

## Positionality: How History and Place Inform your Teaching Practice Chat resources

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We thank everyone for their generous contributions in the chat. We have chosen to anonymize the responses before sharing with the broader community.

Why does reflecting on and sharing your positionality matter in your context?

Answers included:

- It lets our students know where we are coming from geographically and how our background informs our perspectives.
- Reflecting on and sharing my positionality matters because my positionality influences the way I see the world and engage with others.
- Because we are whole beings, who have a history...(vs “professional” 1-dimensional beings)
- It acknowledges that we are all different, and that culture and background and history all contribute to how we think about things, what we know and teach. That it isn't one absolute truth and way of thinking. And it acknowledges histories of power and colonialism.
- Sharing Positionality matters because as a Self-in Relation being, I can know myself better when others share more about who they authentically are
- I ask my students to explore their familial history and how that shapes their way of being. I share mine to normalize this way of thinking about themselves and give them permission to share those things that may be hard
- As an Educational Consultant, instructors appreciate knowing what my background is, including teaching experience. It's important to be able to connect with all the members of the community that I work with to be able to learn from one another.
- I teach in Creative Writing and I think it's important to disrupt stereotypes about who can be a writer and how people become writers. It's so different for everyone.
- It signals to students (and colleagues) that I expect we are in a space where we bring our whole selves.
- It matters to me as an educator because I am deeply committed to the work of anti-oppression and decolonization. Part of that work is to find ways to challenge inequalities and hierarchical power relations wherever I find them. In the classroom these power-relations are part of the relationship between educator and participants. So I try to

share my positionality because it also means sharing my biases and sharing the perspective and approaches. It is also something I do to humanize myself and position myself for students as a fallible human being and not an all knowing expert

- I recognize how my family history including intergenerational trauma, landscape where I grew up and learning in Europe and multicultural family and then moving to Canada has shaped my knowledge and experiences in my daily life, work and research
- As Indigenous scholar I position myself to recognize my ancestry and give credit for where my Indigenous knowledge comes from. I carry within me Kikapú and Huasteco traditions

If someone were to ask you how to get started exploring positionality, or sharing about positionality in professional spaces, what suggestion would you give them?

Get started by reflecting on the following:

- What factors influence the way you show up in the world, do research, teach, etc.?
- How do you experience power and oppression?
- How do you share and experience knowledge?
- What teachings inform how you view the world?
- How do you use language?

Specific resources

- What I Learned In Class Today (WILICT): Positionality
- Respect, Sincerity and Responsibility: Land Acknowledgments at UBC (Asynchronous module). Followed by Reflection and Action: Land acknowledgments at UBC (Synchronous session, once per semester)
- Identity Matters: Connecting Power, Privilege and Bias to Anti- Racism Work (Asynchronous module). Followed by synchronous, online workshop
- Consider engaging in a Wheel of Power/Wheel of Privilege reflective activity
- bell hooks - Teaching to Transgress

A piece of advice:

- Start by listening, then make small steps because being vulnerable means being brave