**Individual Reflection**

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Over the course of my studies and field experiences, my understanding of teaching has evolved significantly. From a blind eye, teaching may seem like a straightforward process of delivering information, following a curriculum and managing a classroom. However, I have come to realize that teaching is far more complex and a practice that requires deep reflection, adaptability, and a genuine understanding of students' diverse needs.

One of the most significant shifts in my perspective has been the importance of student-centered learning. Early in my journey, I believed effective teaching meant delivering well-structured lessons and maintaining classroom discipline. While these elements remain crucial, I have learned that authentic engagement stems from fostering an inclusive environment where students feel safe and are encouraged to participate actively in their learning. I have learnt the true meaning of a hands-on teaching approach where students are not only exposed to theory but also its connection to practice. Moving along, through class discussions, the method has shown to be highly effective as students are exposed to real-world problem solving as well as various project styles, which in turn helps students foster a deeper understanding of the material.

Becoming a teacher has made me rethink my past learning experiences in the classroom and reflect on the teaching/learning situations of my former teachers. Looking back at my elementary and high school studies, the word that best describes my experiences is "rigid." That said, my field experiences have exposed me to various diverse teaching/learning environments where I quickly concluded how beneficial and essential elasticity, also known as flexibility, is in the classroom environment.

Another key area of growth has been my understanding of differentiated instruction. In my early field experiences, I struggled with meeting the diverse needs of students in a single classroom. I have since learned to incorporate flexibility in lesson planning in order to best support and accommodate various learning styles and backgrounds. For example, I have effectively used visual aids, hands-on activities, and technology to ensure all students can access the curriculum in ways that resonate with them. Additionally, I have come to appreciate the role of formative assessments in guiding instruction, allowing me to adjust my teaching in real time to address student misconceptions and reinforce learning.

Furthermore, this fourth-year seminar has been enlightening, providing invaluable insights through in-depth discussions and the exploration of numerous case studies. Reflection on real-world classroom scenarios has helped me better prepare for the unpredictable yet realistic challenges teachers often face. These case studies have deepened my understanding of classroom management, student diversity, and problem-solving, reinforcing the importance of adaptability and critical thinking. Being part of these discussions has expanded my perspective and strengthened my confidence in navigating complex situations with professionalism and empathy. It makes me ponder whether the average person truly understands the complexity of the teaching profession.

Moreover, the textbook *Professional Ethics and Law in Education* has enhanced my growth as a teacher, highlighting that teaching includes the navigation of the legal and ethical complexities that come with the role. Looking back on my journey, the textbook has helped me realize the importance of balancing student rights and fairness while staying adaptable and empathetic. It's made me understand that being a good teacher goes beyond just flexibility in planning, it includes handling real-world challenges with integrity. The textbook has opened my eyes to the more profound responsibilities teachers hold, responsibilities that go beyond the curriculum and help shape the entire classroom learning environment.

To conclude this reflection, I'd like to continue developing my approach to teaching by improving how I support my students, especially those with diverse learning needs. I've been thinking about how to make my lessons more hands-on and engaging while still meeting learning goals. I'd love to find ways to bring creativity into subjects like math and art in a way that feels meaningful. I also want to get better at using assessments that really show how my students progress, like through peer and self-reflection. Going forward, I plan to try out new strategies, connect with other teachers for ideas, and continue learning from resources that help me grow. Ultimately, I aim to create a more inclusive, engaging, and effective classroom that supports all students in reaching their full potential.

*References*

Maxwell, B., Gereluk, D., & Martin, C. (2022). Professional ethics and law in education: A Canadian guidebook. Canadian Scholars.