# A Framework for Creating and Using Teaching Philosophy Statements to Guide Reflective and Inclusive Instruction

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## Abstract

A teaching philosophy statement (TPS) is a brief, deeply personal narrative that gives insight into an educator's perspective on the teaching enterprise. A TPS is typically comprised of a reflection on the educator's values and beliefs, a description of what happens during the learning process, and statements about how teachers and learners ideally interact. Use of a TPS clarifies the bridge between theory/ philosophy and practice which strengthens education as an interactive phenomenon and in so doing evokes an ethical purpose for the teaching-learning dynamic. This article describes the theoretical underpinnings of, and process for, an innovative framework occupational therapy educators can use to construct, implement, and evaluate a TPS based upon the beliefs, actions, and anticipated outcomes of their teaching. Creating and consistently using a TPS is an essential faculty development activity, one that nudges educators to be more deeply reflective and capable of building inclusive learning environments where every student is engaged and feels welcome as part of a community of learners.

## Keywords

Philosophy, faculty development, reflective teaching, inclusive education

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## ABSTRACT

A teaching philosophy statement (TPS) is a brief, deeply personal narrative that gives insight into an educator's perspective on the teaching enterprise. A TPS is typically comprised of a reflection on the educator's values and beliefs, a description of what happens during the learning process, and statements about how teachers and learners ideally interact. Use of a TPS clarifies the bridge between theory/philosophy and practice which strengthens education as an interactive phenomenon and in so doing evokes an ethical purpose for the teaching-learning dynamic. This article describes the theoretical underpinnings of, and process for, an innovative framework occupational therapy educators can use to construct, implement, and evaluate a TPS based upon the beliefs, actions, and anticipated outcomes of their teaching. Creating and consistently using a TPS is an essential faculty development activity, one that nudges educators to be more deeply reflective and capable of building inclusive learning environments where every student is engaged and feels welcome as part of a community of learners.

Teaching is an intricate activity, one that requires obtaining and continuously developing a wide variety of skills and attitudes, including instructional methods and learner engagement, motivation, and assessment. One's teaching paradigm can be outlined and reflected upon through the development and use of a teaching philosophy statement (TPS). A TPS is a brief, deeply personal narrative that gives insight into an educator's beliefs, intentions, and actions (Pratt, 1998) within teaching-learning spaces. A TPS is typically comprised of a reflection on the educator's values and beliefs, a description of what happens during the learning process, and statements about how teachers and learners ideally interact (Felicilda-Reynaldo & Utley, 2015; Laundon et al., 2020). While many questions can be addressed, Goodyear and Allchin (1998)

suggested that the big question answered by a TPS is "why do I teach"? As paradigms of educational practice, a TPS serves to help educators better understand why and how they teach and the goals and values which underpin instructional practice; they nudge them to go beyond what they know and question their assumptions about teaching.

From a purely pragmatic perspective, TPSs are increasingly common in academia as tools for faculty development, promotion and tenure, as part of the teaching portfolio, and also as a required element of academic job applications (Meizlish & Kaplan, 2008; Schonwetter et al., 2006). A TPS, however, serves a much more important purpose in developing teacher identity, career trajectory, and pedagogical skills in a contemporary educational landscape increasingly impacted by institutional policies, political ideologies, and a focus on student outcomes and satisfaction. A TPS is versatile in use and can positively impact educators and learners at multiple levels in educational systems and processes. Foremost, a TPS helps one to more clearly conceptualize the motivators, purpose, process, and outcomes of teaching (Hollins, 2011). They make explicit the reasons why one pursues a teaching path, helps form connections with students and colleagues, and "makes the invisible visible, promotes ownership of ideas, can increase confidence, and invites reflection" (Caukin & Brinthaupt, 2017, p. 3). So important are both the process and content aspects that Bonner et al. (2020) considered writing a TPS as one of the five key competencies for early career faculty. A TPS can play a central role in promoting the practice of teaching as a scholarly activity that is "purposeful, reflective, documented, and shared in an evaluative forum" (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998, p. 103). Education has recently seen a continuing shift to a focus on teaching skills and the 'learnification' of education (Biesta, 2009), one that minimizes the larger purposes of education in a democratic society. A TPS can help solidify the bridge between theory/philosophy and practice (Pike et al., 1997) which can strengthen education as an interactive phenomenon where "*what* pupils and students learn and what they learn it *for* – that it matters, for example, what kind of citizens they are supposed to become and what kind of democracy this is supposed to bring about" (Biesta, 2009, p. 39). Teaching that is not underpinned by philosophy or theory becomes "stripped of its critical and moral purpose" (Rowland, 1998, p.134) and "intellectually hollow" (Grasha, 2002, p. 92). Knowing instructional methods and generalized learning theories is not enough; educators need to deeply reflect on and examine their beliefs and attitudes about teaching so that both they and students "can expand, hold up a critical light, and adjust their own ideological lens in ways that make the classroom more inclusive, exploratory, and transformative" (Bartolome, 2004, p. 117).

In addition to the value TPS offer for educators in deeper examination of themselves as educators and in highlighting strengths or gaps in skills, evidence is clear that learners also derive significant benefits. Broadly, TPS help form the foundation of the varied classroom interactions educators have with their learners. Educators' beliefs about the teaching-learning dynamic directly impact instructional practices and positively impact student outcomes (Mujis & Reynolds, 2002; Wall, 2016). One's philosophy of teaching

also influences which instructional strategies are used, how the learning environment is constructed, and expectations of students, all of which are correlated to learner performance (Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Rosenthal, 1994).

Existing models for constructing a TPS tend to concentrate on method or content (Chism, 1998; Schonwetter et al., 2002; Yeom et al., 2018). For example, Yeom et al. (2018) offered a linear process model, while both Chism (1998) and Schonwetter et al. (2002) suggested content-oriented frameworks. While not focused specifically on process or content, Beatty et al. (2009) and Beatty (2009) offered two valuable faculty development activities to help prepare a mindset for writing a TPS. Although there is an expansive volume of interdisciplinary literature on defining a TPS, what to include, and how to use them, little exists which proposes underlying theoretical foundations. Additionally, and despite clear evidence of the value of a TPS for both educators and learners, there is no existing occupational therapy education research or literature pertaining to use of a TPS by the profession's educators to enhance their teaching. This article therefore fills a gap in occupational therapy educational practice by describing a framework that guides the development *and* use of a TPS based upon a constellation of related unifying theories. This article first describes the foundational theoretical and philosophical concepts which inform the framework, and then subsequently outlines the major elements and structure, content, process, and finally, suggestions for implementation.

## Foundational Theoretical Concepts

This section describes numerous foundational theories and philosophies that provide support for the framework and the process and content of a TPS in general. These should not be confused with the underlying theories and philosophies informing one's personal TPS, which will obviously vary significantly between individual educators. It is also relevant here to note the relative lack of existing research or literature on the importance and utility of theory and philosophy in occupational therapy education (Heeb et al., 2020; Taff, 2021). That said, occupational therapy has long sought out and integrated theories from other disciplines, and the theoretical approaches referenced in this paper are congruent with the ethos and goals of the profession. Although the sociocultural theory of cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978) and situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) are embedded throughout, this section is framed according to the traditionally acknowledged major divisions of philosophy: ontology, epistemology, and axiology (Pritchard, 2015). The focus on ontology, epistemology, and axiology is intentional, as these underpinnings embed philosophical perspectives into the content of one's TPS and promote a mindset of *philosophizing* (Taff et al., 2021) among educators.

### *Ontology*

Ontology is the branch of philosophy that studies reality, existence, and relationships between people and objects (Craig, 2020). The reality or ontology of education involves what it 'is' and how it 'works'. Ontology provides meaning and motivation and holds worldviews together (Thayer-Bacon, 2017). Education plays an important role in helping students perceive the implicit, to "notice ontological threads we use to make sense of

our lives" (Thayer-Bacon, 2017, p. 6). Topics addressed by an ontology of education include how teachers and learners view the world, personal identities, goals, values, the learning environment, and the relationships between those involved in the teaching-learning dynamic. The work of educational philosopher Gert Biesta offered a perspective that informs the ontological aspects of the framework.

Biesta (2009) has written extensively on three distinct purposes of education: qualification, socialization, and subjectification. Qualification- the most common focus and evident in both curricula and instructional practices- involves gaining knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to a given discipline. Socialization is often found in implicit or hidden curricula and imbues learners with the accepted lexicon, behaviors, and culture of a profession or discipline. The third purpose of education, subjectification, is rarely addressed in educational programs. Subjectification is related to existentialist concepts such as authenticity and "arouses a desire for wanting to try to live one's life in the world, without thinking oneself as the center of the world" (Biesta, 2020, p. 98). Subjectification involves the awareness of oneself as capable in ways unique from the existing context, "as being different from any identified part of the community" (Ranciere, 1995, p. 37). A common thread in this framework relates to how to enact subjectification in the teaching-learning dynamic, and nudges teachers to ask questions and design instruction that encourages learners to engage in exercises that build their capacity to frame education as something that contextualizes knowledge into their being and becoming (Wilcock, 1998) as ethical citizens who have a responsibility to think beyond themselves.

Another element of the ontology of teaching relates to how classrooms are intentionally constructed to facilitate development of democratic spaces where education is prioritized over learning that is rote, formulaic, and lacking in meaning. Biesta (2009) has critiqued what he terms the 'learnification' of education, which prioritizes individualized processes unconcerned with purpose and relationships. In contrast to a focus on learning where the teacher is merely a facilitator, the experience of 'good education' centers on the nexus of *content*, *purpose*, and *relationships* (Biesta, 2012). The relationship between teacher and learner, and how that is purposely created and nurtured, is at the core of any ontology of teaching. In a learning-centered paradigm, learners actively construct knowledge and 'learn from' the teacher Biesta (2014). In contrast, an education-based paradigm focuses on 'being taught by', which requires a certain type of communication between teacher and learner. Communication is the difference maker in making plain the contrast between the experience of *learning from someone* and *being taught by someone*. Communication in this sense is much different than mere transmission of information from one person to another. Echoing Dewey, Biesta framed communication as "a process of sharing experience till it becomes a common possession" (Dewey, 1916, p. 12). The defining of education as participatory sharing in experiences that change ideas and/or emotions has fundamental implications for how teachers view their role, students' roles as co-learners, and how the learning environment is constructed and perceived. Biesta (2014) argued for teachers who are thoroughly engaged in a reciprocal, participatory process where "teachers are not disposable and dispensable resources for learning, but where they have something to

give, where they do not shy away from difficult questions and inconvenient truths, and where they work actively and consistently on the distinction between what is *desired* and what is *desirable*" (p.57). From this perspective, the realities of both teachers and students and the relationship between these two agents of education must be examined with the same, or greater, zest than the mechanics of strategies for instruction and assessment.

### *Epistemology*

The study of knowledge, or epistemology, is fundamental to educational endeavors. Thayer-Bacon (2013) described epistemologies as "theories about how it is we know what we know" (p.18). Epistemology seeks to answer questions such as 'what is knowledge?', 'what can be known?', and 'how is knowledge best obtained?' (Craig, 2020). Of the three divisions of philosophy, epistemology is the most commonly employed in education and is congruent to Biesta's (2009) conception of qualification. The dominant epistemologies of education tend towards the pragmatic, stressing performance that can be observed, measured, and evaluated according to standards often set outside of local learning contexts. In teaching and learning spaces, epistemological questions addressed include what curriculum, skills, and attitudes are essential in the contemporary world, is knowledge unidisciplinary or transdisciplinary, what instructional strategies best facilitate learning, how can students learn about themselves as learners and enhance their capacity (metacognitive skills, critical thinking, emotional intelligence), and how is learning best assessed. Foundational theories and philosophies contributing to the epistemological elements of this framework include social reconstructionism, particularly the work of Theodore Brameld.

Social reconstructionism, a precursor to critical pedagogy, held that socialization was fundamental to being human, and that "we should use education to socialize our young in ways calculated to expand and reinforce democratic culture" (Stanley, 1992, p. 8). In the three decades between the 1930's and 1960's, reconstructionists such as George Counts, Henry Rugg and Theodore Brameld shared the "conviction that education can and should be employed to help solve social problems and reconstruct the sociocultural order to create a more ideal society" (Stanley, 1992, p. 6). Social reconstructionism postulated that society needed to be consistently examined and changed for the better of all and curricula should be leveraged to teach students how to see the big picture, ask critical questions, and take necessary action to improve their communities and the world. An exploration of the reconstructionist view of education illuminates several important implications for the epistemological facets of teaching and learning contexts, including what types of knowledge are most valuable and how to teach, assess, and apply that knowledge towards a reconstructed and more just world.

Theodore Brameld arrived on the reconstructionist scene later than his contemporaries, but reimagined and carried the mantle of the movement even as its influence waned throughout the 1950's and 1960's (Stanley, 1992). Many of Brameld's concepts hold value for a contemporary discussion of how epistemology is evoked in educational spaces, and a few of those are discussed here in the context of influences on *what* and *how* one teaches. Social reconstructionism features firm beliefs on both the what

(curriculum) and the how (instruction) of teaching and learning within a critical and socially aware paradigm of education. From a social reconstructionist perspective, the focus is on the link between what students learn and how those discrete knowledge, skills, and attitudes play out in society, with the overall goals of developing democratic values and preparing students to be change agents. Brameld (1965b) advocated integrating 'explosive' ideas as the centerpiece of all curricula. Explosive ideas are thought-provoking, often contentious, and have no clear solutions. Culture, class, and evolution are examples of explosive ideas and Brameld suggested they be used as conceptual topics in themselves, connected to other concepts or phenomena, and as starting points for class discussions and projects. Similarly, Brameld proposed what he called the 'wheel curriculum', where social issues served as the conceptual hub with spokes formed by groups of students focusing on specific aspects of those issues, coming together for debate and eventual consensus. In *Education as Power* (1965a), Brameld described a charter for educational leadership that is not simply a guide for faculty and/or administrators, but rather a blueprint for curriculum in a reconstructionist perspective. Brameld pointed out desired qualities such as creativity, audacity, commitment, and confrontation and how they can be developed through content that teaches students critical thinking, innovation, open-mindedness, imagination of possibilities, taking sides, team dynamics, managing conflict, and confronting challenges.

The instructional methods typically used by reconstructionist educators include reflection, reflexivity, dialectic discussion, experiential activities, and the Brameldian techniques of defensible partiality and social self-realization. Defensible partiality is a problem-solving activity where students assume a position on a topic, each defending their stance in critical and unrestricted debate. Social self-realization- to Brameld (1965a) the highest human purpose- involves fulfillment of individual potential while helping others to do the same cooperatively. Achieving social self-realization serves as both an end and a means as modeled within instructional practices requiring collaboration, such as team-based learning, gamification, and consensus-building projects. Social reconstructionism challenges traditional epistemologies- those provable through logic or empirical science- by shifting the focus to developing ethical and reflective mindsets, all aimed at developing responsible citizens with the ability to make socially beneficial, and often innovative, change. To facilitate these goals, educators must take inert epistemologies and make them actionable; transform the accepted stability of knowledge to a more fluid vision of possibility.

### Axiology
Axiology, or ethics, is the branch of philosophy that explores what is good, just and virtuous (Craig, 2020). Ethics has not historically been a priority in terms of the mechanics of teaching and learning; instead there have been well-intended but misguided assumptions that approved curricula are morally grounded and teaching is an inherently ethically neutral activity. A unique aspect and strength of this framework is its attention to the ethical landscape of education, including how members of learning communities support one another, inclusive teaching, and how knowledge can be used for the betterment of the world. Additional axiological questions might explore why one

teaches and what is rewarding about teaching, the ethical implications of concepts and skills taught in learning spaces, and the ways learning can be used to enhance one's wellbeing and capacity to be more ethical humans. The theoretical and philosophical foundations of the framework briefly described here include critical pedagogy and related conceptualizations from philosopher Paul Ricoeur (Ricoeur, 1992).

Critical pedagogy is an approach to education informed by the philosophical school of critical theory, which is primarily concerned with asymmetries of power and privilege and the interactive context between individuals and society (McLaren, 2009). Critical pedagogy "asks how and why knowledge gets constructed the way it does" (McLaren, 2009, p. 63) and how certain types of knowledge are legitimized while others are not and is therefore most often brought to bear upon questions of epistemology in educational spaces. That said, the ethical dimensions of critical pedagogy are the focus here, and how *emancipatory knowledge* (Habermas, 1971) can be used in both content (curriculum) and process (instruction) to help students understand how power and privilege impact themselves and classmates as both learners and citizens. Critical pedagogy provides the foundation for critical consciousness (Freire, 1971) and develops in students habits of critique that can be applied to the truth claims of knowledge and skills learned, how their classrooms promote or challenge equity and empowerment, and how ways of learning and knowledge can be used for the common good and making a more equitable and just world. Critical pedagogy provides a foundation for student understanding of social justice as ethics on a societal scale, and the task of the teacher is to facilitate knowledge, skills, and attitudes to prepare students to transform their worlds. The instructional methods and roles of the educator in critical pedagogy are underpinned by an ethics of *interaction* and *presence* where learners hold each other accountable but are supportive and available to each other. Maxine Greene (1988) summed up the instructional goal of critical pedagogy clearly: "If situations cannot be created that enable the young to deal with feelings of being manipulated by outside forces, there will be far too little sense of agency among them. Without a sense of agency, young people are unlikely to pose significant questions, the existentially rooted questions in which learning begins" (p. 3).

The work of French phenomenologist Paul Ricoeur is also relevant to any discussion of an ethics of education. His 'petite ethique' stressed a modest but potent conception of the good life as "living well with and for others in just institutions" (Ricoeur, 1992, p. 172). Although not as directly focused on elements of power inequities in society as critical pedagogy, Ricoeur's communitarian perspective on the collective responsibility of individual identities complements the former, particularly in the more local context of educational spaces. Ricoeur's ethics is centered on the idea that personal identity, self-esteem, and self-respect are unavoidably connected with others (Reagan, 2002). Being ethically accountable to others requires mutual acknowledgement of others as the antecedent to fully knowing oneself. In other words, we construct our subjectivities and become self-aware through ethical living among others. Ricoeur suggested the actions which constitute goodness arise not from a perspective of 'what' or 'why', but rather from questions centered on 'who'. 'Who' questions explore motive, reciprocation, values, experiences, and personal accountability (Ricoeur, 2000). 'Good' environments

begin with each individual and the resulting responsibility for educators is to create conditions which allow and encourage all of the unique voices in a learning community to contribute to not only shared understandings, but also an atmosphere where inclusion and belonging has the same priority as academic progress. Living not only *with* but most importantly, *for,* others is the ultimate goal of Ricoeur's ethics and the overarching ethical challenge for teachers and students alike as they create and navigate curricula, instructional practices, collaborative knowing, and learning spaces.

## Description of Framework

### Structure and Content
The core of this framework (see Figure 1) lies in the conceptual elements and their intersection with the three dimensions of beliefs, actions, and outcomes. The six conceptual elements are: (1) sense of purpose (including definitions of teaching & learning), (2) essential content and skills to be addressed, (3) developing student capacity as learner and co-learner, (4) integrating concepts across boundaries, (5) relaying how to use knowledge for the common good, and (6) creating an environment of inclusion and belonging. For each of the six elements, those writing the TSP must briefly describe their *beliefs* (the 'whys'), *actions* in the classroom (what one 'does', instructional methods/activities, set-up), and educational *outcomes* (goals for students and oneself).

**Figure 1**

*Teaching Philosophy Statement Framework*
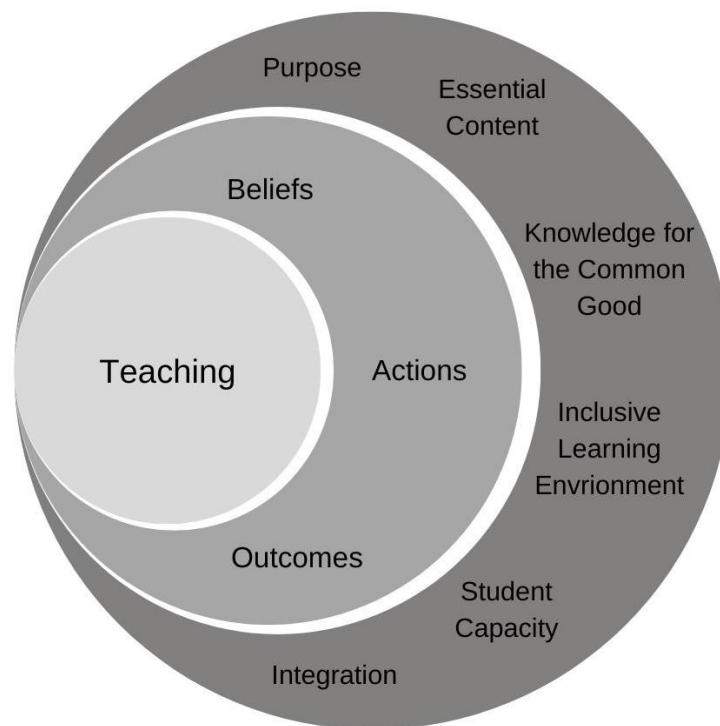
**Process**

Creating a TPS is an iterative task as the document is dynamic and evolves continuously over time. The TPS is constructed and sustained through six sequential steps (see Figure 2): (1) preparation, (2) outline ideas using the framework, (3) draft the narrative text of the TPS, (4) cross-match with initial belief statements for coherence and finalize, (5) implement, and (6) reflect and revise the TPS.

**Figure 2**

*Steps in Constructing a Teaching Philosophy Statement*
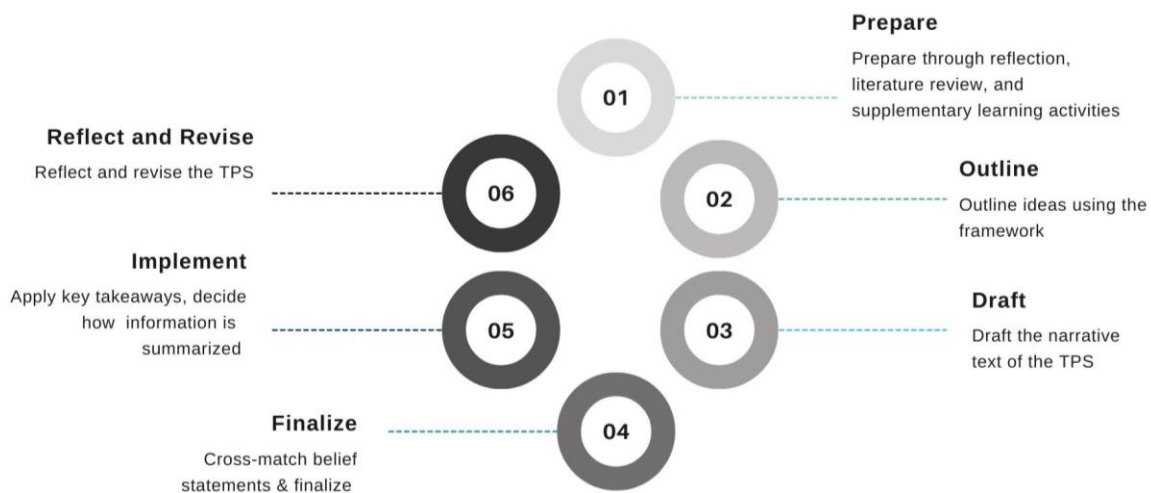


The first step is to prepare through reflection, literature review, and supplementary learning activities. At first appearances, writing a TPS is a daunting task, and spending some time and effort establishing a specific mindset can help one feel more confident. In this first preparatory step, several activities are recommended. Initially, begin the process by listing 10 fundamental beliefs ('I Believe' statements (Caukin & Brinthaupt, 2017)) about the teaching-learning dynamic. These belief statements or claims are then each supplemented with 'Because' (what does the literature say) and 'This I will do' (representative actions) explanations that stimulate deeper reflection and engage educators with literature and evidence supporting their intuitive beliefs. These foundational 'I Believe' statements can also be loosely connected to literature in the philosophical categories exploring the nature of reality, knowledge, and ethics. The suggestion here is not that each of us as educators needs to be thoroughly versed in formal philosophy. However, since philosophical questions are often examined and tested in the form of theories, it is important to have at least a novice level of awareness. Additionally, there are multiple philosophical schools of thought that are not necessarily framed as theories, but nonetheless provide critical foundations for curriculum development, instruction, assessment, and learning environment design.

Following the individual preparatory work, one should next take initial thoughts to colleagues for discussion. This activity allows one to gain additional perspective and voice beliefs in the local learning community. At this point, one should also consider participating in further development activities such as *Finding Our Roots* (Beatty et al., 2009) and *Philosophy Rediscovered* (Beatty, 2009) or completing a 'Teaching Cube' (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998). These experiences are best accomplished in collaborative fashion within one's faculty learning community.

Once the first step is complete, the next step is to use the framework to outline ideas for each of the six core conceptual elements and for each, identify priorities according to the three dimensions of the framework (see Table 1). Here the goal is to broadly include truly fundamental beliefs, actions, and outcomes, not necessarily an even distribution of the three dimensions within each of the six elements. In step three, use the outline from step two to draft the narrative text which comprises the TPS. Table 2 offers sample prompts in each of the sections and dimensions to assist with constructing the draft. The fourth step involves cross-matching the draft with the initial list of 10 "I Believe" statements for general coherence and finalizing the text (which should be approximately 2-3 pages in length). The final two steps are to implement and revise the TPS as necessary within timeframes that make sense for logistics and one's reflective proclivities.

**Table 1**

*Elements and Dimensions of a Teaching Philosophy Statement*

| | Beliefs | Actions | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sense of Purpose | | | |
| Essential Content and Skills to Be Addressed | | | |
| Developing Student Capacity as Learner and Co-Learner | | | |
| Integrating Concepts Across Boundaries | | | |
| Relaying How to Use Knowledge for the Common Good | | | |
| Creating an Environment of Inclusion and Belonging | | | |

**Table 2**

*Potential Writing Prompts per Element*

| Sense of Purpose |
|---|
| Why do you teach/what about teaching is rewarding to you? |
| How are you unique ('Who am I') as an educator and what is your role in education? |
| What basic principles, philosophies, or theories influence your teaching approach? |
| What are your career teaching goals? |
| **Essential Content and Skills to Be Addressed** |
| What do you believe is most important for occupational therapy students to learn? |
| What sorts of skills and intellectual mindset do you want to develop in students? |
| Which instruction and assessment strategies do you find most effective? |
| **Developing Student Capacity as Learner and Co-Learner** |
| How do students learn most effectively? |
| How do you encourage students to know about themselves as reflective learners? |
| In what ways do you facilitate a growth mindset in students? |
| How do you arrange instruction, assignments, and assessments to facilitate peer interaction and support? |
| Are the instructional activities and assessments you select representative of multiple ways of knowing? |
| **Integrating Learning Across Boundaries** |
| How do you integrate course content across intradisciplinary curricula and with student's personal lives/experiences? |
| What strategies do you use to connect disciplinary core concepts with content in other fields of study? |
| How do you extend classroom instruction into real-life situations and community experiences? |
| **Relaying How to Use Knowledge for the Common Good** |
| How do you embed ethical issues into your teaching, assignments, and assessments? |
| What strategies do you use to highlight the implications of course topics for diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and anti-racism? |
| How do you support students in developing emotional intelligence and skills in critique, advocacy, and being upstanders? |
| How do you teach students to be socially responsible users, generators, and conveyors of knowledge? |
| **Creating an Environment of Inclusion and Belonging** |
| How do you build relationships and trust with students? |
| How do you create a culture of respect and compassion in learning spaces? |
| How do you build representation, accessibility, choice, and flexibility into course materials, teaching, assignments, and assessments? |
| What strategies do you use to encourage peer receptivity and support in classroom and out-of-class (e.g. group project) learning? |

**Implementation**

After writing the TPS, start applying the key takeaways to various aspects of planning one's teaching: curriculum development, how learning space is arranged to facilitate inclusion and belonging of all students, what policies/norms one creates, writing intended learning outcomes, lesson planning, which instructional strategies are used, learner assessment (both formative and summative), course evaluation/revision, and gaps in one's personal professional development.

An important aspect of implementation is deciding how one's TPS can best be relayed to and summarized for students and colleagues. Include a synopsis of the TPS in course syllabi and refer to specific key elements during instruction and assessment to consistently keep the ideas in front of students (and oneself). One's faculty learning community can also play a vital role in the implementation phase. Ask a colleague to review your TPS and then observe your teaching performance- are they able to see evidence of the TPS in your content, words, and behaviors?

The final step in the implementation phase focuses on long-term use as one participates in the occupation of teaching. Re-engaging the TPS after each semester or academic year is highly recommended. Reflect on if you 'walked your talk' in each class; if yes, wonderful (but reflect on exactly *how* you exemplified it), if not, reflect on why that is the case and revise the course and/or any specific teaching facets as necessary. Straying from the essence of the TPS can occur if one is rushed, overwhelmed, falls behind in reading literature, or simply overlooks aspects unintentionally. Not enacting one's beliefs, actions, and/or outcomes is also possible due to new experiences and knowledge that may change how one thinks about certain facets of teaching. If your fundamental beliefs have altered somehow, revisit the TPS and make the necessary adjustments. This final step is iterative and should ideally be repeated periodically throughout one's teaching career.

### Implications for Occupational Therapy Education

The writing and subsequent use of a TPS has many positive implications for occupational therapy education, made even more salient since this is the first introduction of this reflective tool in the professional literature. Foremost, the process promotes faculty learning and development as reflective educators (do they do what they believe?), thereby going beyond mere competency and emphasizing the ontological and ethical dimensions of teaching. The framework described here encourages intentional connection of classroom (or clinic) practices to the learning theories and philosophies that underpin them, leading to a more scholarly approach to teaching. A TPS can also be used as a tool to frame course development and communicating to students one's beliefs about teaching and associated expectations of them as co-learners. From a continuous improvement standpoint, the TPS offers colleagues and administrators a tool for focusing conversations about improving/enhancing teaching. Finally, a TPS facilitates integrating values regarding inclusive teaching into practice by surfacing implicit biases and barriers to creating welcoming learning environments that can be addressed by occupational therapy educators.

## Conclusion

The process of writing, using, and revising a TPS is one of the most impactful experiences an educator can embark upon, and therefore pioneering for occupational therapy faculty development. Pairing the personal value with the positive impact for students facilitates going beyond a 'learning' paradigm into the reciprocal space of 'education', where knowledge, skills, and attitudes are contextualized and imbued with purpose. That said, the task requires time, effort, deep reflection, vulnerability, and persistence. This article provides a roadmap for educators to follow as they engage with this transformative activity that is never quite 'finished'.

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