As a Designer:

*Family and Consumer Sciences Philosophy of Teaching*

The **purpose of education** is not only to provide students with intellectual learning, but to also prepare them for real world. The **function of school** then would be the place where students would receive the training they require to not only survive but flourish. **In order to serve our students** we need to incorporate real world practices to ensure our students stay motivated. We need to give them the proper skills they need to make it in the real world no matter what role they choose to take on. **Family and Consumer Sciences** offers literacy in a number of areas that Americans struggle with. By teaching literacy in those areas family and consumer sciences teachers ensure the purpose of education remains to enlighten and prepare the students for the professional careers.

In the early 1900s social reformers envisioned education as a means of improving the life circumstances of the poor and working class. Family and consumer sciences is the comprehensive body of skills, research, and knowledge that helps people make informed decisions about their wellbeing, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life. What social reformers envisioned for education is what family and consumer sciences can offer. As a family and consumer sciences teacher I can provide my student’s with the opportunity for a better quality of life by educating them on the importance of making informed decisions on a number of different topics. According to Tahira K. Hira, “General literacy has been broadened to include thinking and decision-making skills” (Hira, 2013) Knowledge is key. If they know what the big issues are that will affect them, and how they will be affected they can make their own informed decisions on how to prepare themselves, and ultimately come out on top when they face major issues such as health and finances. This is something that I believe can oppose the major crises such as obesity and bankruptcy.

 I believe that the **role of the student** is to facilitate their education. Something that I caught on to quickly while on my practicum was that if the student did not care or did not want to learn, they would shut down. I **view the student** as mini instructors. Students relate better to their peers than they do to teachers. **We can assure that students assume that role** by allowing them to be responsible for their own education. Sometimes it’s okay for the teacher not to be the center of attention. I think realizing that is key because this really effects how your students view you.

This part of my philosophy of education stems from my practicum. I noticed that many of the students seemed to know each other quite well. It seems obvious to say that, but I was a stranger to them. Even if they didn’t know each other on the personal level, they had at least spent all semester with each other. I wish I had noticed or been aware of this at the time because I could have used that to my advantage. I kept asking them to answer questions for me when instead I should have had them answer questions for each other. This could have been done by having a think-pair- share activity. I could have given them each a different question and they could have thought about their answers individually then paired up with a person who had the same question and compare answers. Then the students could have paired up with students who had different questions and talked about their answers. If they disagreed with each other they would have had to defend their answers. By doing this I would have allowed my students to facilitate their own learning. I wouldn’t have answered those questions for them, they would have had to think and apply their knowledge to the questions so that they could answer and explain why they believe they have the right answer.

 I **view the teacher** as someone who enables students through their educational career. I also view teachers as the creative backbones of education. **This is consistent with above beliefs** in few ways. The first one being that one teacher isn’t solely responsible for get the student the skills they need. There are a number of factors that influence that. Second, teachers make it possible for the student to have access to learning information. **The primary responsibilities** of a teacher in a society that values diversity is to first acknowledge that there is that the students they have are diverse and the second step is to meet their needs through thoughtful planning of instruction and activities.

Students may facilitate their own learning, but teachers enable them to do so. As a teacher, I will think about the best ways I can get my students to help each other out and learn from each other. Meaningful instruction doesn’t just happen, it is created. Diversity means that there is a variety of something. The way I view this question, it is asking about learning. Students learn in a variety of ways. There is no one perfect mold that fits all students. There is an immense advantage to understanding how your students learn. There are many quizzes available that can give students an idea of what their learning style is. Making this one of the first activities you do will ensure that you know how your students learn best. Also, making sure you are aware that you teach the way you learn is very important. For example, you may not notice that you tend to be more hands on, and for some students only doing hands on activities will not be enough.

I plan on **designing my curriculum and instruction** in a way so that skills and knowledge are kept intertwined. I believe that with standard based learning many of the skills students need for their professional careers are being cutback. It has become more so about trying to get the student to pass assessment so that they can meet the standard than it is about making sure they grasp as concept. **Teaching 21st century** skills is important for the students whether or not they choose to futher their education or not. I think it is important however that teachers do realize that college is not for everyone but that doesn’t mean they don’t need the skills.

In family and consumer sciences classrooms, you wouldn’t typically think that this would be the place where students would be learning about 21st century skills. However, I think it is important to realize that while yes, this may seem like a break to them, it actually is a place where you get to hone the skills you learn in other classes. I view family and consumer sciences classes as the place where students go to apply their knowledge and gain the skills they need. After taking this class I decided that I would take on the challenge of introducing more science, math and English into my classrooms. I think that family and consumer sciences is a place where those skills should be used to make sure the students are practicing their skills.

 I titled my philosophy of teaching paper *As a Designer* because I believe that that is what I will be teaching my students. I want my students to be able to design their own futures. I will be a designer also. I will take their ideas and their view points and create lessons and units that will help them achieve what they need and want.

I believe it is important to have a philosophy of teaching. I think it is important to know where you stand on your views. This assignment gave me the opportunity to reflect on my practicum experience in a whole new way. Although I was only teacher for a two days, my actions and how I organized my lesson plans reflected my views. I realized that I thought about some things in one way, but acted in another. Knowing what your philosophy of teaching helps to ensure that you can keep your beliefs and your actions to reflect each other.

Bibliography

Hira , T. (2013). Home economics literacy: Investing in our Future. *Journal of ARAHE*, *20*(3), 113-118.