

My Professional Teaching Credo:

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Introduction to Teaching

Mrs. Eastman

## Abstract

Through many years of living a physically active lifestyle and experiencing the joy of the multitude of sports, games, and activities that this world has to offer, it has become clear to me that I have a true passion for teaching physical education and health. Through my experiences, I have developed a unique set of teaching philosophies that I wish to incorporate into my classrooms in order to effectively educate the students. I classify my personal teaching philosophy as being influenced most by Progressivism, Existentialism, and Essentialism.

I believe that in teaching physical education, it is important to incorporate problem solving skills into the curriculum, as well as facilitating growth of personal values like teamwork and sportsmanship. This student-centered approach is the basis for my progressivism ideals. I also believe, however, that specific skills and knowledge pertaining to various sports and activities as well as health-related content are an important foundation for discovering one's own interest in being healthy and physically active. This belief in the importance of essential knowledge is the backbone of my Essentialist Philosophy. Finally, I also believe individual choice and authenticity, based on the fact that everyone has their own unique set of strengths and weaknesses. Through my curriculum, students will be able to identify their aptitudes, strengths, and weaknesses in an effort to discover the activities in which they most enjoy and will likely continue into adulthood. In this way I will give my students the tools to become healthy, physically active adults.

Physical education was always my favorite class when I was a child. My competitive spirit and sense of adventure always pushed me to excel, and I always embraced each new activity with a sense of wonder. As I grew older and became more serious about team sports, I became more in-tune with specific skills and knowledge of the game. Continuing on toward college I realized how much of an impact my physical education and extracurricular sports experiences had on my mentality and lifestyle, and how my desire to continue to be physically active would help me to maintain a desirable level of health for years to come. I simply hope that I can help instill this passion in others.

I believe that developing problem solving skills and personal values are essential things for teachers to cultivate in students, especially in the health and physical education settings. My belief in the importance of these skills coincides with the Progressivist philosophical approach. The ability to analyze situations and develop solutions to problems is a valuable skill that everyone uses in their everyday lives. Helping children develop those skills not only prepares them for their future schooling, but also for life as adults. Cooperative group and adventure activities are great ways to facilitate the learning of these types of skills. As I stated before, personal and social values are also part Progressivism. These values, such as cooperation, teamwork, and sportsmanship, are extremely important aspects of social interaction and should be developed at an early age. These skills can be brought about through various team sports and activities, with careful explanation as to their importance.

I believe that it is an educator's job to aid an individual in their quest for identity and self discovery. Everyone is unique and has individual worth. Teachers should guide individuals in their effort to live authentically. Health and physical education are no exception. Everybody has a different set of skills, strengths, and weaknesses. By providing a plethora of different activities

for students to learn about and develop proficient skills, I will be helping them find their niche. This may help them decide which extracurricular activities they wish to participate in, or which hobbies they decide to pursue. In either case, I will be making a constant effort to guide children in the journey of discovering their individuality.

I believe that there are certain skills and knowledge that should be taught in every subject due to its importance in everyday life. This opinion reflects my belief in the Essentialism philosophy. I feel that this applies especially to physical education because of the various fundamental skills and knowledge of rules that one must learn in order to participate in different types of games, sports, and activities. The emphasis should be on the *essential* knowledge and skills. General physical education classes rarely allow enough time for students to become experts at a particular sport. That is an unrealistic expectation. The objective is to have students become acquainted and competent at a variety of different activity forms in order to assist personal growth and self discovery.

As a health and physical educator, I will base much of my instructional strategy off of the Constructivist psychological theory. This theory suggested that individuals construct their own individual understandings in unique ways, as opposed to simply receiving information. This approach emphasized student-centered teaching strategies and curriculum. Based on what I have observed, read, and experienced over the years, different people learn in a variety of different ways. These learning methods can be classified as auditory, visual, kinesthetic, or some combination. For this reason, teaching strategies must be designed to cater to all of these learning types in order to create an accommodating learning environment for all. In the physical education setting, I will be able to cultivate learning from these different styles by explaining lessons audibly, providing visual aids, giving demonstrations, and allowing for hands-on

practice. In this way I will be able to reach out to all types of learners in order to maximize the benefits that each individual receives from my class.

The most important objectives for me to accomplish as an educator are to develop problem solving skills, promote personal and social values, create individual identities, and build essential knowledge and skills in my students. My teaching philosophy, characterized by Progressivism, Existentialism, and Essentialism, will enable me to accomplish this. Teaching is not simply about supplying knowledge and giving exams; it is about developing well-rounded individuals with the tools and motivation to pursue their dreams and live happy, healthy, successful lives. As a teacher, I hope I can do just that.

## References

Parkay, F. W., Standford, B. H. (2007). Becoming a teacher (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.