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# TEACHING TIPS

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## Faculty Engagement

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### DO YOU HAVE A TEACHING MISSION STATEMENT?

Socrates taught us “the unexamined life is not worth living.” The same could be said for our teaching intent for, unless we have a clearly established purpose, we can become off course, adrift and at the whim of the winds. Essentially, a mission statement is a teaching philosophy constructed from fundamental objectives for you, as a teacher, but perhaps more importantly for the learner. The objectives are connected to teaching methods, assessment and learning ideals.

An example of a mission statement might be: “I intend to teach the learner the differential diagnosis (in my content area) from clinical cases, such that they can demonstrate this reasoning strategy when seeing patients in the clinic.” A mission statement should be relatively short, easily communicated, memorable and frequently revisited. Post it where you will see it every day. It will force you to examine your intent, your attitude toward the content and learner, your methods, assessment strategies, and your ultimate goals and teaching satisfaction. Write your teaching mission statement today. It will set your course, keep your bearings and speed, and give you the mental comfort of being anchored in your homeport.

*Source: Hangen L. Writing a teaching philosophy statement. Center for Teaching Excellence, Iowa State University. <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/document-your-teaching/teaching-philosophy/> (accessed 7/19/2014)*

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