

Dr. Khristeena Lute

## Teaching Philosophy

When both student and instructor engage in conversation in the classroom, we connect as individuals, writers, and members of the same academic community. As the instructor, I am fully knowledgeable in the compositional and literary content of my area and ready to hand over the reins to my students, teaching them how to take responsibility for their own learning. I approach my courses with an understanding that in order to process our reading, we must write, and in order to process our writing, we must read.

Whether teaching composition or literature, I work together with my students to demystify academia. Students regularly take part in classroom workshops, where reading and writing instruction converge. Together, we explore the value and importance of their own writing and studies, and this relationship provides the means of mentoring my students both in and beyond the classroom walls. I am fascinated with explorations of the world through literature and writing, both as an individual and as part of a greater discourse community, and this interest transfers to my students as I guide them to a deeper understanding of their writing, themselves as individuals, and the world around them.

My curriculum and course planning are tailored to reflect department standards and guidelines but at the same time reflect my own voice and personality in a way that benefits students and student learning. Universal Design techniques, such as creating graphic organizers, uploading teaching modules to a course website, and utilizing educational tools and software, help me to support various styles of student learning in and out of my classroom. I start the semester with a discussion of our goals for the course and how we can best reach them and then model goal setting, teach research techniques, and utilize campus resources in order to teach academic survival skills. At the end of the semester, students have taken responsibility for their own learning and show growth not just in their composition abilities, but also in their academic independence.

My classroom is a place of trust and safety in order to ensure that my students and I feel comfortable enough to ask questions and put forth our own ideas. I feel that students should be comfortable with the environment and the instructor, and our course civility statement establishes a fair and equitable working environment for everyone. My students feel secure in my classroom, and I take pride in creating a stable, safe, and productive learning environment.

I prefer a variety of methods in assessing my student's progress throughout the course. Writing to Learn activities, which are informal writing exercises, provide quick feedback to my students in terms of whether they are satisfactorily meeting course expectations and to me in terms of student understanding. These assignments are graded for content only in order to ease student anxiety concerning writing mechanics. Learning to Write projects, which are formal assignments, tend to make up the majority of the percentage of grades in my classroom. I prefer using a rubric grading system that includes detailed sections to aid students in revision.

I not only focus on creating a stronger essay but on creating a stronger writer and academic. By sharing various writing techniques that cater to each student's needs, I assist the student in reaching his or her potential as a writer. My courses are gateways to a better understanding of course material for the students and prepare them for not only the next essay or exam in class, but for the rest of their academic careers.