

Philosophy of Education Guidelines

Writing your philosophy of education may seem to be a daunting task. However, if you remember that your philosophy of education is constantly developing, you should be able to see this task as an instructional opportunity for you, rather than as a chore. You should probably make appropriate reference to elements of specific philosophies of education (e.g., constructivism, behaviorism, etc.) and/or personal experiences as evidence for and illustration of your statements.

You will find it helpful in writing your philosophy of education if you think of it in four parts. In your paper, you should indicate (briefly your thinking/beliefs about each section):

1) What you believe about:

- the nature of learners
- teaching/your role as a teacher
- schools
- the role of others (administrators, parents, etc.)

For example, are all students capable of learning? Do all learners have something to contribute, or is this purely the role of the teacher? Are learners innately curious or empty vessels to be filled with wisdom by the teachers, or from a textbook? Should parents participate in the schools or should education be left to professional teachers? This is where you might discuss philosophies you have studied such as constructivism and behaviorism.

2) What is knowledge and what is worth knowing?—i.e. what you value and the goals associated with those values (your axiology) about:

- the purpose of education
- the content you will select
- the skills you expect your students to develop

For example, do students need to be trained to be critical thinkers/problem solvers? Do students need to be trained, socialized, shaped, and/or controlled? What sort of conduct do you expect from students? Do they need to learn a trade, a skill, how to follow rules, obey the law or perform a job? Do they need to learn the content of various disciplines, facts, how to solve problems or how to cooperate in groups, make decisions, and interpret the world around them? Do they need to learn how to engage in social reconstruction? Should teachers actively involve parents and the community in their classrooms? Is life-long learning involved? You may want to consider putting something in this part about standards.

3) What methods you expect to utilize to accomplish your goals (an epistemology):

- lectures
- direct instruction
- cooperative groups
- problem-solving
- worksheets
- ability grouping
- etc.

For example, will you always use one method? Or a mix? How will this help accomplish your goals. Have you read or experienced something that supports your belief? Give reasons.

4) Finally, in keeping with LHUP's Teacher Education Program's Mission Statement and Conceptual Framework, you could conclude by explaining how your philosophy promotes you as a Reflective Decision Maker and how it will enable you to continue to develop professionally.

This structure can be used as a guideline for what a Philosophy of Education paper might look like. Basically, it is an opportunity for you to sit down and put in writing what you really feel about education in general and teaching in particular. So think about all that you have learned and experienced and begin writing.