

SHARRI K. HALL

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Teaching Statement

In my courses, I aim to educate my students to be able to apply the skills they are learning in a highly specialized field to the world at large. I want to encourage the relevance, value, and critical thought surrounding studying the humanities. I design my courses to engage not only with music and musicology, but with critical topics in society. I develop assignments meant to help students learn how to delve deeper, to ask questions, to seek out connections, and be able to derive informed opinions.

I believe in open discourse, that every person has the right to an informed opinion and should feel comfortable and supported in sharing those opinions. However, I encourage students to broaden their horizons, assigning readings and encouraging discussion that will challenge them and not simply reinforce their preconceived ideas. In discourse, I support original thought and professionalism, and not simply regurgitation of reading material or lackadaisical interpretation. Often, courses are designed to give a broad sense of knowledge on a variety of topics. Instead, I purpose my courses to give an in depth account of fewer topics so students have the opportunity to engage with critical topics and ideas at deeper levels.

Since writing is a universally vital skills, it is heavily emphasized in my courses. Students can expect regular writing assignments of varying lengths. I think students learn best by modeling best practices. Students will learn good writing by reading good writing. So, I assign reading and writing assignments meant to reinforce skills in research, argumentation, analysis, and critical thinking.

Lastly, within reason, I endeavor to be as approachable as possible. Students are more successful when they feel their teacher is on their side. I hope I can fill whatever role a student needs me to fill to ensure their success.