design process. For example, lighting materials were analyzed as design elements for an aesthetic class, accent dress details in a design studio class, and visibility-aids for a functional clothing design class. For a creative endeavor, I create designs based on research and experiments while continual creating and presenting designs at invited and juried exhibitions locally and globally.
FUTURE RESEARCH PLANS

Over the next several years, I have plans for three major research areas. First, I will keep updating emerging technologies, techniques, and materials. I will search for creative applications that can lead to successful grant and funding supports and publish a journal with the synergies of educative and creative scholarship activities. From the efforts of collaborative research on development of sensors and OLEDs, the following is expected: publishing two journals of each discipline and transdiscipline; proceedings and presentations at international conferences of IEEE-International Symposium of Wearable Computing (ISWC); proposal submissions to Intramural Grants Program (IGP), National Science Foundation (NSF), and Korea Institute of Industrial Technology (KITECH); extension to the collaborative works to educative curricula; and involvement to invited and juried exhibitions, design competitions, and fashion shows. Second, after I involved the Global Partners Program Grant funded by the Office of International Programs at Auburn University, serious discussions will begin on collaboration with the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Education with the aspects of functional clothing development research. Last, for future research, one of the major future studies will focus on transformable design for sustainability applying emerging technologies. I will attempt to develop proposals for securing intramural and extramural funds from the inter- and transdisciplinary research efforts on developing smart materials.
FUTURE RESEARCH PLANS

My future plans involve continuing my work toward the two previously stated goals through the use of innovative and collaborative research methods. Ultimately, I will disseminate my research findings through a variety of avenues, including academic publications, a book geared towards a professional audience, and workshops and seminars targeting non-academics.

My long-term research agenda involves an expansion of my central substantive area to more thoroughly understand the role of community culture and expectations as well as the societal institutions that potentially play a role in minimizing and silencing private family issues, such as DV in affluent families. To this end, I plan to collaborate with quantitative and qualitative researchers within sociology and family studies but also in other fields, such as criminal justice and educational policy. In keeping with my past and current research experiences, I will continue to incorporate undergraduate and graduate students in my research projects. I believe that this future research will successfully attract external government and private funding due to the creation of strong collaborative research projects with a variety of researchers, students, and community organizations as well as innovative research designs aimed at advancing theory and practical application.
GETTING STARTED...

Jot down some ideas for content:

• Main themes of your research/scholarship.
• Examples of research problems/issues you have addressed
• Research Goals next 2-3 years
OTHER TIPS FOR LANDING AN ACADEMIC JOB

- Get teaching and research/creative scholarship experience while in grad school
- Network and connect with multiple mentors [work closely with at least 3 professors who can write you strong recommendation letters]
- Take advantage of special training when appropriate
- Publish
- Get multiple people to review and provide feedback on your CV, Cover letter, Teaching Philosophy Statement, Research Statement, Teaching Portfolio...
- Attend and Present at Professional Conferences
- Work with teams
- Get exposure to grantsmanship
- Practice your job talk (prepare for your interview)