

In my experience as a teacher of rhetoric, composition, and technical and professional communication, I have learned that teaching can be a demanding, but also a very rewarding endeavor. Today's market place requires proficiency in both oral and written communication, as well as extensive experience with computer technology. With this in mind, I am driven to inspire my students to engage in critical reflection in their communicative practices, whether in writing, speaking, or interacting with others. I remind my students that good communication and critical thinking skills are highly valued commodities, and tend to determine one's level of professional success. However, I also emphasize the ethical function of rhetoric in the process of communication, which is indispensable in developing their critical faculties, and in turn, might engender social awareness and change. I believe that teaching technical communication to students is therefore also an excellent opportunity for my students to get acquainted with social, cultural and ethical concerns that extend beyond the classroom. Being able to articulate and reflect one's ideas in writing also means being able to overcome contradictory ideas, and thus leads to greater understanding of the various social processes in which my students participate. In my teaching, I therefore employ this dual emphasis on conveying not only the professional skills demanded of them, but also the ethical choices that they have to make in their professional lives and communicative practices.

It is a very rewarding experience when students tell me that, as a result of our interaction in the classroom, they feel they have become more confident of their abilities as writers and thinkers, because it makes them more prepared for whatever professional destiny awaits them. I see my classroom as an opportunity for the students to realize that my role as an instructor of composition and technical communication entails more than being just a person who grades their essays and discusses issues of writing. Instead, for my classroom pedagogy, I look to Paulo Freire's idea of dialogical learning, where students come to see the world "not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation." In my teaching, as well as my pedagogical aims, I have always emphasized the way writing opens up social space for reflection. I try my hardest to create a classroom atmosphere where students become engaged learners, involved in discovering complex social and cultural dialogues through their own reading, writing and thinking. I see my task as a teacher as being a mediator of ideas, someone who encourages them to become more successful at expressing their own ideas through writing, reading, and careful reflection.

For this reason, I believe that learning how to communicate well goes hand in hand with discovering how to think self-reflexively and creatively. In my classroom, I use activities such as reader reviews, class discussions, group writing assignments, which all work to enhance the notion that meaning is achieved through a social process of critical inquiry and careful articulation. When students become aware that meaning is constructed by what they bring to the class and what others bring to it, they come to understand that meaning is always created through a dialogical process of communication in which both theory and praxis intersect. In addition, keeping in mind the principle of *kairos*, I

emphasize that any communicative method's success is dependent upon the particular approach taken to a specific situation, and that there are no "correct" models to follow. This makes students become aware of the importance of their own recursive and ethical involvement in such activities, whether through writing, reading, or thinking, which in turn gives them new ways of perceiving themselves as active participants in their communicative practices. My teaching philosophy thus reflects a hands-on approach coupled with a critical and theoretical approach, where my involvement is as important as my students' participation in discussions, critical reflection, peer reviews, and uncovering new layers of knowledge and understanding.

Further, I have made it a point to incorporate computer technology in dealing with issues of writing and technical communication. I see the classroom as an important place for allowing students to interact and become familiar with multi-media, because computer technology undoubtedly will continue to play a large role in our personal and professional lives. Rather than uncritically accepting technology, I try to make my students aware of the social and cultural stakes implicated through the use of technology, and get them involved with what Jürgen Habermas calls "communicative action." Allowing my students to see the cultural/social implications of certain technologies in turn gives them agency to position themselves in their communicative practices, which can lead to a more informed and deliberate use of technology. For example, in teaching web authoring, I make my students aware of the mediological change instantiated by new media, which combine various older forms of media. In doing so, I make my students aware that creating a website involves dealing with various forms of media that complicate the traditionally print-based approach to composition, but that a website's composition still involves their ethical deliberation and rhetorical consideration of audience and purpose.

I believe that my teaching philosophy also reflects this interest in integrating rhetoric, multi-media, and critical theory in my teaching in the classroom. Rather than seeing my teaching of technical communication in terms of conveying a neutral set of skills required of any modern professional, I see my role as a teacher as someone who encourages students to engage in critically reflective communicative practices and deliberative communicative action. In this sense, I see my teaching of technical communication in terms of Carolyn Miller's notion that technical communication is a social practice with political implications. In the future, I definitely would like to teach more courses in computers and writing, and explore issues of doing writing and research through computer technology. I hope that in this endeavor I can help people in engaging in critically reflective practices along with helping them gain the much-needed skills to realize their personal and professional goals in life.