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My critical pedagogy views teaching as a collaborative, culturally responsive activity that resists top-down banking models of learning while remaining sensitive to the need for teacher authority in the classroom. Critical pedagogy views education as a means to achieve social justice and change and aims to produce lifelong learners who are adept at identifying their own and others' assumptions and prepared to be change agents in their professional careers. To achieve these goals my pedagogy focuses on, creating an authentic learning environment, fostering critical self-reflection and experiential learning. Together, these goals scaffold a learning environment that values and acknowledges diversity of life experiences, cultural background, social identities, and positionalities; encourages critical thinking and adapts to students' various ways of learning and engagement.

Creating a diverse and authentic learning environment

Creating an authentic learning environment begins opportunities to build authentic relationships based on trust, reciprocity and affirming exchanges that value multiple ways of being and knowing. My personal engagement strategy is foundational to creating an authentic learning environment. I join my students in the classroom as a co-learner, a colleague and a facilitator. Not only does this build trust, it also encourages students to see themselves as self-directed learners and co-facilitators in the classroom. I also encourage my students and I to get to know each other – promoting appropriate disclosure and facilitating a space to practice this important skill we employ with the populations we engage with and deeply care about. Through regular check-in's that tend to students lives inside and outside of the classroom, I elevate the value of students' personal well-being, to create supportive spaces for authentic engagement. I intentionally design my courses to include multiple ways of engagement, recognizing different learning styles of my students. I utilize small group and class discussions, complemented by an online discussion board for those who thrive with the use of technology.

Critical self-reflection

As I engage in the teaching, I draw on the knowledge and skills of social work practice. Paramount to the myriad skills that I bring to the classroom is centrality of self. Social workers use themselves as tools to help others. It is in this frame that I focus on humility and authenticity in the classroom environment. I believe that a deep understanding of ourselves allows us to engage with others and the content in a way that is deeply personal. This personal connection to the knowledge undoubtedly supports the application of knowledge in our professional and personal lives. The use of self in the social work profession inherently provides a basis for motivation. However, I have often asked myself what motivates this process of curiosity, this yearning to understand? The research surrounding student's motivation elevates the role of a supportive environment but also focuses on student efficacy and value. Some students will come with intrinsic value for the work, others with instrumental value. My role then is to guide students through the process of understanding where their motivation emerges. Although, easier said than done, I believe that creating the space for students to use themselves in a way that

facilitates understanding of the content, motivations will surface. One example of this occurred as I was facilitating an Intergroup Dialogue Course in the BASW program at the University of Washington. Students were able to explore their social identities during the first few weeks of the class. Then we began to learn about macro problems of oppression and inequality. Having an understanding of who they are, allowed them to know where they stand and to develop sound arguments around various social problems. Students were then, motivated to do something about the problems they now understood. This demonstrates that when students use themselves as a point of reference, they are not only able to critically reflect, but they are motivated to take action.

Experiential learning

Using experiential learning strategies to create a lively and supportive classroom environment is another important characteristic of my teaching. As a facilitator and educator, my role is to harness students' lived experiences as a basis for critical self-reflection and experiential learning. Experiential learning strategies allow me to provide a variety of opportunities for students to participate in classroom activities, which are responsive to a range of learning and communication styles. By adopting experiential learning strategies, I am able to design activities that are personally relevant to the student. As much as possible, I aim to use students' involvement in real world projects as a way for them to see theory in action and to be able to practice the skills they have learned in the classroom.

In the end, my teaching goals have been met when my students demonstrate the ability to connect learning content with their experiences through journaling, critical engagement in the dialogical process, and creating presentations that highlight the ways they translate learning into action. My hope is for my students to create a narrative that reflects how their classroom learning informs their practice, and how their practice provides a lens through which they critically engage with their learning.