**Teaching Philosophy Jennifer Falcón**

The most rewarding part of teaching for me is witnessing students’ progress and gain knowledge throughout a semester. I teach to help them learn, to watch them grow, and this growth is not as a result of what I’ve done as a teacher, but of the work they’ve done as students. To help facilitate students’ growth as writers, as researchers and communicators, I approach teaching with an eye on drawing from theories and concepts in digital composition and digital rhetoric: work hard to create an active and engaged environment in my classes; and create opportunities for meaningful collaboration.

**Digital Rhetoric and multiliteracies**

I define digital rhetoric not only as the application of rhetorical theories and practices in a digital environment, but as a relationship between the composer and the device, platform, network, or software individuals and groups use to compose and deliver information. Students’ rhetorical choices speak to their understanding of digital platforms, their knowledge and effectiveness in communicating and delivering information. I use the first-year composition classroom as a space to begin introducing theories and practices in digital rhetoric. I scaffold introducing practices, so that they first appear as low-stakes assignments and work up to major multimodal assignments. In professional writing classes I require students to compose brochures and slideshows as supplemental material to enhance their presentations. This also urges students to critically assess the relationship between their audience, the genre they compose in, and the constraints and benefits of using specific software, platforms, and devices to compose. As an instructor, this provides me with an opportunity to leverage students’ interests and aptitudes with multiliteracies.

**Creating an active and engaged learning environment**

Knowing that students will enter my composition classroom with a varying degree of experience and skill it is important to create an atmosphere that is inviting, and promotes risk-taking and collaboration. I want them to leave the class not only having improved as writers, but in their approach to writing. To make them feel more at ease with the rigors of writing I always begin the semester with a discussion of the writing process. I ask what they think the writing process is, and to describe their own writing process. I believe this helps them to better understand that everyone’s process is different, and understanding what works for them and repeating it can help them become more efficient writers. I stress that finding what works best for them and helps them stay organized can only improve their writing process.

**Collaboration**  
I use collaboration as an opportunity for students to collectively demonstrate their knowledge of genres and audience expectations as they attempt to effectively deliver a message, and/or their research. I provide students with opportunities to collaborate with an audience and me. I schedule peer review conferences in addition to scheduling one-on-one conferences with me, which allows me to provide feedback and discuss each student’s project. Creating a learning environment where students are comfortable to write, and eager to collaborate is an important component of my approach to teaching writing.

I believe in the universal necessity of writing, and I teach writing because it is a large part of our communication both inside and outside the classroom. Writing is difficult to do, difficult to teach, but rewarding on both ends when you see students’ progress throughout a semester.