

Emergent themes found in the teaching philosophy statements of past USDA Excellence in College and University Teaching in the Food and Agricultural Sciences award recipients

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Characteristics of this theme include:</u>
Student Centeredness	An emphasis on a learning-centered classroom environment; instructors who are student centered typically concentrate on teaching students to be lifelong learners, empowering students to solve problems and think critically, encouraging collaboration, teaching at higher cognitive levels, increasing intellectual rigor and standards, and promoting reflective thinking by students
Instructional Variability	Recognizing and addressing the different learning styles of all students, employing various teaching tactics and creating learning activities that maximize student learning
Build Student Rapport	Creating a hospitable classroom environment through building relationships with students; instructors who build student rapport care for students' welfare, enjoy students, identify each student's strengths and weaknesses, respect students, are approachable, listen to students, empathize with students, and relate to students
Conducive Learning Environment	Creating a safe learning environment that is intellectually stimulating, positive, welcoming, comfortable, and conducive to learning
Professional Teaching Commitment	Active dedication to improve teaching; instructors who have a professional teaching commitment are progressive, have an understanding of pedagogy, stay current in pedagogical advances, inform their practice through research, continually assess their teaching, seek professional development, and personally reflect on their teaching
Enthusiasm	Having passion for the subject matter, creating interest and excitement, and making the learning experience enjoyable and exciting

Expert in Subject Matter	Providing foundational facts and information, keeping course content current, displaying mastery of subject matter, incorporating current research in instruction, and having strength in pedagogical content knowledge
Role Model	A teacher who has a positive impact; who is motivating; a mentor; challenges students; inspires; encourages; provides time and attention to students; is approachable; sets high expectations; makes a difference; has personal dignity; is dedicated; and possesses high personal and professional integrity
Organization and Clarity	Clearly stating learning objectives/goals, effectively planning, using effective principles of instructional design, structuring learning, giving detailed instruction, and clearly communicating
Provide Opportunity to Learn	Providing opportunities in and out of the classroom for student success, stimulating ownership and responsibility in learning, enforcing accountability, providing informal and/or formal feedback on student progress, assigning unique assignments, and utilizing student research projects
Technological Integration	Incorporating various technologies into instruction and staying up-to-date on educational technologies

Taken from: *A Content Analysis of Teaching Philosophy Statements of Award Winning Colleges of Agriculture Professors*, Laura Sankey, 2011