

Jessica Wellington's Teaching Philosophy Statement

"I have no question that students who learn, not professors who perform, is what teaching is all about... teachers possess the power to create conditions that can help students learn a great deal- or keep them from learning much at all. Teaching is the intentional act of creating those conditions, and good teaching requires that we understand the inner sources of both the intent and the act." (Parker J. Palmer, The Courage to Teach)

Throughout my life I have had more teachers and professors who were seemingly there to only collect a paycheck than not. The handful of teachers who really cared about their students, however, changed my life.

As an educator, I strive to create an environment where my students feel inspired; one where they are not only seen and heard but also encouraged to share and flourish. Although my teaching style encompasses various methods depending upon the subject, students, and day, a collaborative approach is at the forefront of my classes. I strongly believe that the best educators are students themselves, so as I am continually learning from my students and colleagues, my teaching style is ever-growing.

Although I have many goals for my students, making sure they feel safe is an important one. In a time where cell phones and social media have so many people feeling anxious and less than, it is vital to me that my students know that my classroom is a judgement free, safe zone. On the first day of a new semester, it is made clear that everyone's well-being is important to me. Thankfully, my students' feedback is evident that I'm achieving that goal. A current student of mine, Grace Roshala, just referenced me in a paper she wrote, "She [Miss Jess] pushes me, encourages me, cheers me on, and has taught me so many life lessons over the years that I will never forget. She [Miss Jess] also helped me find my passion for dance, ultimately leading me to the decision to continue dancing in college and the rest of my life." Grace is one of many people whom I have inspired to pursue dance and the performing arts on the collegiate and professional levels. Grace's paper went on to say, "Just like how Time Magazine releases a list every year of the "Times 100 Most Influential People," Miss Jess is my most influential person. And dance has been the most influential part of my life."

I feel as though I was born to inspire people through dance. I care about my students, and I love teaching.

References:

Palmer, P. J. 1998. *The Courage to Teach*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Roshala, Grace 2025. All About Me paper. Hermitage, PA