**Teaching Philosophy**

The act of learning is a lifelong process and as humans, we are always learning. Learning can happen formally and informally. Schools are places where learning takes place in a formal manner but learning isn’t limited to schools. The school, teacher, student and the curriculum all have different roles but they need to connect to one another.

In this class we have discussed the ideas of John Dewey. His theory of experience was that human interaction with the world around them is what makes experiences. They are essentially one and therefore humans are always learning. In the school sphere, curriculum should be meaningful to students because that is how we naturally learn. If curriculum is meaningful and relevant to students and their life experiences, then they will learn. Currently there is substantial amount of material that needs to be covered in the curriculum. The way that the curriculum is presented though is what really matters. It needs to be child centered as a basis for student learning.

The school’s role in education is to serve as an environment to foster and evoke learning. Schools should be places where students can express and learn about themselves. They should be able to grow as individuals in school and become contributors to society when they leave school. This doesn’t mean that that school should keep producing the status quo but be a place for social change. The role of a teacher in a student’s education should not be to teach a student what to think but how to think. These two ideas are very different from one another. If teachers are teaching students what to think, then the student isn’t learning to be a critical thinker. The teacher then just becomes a sender and the student a receiver and the cycle stops there. They aren’t exchanging information because the student isn’t getting an opportunity to do anything with the information they received. The teacher’s role is to offer different tools for the student to choose from. They should aid the student in becoming critical thinkers with the material that they are presented with.

Students’ roles in school should be to become critical thinkers so that in the future they can become contributors to a just society. They are always learning and this doesn’t just take place in a school setting. It is difficult for students because before they even enter school, there is inequality among them. When they get to school they are all required to be at “grade level.” Standardized testing and some of the curriculum is used as a way to measure this but don’t take factors into consideration. Students come from all sorts of economic backgrounds and sadly a lot have to deal with a significant amount of problems at home that really affect their achievement in school.

As human beings we are always learning. It is a lifelong process that happens informally and formally. Schools are a more formal way where learning takes place. Children and adolescents spend a majority of their time in schools so schools should be places where students can grow as individuals. Teachers should be committed to student learning and if they are presented with a vast amount of curriculum they should just throw it at the students. Curriculum should be presented in a way that is meaningful so that students can critically analyze it and use it to reason the world for themselves.