

## TEACHING PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY

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*Education has always taken an important role in my life. From a young age, I believe my educational experiences have shaped the person I am becoming and continue to strive to become. Through life-changing teachers, mentors, advanced placement programs, first-generation scholar opportunities, and so much more, I found a passion for teaching and education that reflect the values I portray as an employee, coworker, teacher, and researcher.*

I had not learned exactly what economics was until my senior year of high school in taking half a year of economics (and another half year of a class called government). My interests finally seemed to fit into an actual subject field, a potential career path – and it was economics. Economics, being a social science, allows us to question not only topics in a singular field, but a myriad of different subjects, such as psychology, public policy, and education. Being able to grow my passion for economics and education research in graduate school has been one of many major motivating factors in my own personal teaching philosophy. Government class gave me my first structured look at what government was, did, and how it affected our day to day lives. Both of these courses sparked an interest in something I couldn't before put a word or label on.

Teaching has been something that has come incredibly naturally to me, and I feel I owe a lot of this to being an eldest daughter of five, and an incredibly relatable individual. One very important tenet in my teaching philosophy is that students feel encouraged and comfortable communicating with me, similar to how someone may look up to an older sister. Further, I entered my PhD program here at WVU as a 20-year-old. I was the same age as some of my students I was teaching, sometimes even younger. At first this was intimidating. After a few years, I began to learn my age was not something I should be ashamed of, but rather embrace. Since coming to this realization as a teacher, I feel I am able to better connect with my students through this commonality, rather than keeping this aspect of me distant and anxiously hidden away from my teaching; which in turn has greatly improved my confidence teaching and strengthened my teaching philosophies. Each semester I feel that responsiveness, communication, and connectedness with my students is continuing to improve.

Some of the classes I have taught include economics principles courses, yet I feel that my best teaching comes through in any type of math class. The precise and intricate approach to math is similar to my teaching. I am organized, well-prepared, and detail-oriented, which translates well into helping student understanding in economics. Dr. Mike Hardt, an assessment writing specialist at Syracuse University, opened my world to a whole new field of research in learning and pedagogy, where I am able to relate much of my educational research as a graduate student back to my teaching style and the way I present research and assess students on learning. Through a brief semester with him, I was able to improve slightly on the effectiveness of my teaching, I believe. This is something I plan to continue to work on and improve throughout my teaching and education career.

Teaching and learning have become such a passion for me that these themes have sparked research interests involving the benefits of education and educational institutions, as well as the mechanisms of student learning.

To make sense of all of the above, my love for education has driven my entire teaching philosophy. I want students to be able to access their full potential through their own educational experiences; whether I accomplish this through teaching, mentoring, or continuing my work in another way with individuals helping them learn and advance in any field.

Yours Sincerely, Monica Moses