

Teaching Statement

In my teaching, I strive to synthesize what struck me as most worth emulating during my time in Oxford with the best teaching practices I am familiar with from Swiss universities. The Oxford tutorial system strengthened my conviction that one-on-one discussions, even when brief, allow one to encourage students in their intellectual development in ways that make a decisive difference to their motivation and performance. I try to enable such discussions as far as possible within a Swiss setting. I use flipped classroom methods and other forms of blended learning to enhance student engagement in the classroom. When students write papers with me, I make a point of conducting preliminary and follow-up discussions with them in the form of an Oxford tutorial. I also ensure that students feel they can approach me with questions before and after my classes. My multilingualism is often a help in this, allowing me to put students more at ease by switching into Swiss German, German, English, Italian, or French.

At the BA level, I focus on creating a welcoming, inclusive, respectful, and supportive atmosphere that fosters the love of intellectual discovery. I make sure that students engage in real conversations, both with me and with each other. To this end, I have the students send me short questions about the readings in advance of the discussion. This gives me a sense of what they struggled with, but also something I can use to draw reticent students into the discussion. It also creates an incentive for students to do the readings beforehand, which in turn facilitates lively and fruitful discussions. I endeavour to make students feel that their questions are welcome and make sure they receive a satisfying answer.

At the MA level, I focus on helping students develop their dialectical skills. Mindful of the fact that not every student will become an academic, I ensure that students cultivate transferable skills and intellectual virtues such as clarity, argumentative cogency, and an eye for good questions. Wrestling with philosophical problems should empower students to discipline their own thoughts into effective arguments. But it should also teach them to entertain outlooks that are alien to their own. In short, students should come out better thinkers—something as beneficial to their careers as to their ability to contribute to societal goals such as sustainable development. Meanwhile, I strive to get students to the point where they feel empowered to contribute to ongoing debates in philosophy. The normalization of videoconferencing technology has been helpful in this, as it has made it easier to have the authors of the readings answer the students' questions directly, thereby making the students feel that they are participating in a global conversation.

Students at or approaching the PhD level need to master the writing norms that academic work in philosophy must satisfy to be publishable in competitive venues. My years in Oxford, together with the thorough training in the distinctive norms of the Anglophone essay that I have undergone as a student of English literature and linguistics, equip me to teach them these norms, which students from non-Anglophone countries tend to be insufficiently familiar with. To do this more systematically, I would like to offer professionalization workshops to pass on this know-how as well as the working techniques I picked up in Oxford. I am also keen to ensure that outstanding work by students can appear in print by providing students with the necessary orientation in the journal landscape and the peer review process. I myself received such support as a student at UZH, and I would like to pay it forward.

In keeping with this attitude, I have also been doing a good deal of mentoring of students and younger researchers, especially from underrepresented groups, both within and outside Switzerland. I recently helped a former student secure a place in a competitive programme in the UK. I have encouraged students to apply to the *Studienstiftung* and supported their application with reference letters. I also make a point of offering advice and detailed feedback to anyone who asks for support in applying for third-party funding. Experiencing success in these various roles as a teacher and mentor is, to my mind, one of the most rewarding aspects of an academic career.