

The Dos and Don'ts of Teaching Statements

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What you may think this is about:

- your conception of teaching and learning
- a description of how you teach
- justification for why you teach that way
- reflection about your teaching
- your goals as an instructor and your corresponding actions in the classroom
- an opportunity to tie together the other sections of your portfolio

No.

Unless you have extensive teaching experience (which you may), you probably don't have a philosophy. Don't pretend to. It is rather off-putting. Additionally, while R1 institutions want good teachers, they don't expect you to have extensive teaching experience and research. If you have...

(Disclaimer: If you are applying to a teaching institution, then you definitely need to address these items.)

- To find out what you would teach in the department should you be hired.
- This is becoming a serious concern as departments are hiring people who don't necessarily have degrees in that field.
- If you fall in this category, answer this question, directly and succinctly.
- If you don't fall in this category, answer this question anyway – because everyone else is!

- Put your name on it – your name should appear on every page of your application
- Refer to the department specifically; ideally, refer to specific courses in the department – show you have done your research
- In addition to saying where you would fit in with the current courses, mention one additional course you would want to develop and how it fits in with the curriculum; you must define this course – what it would cover, why students would be interested in it, etc.

- Teaching isn't just about coursework
- Teaching is also about mentoring undergraduates, specifically through undergraduate research
- If you have any experience working with undergrads (or mentoring graduate students, if you are a post-doc), this is the place to bring it up – and mention if you plan to work with undergrads in your lab (=NSF funding)

- Keep it under 1 page
 - no one is going to read more than 1 page
- Put it at the end of the packet
- Delineate it from the research statement with a heading
- Make sure your name is on it