

Lauren Scruby

### Philosophy of Teaching Statement

My desire to teach at a collegiate level was inspired by my own experience of self-discovery as a student. It is my intention to help my students discover their own voice – both as writers and as contributors to an intellectual community. With the discovery of this “voice” comes a confidence and a critical eye that my students can apply to their daily lives, academic careers, and professional aspirations. I find it particularly gratifying when students gain confidence in their own writing. The ability to facilitate this discovery is my reward for teaching.

In order to help my students discover their voice, I first try to make the material as engaging as possible. In order to fully engage the students in the material, I first always try to present the “why” factor to my students – meaning, I will make it clear exactly why this information is important for the student to learn. We look at a variety of different mediums – films, television shows, music, advertising, and popular culture to try and contemporize my students’ way of viewing writing. I use this varied approach as a framework to introduce my students to basic rhetorical skills and strategies. For example, we watch a documentary, *Reel Bad Arabs*, about the negative depictions of Arabs in the entertainment industry. The students then learn to summarize the argument presented and apply this argument towards their own analysis of the popular film, *The Mummy*. Within the context of popular culture, the students gain an appreciation for this type of analysis and synthesis assignment.

As an instructor for first year students, I try to be approachable and easily accessible. I want my students to feel comfortable coming to me with issues or problems, so that I may either assist them or point them in the right direction. The classroom is a participatory environment, where the students are responsible and accountable for themselves, as well as for providing feedback to their peers. My ultimate goal is to help develop a group of confident, independent thinkers who have important ideas to share and a strong voice with which to share them.