

# HADI BANAT | TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

[hbanat@purdue.edu](mailto:hbanat@purdue.edu) | 765-607-3747 | [hadibanat.com](http://hadibanat.com)

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As a teacher, I see myself quite fitting in Schon's (1987) profile of a 'reflective practitioner' i.e. I assess my knowledge base and learn from experience. To do so, I adopt an experiential learning framework in my classroom. I engage students in a cycle of active experimentation, introspective reflection, and interactional feedback. This particular student-centered approach develops autonomous scaffolding and conceptualization learning skills.

To implement this approach to learning, I utilize both material and human affordances to create an environment of sociocognitive collaboration, a significant booster for fueling team research projects and the writing process. During the first few weeks of classes, I mentor my students on how to ask questions, make conversations, observe and evaluate, then provide and invite feedback. Through classroom interaction, students gradually learn how to assess strengths and weaknesses, annotate assignment sheets, build a skill inventory, interview fellow peers, and form adept and balanced teams for collaborative projects. I grant my students autonomy and agency after they learn teamwork, which consequently build successful teams and projects. In Professional Writing for example, a mixed-gender domestic and international student team identified an issue in gender imbalance enrollment in their own department. Together they worked on recommending a multiple-event campaign to increase recruitment of women in the School of Aviation and Transportation Technology at Purdue. To prepare my students for autonomous project execution, I teach them how to compose their team's code of conduct in ways to navigate equitable team dynamics. When the aviation team encountered conflicts, I witnessed their mature understanding of how teams function across disciplinary and identity differences. They did not promptly reach out but worked on finding solutions autonomously. In the progress report memos I assigned, I realized their strong negotiation skills and wise decisions for conflict resolution.

I model the recursive nature of research and composing in academic writing by walking my students through the process in an interactive manner where my students are simultaneously users and researchers. Due to my firm belief that writing and research are closely related, I focus on both primary and secondary research. I supervise student progress through their fieldwork research by encouraging them to report on their observations, share updates about their interview questions and surveys, user test their designed tools, discuss sources they are consulting, and lean on my expertise for best practices in ethnographic research when needed. Before they collect primary data, I explain the importance of secondary research, and I develop inquisitive, efficient, and thoughtful library research skills. My students learn how to choose sources by evaluating the relevance and reliability of both source content and authorship. Together in individual conferencing, we collaboratively negotiate data triangulation from both secondary and primary research methods.

To manage time efficiently during busy class weeks, I sometimes replace conferencing with progress report memos, and I link them to different stages of the research and writing process. By examining recurrent themes in students' reflective memos, it has come to my

attention that students often struggle with transitions from data excavation to report writing or argumentation. To guide them through such challenging transitions, I show them how to create digital data banks where they select, annotate, and classify evidence in systematic procedures, thus accomplishing a Spinuzzi (2013) topsight view of their data. After finding patterns, I encourage them to infer the overall themes and design a mind map which guides them to build their arguments. I do not provide ready-made scaffolds, rather I enable my students to design, build, and customize their own scaffolds based on identifying and evaluating needs.

From conversations with colleagues, theoretical pedagogy readings, and mentoring practicums, I have come to realize that writing is an activity system which prepares students to compose in a variety of settings where they use their writing, digital technology, and research skills for different purposes and contexts. To convince my students that writing is not restricted to the required university coursework they take, I share with them writing from the workplace, proposals for winning grants from academia, and job docs from various industries. I also show them various writing venues outside of academia, ask them to describe their observations, and reflect on how writing is continuously evolving based on its relevant rhetorical situation. I invite them to report on their own internship experiences, reflect upon different types and levels of communication, and evaluate where writing skills are most needed in their targeted industry.

In First Year Writing, I invest in students' cultural repertoires and prior literacy experiences. For that purpose, I distribute a demographic survey at the beginning of the semester which collects data about each student's educational background, nationality, culture, languages, prior experiences with diversity, lifestyle, and general interests. I believe that my students who come from small farming communities in Indiana and those who come from urban cities like Seattle and New Jersey can and should have a fruitful conversation. I collaborate with colleagues who teach the L2-writing-specific sections, and together we link our domestic and international sections for both cultural exposure and interaction. Through cross-cultural collaboration, both our domestic and international students do not sustain a Midwestern or a Chinese university experience; they develop globalized perspectives about education.

In studio-customized classes, I provide my students with affordances to use technology and implement multimodal design during their composing processes. When working with visual design, for example, my students explore HATS principles (Headings, Access, Typography and Space) by investigating authentic poster and website design. Before re-mediating their projects into research posters, I design activities that enable students to develop a critical eye towards visual design principles. They assess authentic graphic designers' and typographers' work, evaluate multimodal composing in different rhetorical situations, and observe the interplay between visuals and texts as projected in a variety of digital platforms. Before teaching design, I teach thinking processes that allow students to transform writing into different forms contingent to the appropriate context, audience, genre, and medium. I encourage them to deal with constraints from a problem setting perspective in order to articulate successful communication befitting each rhetorical situation.

I practice what I preach. As I involve my students in experiential learning, I experience the same cycle myself within my teaching and research communities to observe how both – teaching and research – reciprocally influence each other and contribute to knowledge building.