

Santosh Khadka

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

I have evolved as a teacher over time, and so has my teaching philosophy. In my earlier years as a teacher, I was a fan of collaborative and critical pedagogies in the classroom in conjunction with other relevant activities, but my opening beliefs have been re-situated by growing need to account for new media (digital/multimodal) and global forces. I loved collaborative approach because of my belief that learning is collaborative and that students learn more from interaction and conversation among themselves than from lecture. Another parallel principle I held was that knowledge is negotiated “shared belief,” and that learning and knowledge obtained through collaborative work and research can be enduring and meaningful. Therefore, I often encouraged small-group discussion, peer-review workshop, and collaborative projects in and out of the class. My assumption then was that such pedagogical activities can act as springboards for discovery, reinforcement and feedback, and can also facilitate conversation among multiple views, including the views of minoritized groups, making the range of knowledge broad and writing and research experience rich. In conjunction with collaborative pedagogy, I also preferred to use critical pedagogy in the classroom with the conviction that it is the teacher’s responsibility to create and maintain informed and thinking student body capable of critiquing and resisting, if need be, anything taught to or imposed on them. My choice was guided by my position that, as a teacher, I should alert students of possible manipulation and indoctrination by some set of dominant ideologies, and try to make them the informed and critical readers and writers. That being a broader objective, in my class, students examined, debated, and contested the ideologies causing disparities and inequalities among the classes, races and groups in the society. Thus, in an attempt to “empower citizens (students) to disrupt dominant ideology and to revitalize democratic practice”, I relied on critical, literary, linguistic and cultural theories, theories of logic, and critical thinking tools to inculcate critical and analytical perspectives in students. As part of the assignment and classroom activity, my students learned to analyze and critique a variety of texts, such as the music videos, commercial ads, newspaper articles, books, film clips, and so on.

But now getting through years of teaching in a variety of settings in the US, and abroad, my teaching philosophy has evolved and taken a slightly different mode. I still use collaborative and critical pedagogies, but in combination with other sets of pedagogies and practices; they now surface into my teaching as critical and collaborative literacies, along side other kinds of literacies, such as multimodal, digital and intercultural. This shift in my teaching philosophy is emblematic of my changed perspective on the end of education, literacy or teaching itself. I now firmly believe that our students need to learn a range of literacy skills—both traditional and new— in order to wrestle with the academic, communicative/composition and interactive challenges of the 21st century world. Therefore, our students need to be multiliterate now because “[G]lobalization provides a contextual necessity for us to become multiliterate” (Bull and Anstey). In other words, all of our students (and ourselves included) should have the ability to communicate using an array of visual, audio, video, web, and textual resources in multiple old and new media including print, digital and emerging media technologies as well as interact using multiple Englishes in English speaking context and multiple writing/communication styles across

cultures and disciplines. In addition, in this post-truth world, all of us should have the ability to critically evaluate information and resources, and use them ethically across contexts. In short, we all should gain or have a rich repertoire of creative, critical, reflective and rhetorical skills in order to successfully navigate the complexities of this interwoven world.

In line with my *current* teaching philosophy, I have developed multiple graduate and undergraduate courses: ENGL 654: Digital Publishing (CSUN 2021); ENGL 525: Introduction to Writing Studies (CSUN 2021); ENGL 315: Digital Writing (CSUN 2015); ENGL 654: Literacy, Diversity, and Technology (CSUN 2014); WRT 205: Literacies in Motion (SU 2012); WRT 307: Professional Writing (SU 2011). I now integrate digital, multimodal, and intercultural components in the form of course materials and assignments, where appropriate, in all of my courses. My upper division and graduate courses are either fully digital or heavily digital both in terms of content choices and project assignments, but my lower division courses such as first-year writing, and business communication courses have only one or two multimodal/digital projects in the mix because I also dedicate space for traditional essayistic and rhetorical literacies on these GE courses. For instance, some of my projects for “ENGL 654: Digital Publishing” include magazine design and production, digital archive, podcasting, and video narrative. Similarly, assignments for my “ENGL 315: Digital Writing” include audio movie review, documentary production, and feature-length wikipedia article, among others. But my “ENGL 205: Business Communication,” “WRT 307: Professional Writing,” and first-year writing courses include projects like video production, web design, usability testing, and blogging in the mix of all other traditional projects like proposal and report writing, analysis essay, argument essay, and final portfolio.

Thus, my *current* teaching philosophy reflects my belief that we cannot and should not divorce a writing class from its local institutional, disciplinary and larger global contexts. As a space populated by diverse student bodies and situated within an academic institution guided by its own commitments—local and global, a writing class should be guided by its internal richness (cultural, linguistic and literacy traditions of students), genre and disciplinary conventions (academic writing, standard English/Englishes etc.)Jo, and larger global forces and challenges, including changed workplace dynamics and advancement in communication and composition technologies.