

Certification in College Teaching Institute, May 24, 26 & 27, 2021 Michigan State University

Worksheet for Reflections and Applications of Teaching and Learning

Session: Understanding the University Context: Aligning Teaching w/ Different Institutional Types & Missions Thursday morning

What skills and techniques did I learn that will help me become a better educator?

This session helped me understand how institutional mission statements can guide and strengthen my teaching, both in practice and in how I communicate my pedagogical commitments on the job market. I learned the importance of aligning my teaching philosophy with the values and goals of the institutions I apply to, not just to tailor materials strategically, but to ensure my work resonates with the larger educational institution I hope to join. This was a useful shift: from thinking about teaching as something personal and classroom-bound, to seeing it as something responsive to a broader institutional context.

What things am I still uncertain about regarding this topic that I need to investigate further in the future?

While I feel confident in the alignment between my teaching and research in practice, I still struggle with how to articulate that relationship clearly in writing. In particular, I want to explore how to weave my research interests into teaching statements without letting one overshadow the other. I'd like to see more examples or mentorship around this type of integration. I find this to be especially important for documents that need to speak to both hiring committees and institutional missions.

How can I apply materials from this session to my own class to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning?

One concrete step I can take is to revisit my current institution's mission and reflect on how it appears in my syllabus design, assignments, and classroom practices. For example, if my institution prioritizes community engagement or global learning, I can find more intentional ways to echo those commitments in my course framing. I also want to model this kind of macro-to-micro thinking for students: helping them see how their own work fits into broader structures, values, and systems. Ultimately, this session reminded me that teaching is not one-size-fits-all, but should be responsive to where we teach, who we're teaching, and what kinds of futures we're preparing students for.