

STEPHANIE HALEY WILLIAMS, JD, MBA

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My goals as a writing instructor are to facilitate learning of three related skills that will carry students through all academic and professional endeavors; these skills are a proficiency in written and multi-modal communication, a healthy confidence in learning and communicating ability, and an adequate time-management and self-motivation action plan. In order to facilitate the learning of these three skills, I incorporate key factors in my classroom (whether live or online): scaffolding, collaboration, and process.

All assignments are structured with scaffolding to emphasize process, ensure understanding and encourage completion. By scaffolding, I break a large assignments into several smaller point assignments. Scaffolding is important because it allows students to practice, potentially making errors and learning from them, in lower-stake environments.

Learning to successfully collaborate is a fundamental skill for any successful student (and professional). In a live classroom, collaboration is relatively easy to facilitate in the form of mini-group projects and live class discussion. However, the online student should not be deprived of this opportunity. Therefore, online student collaboration is fostered through forum discussion, low-stake virtual group assignments, and various online applications (such as Skype, Google Hangouts or even contemporaneous Google Doc editing).

Process writing is essential to the development of proficient communication skills. Students in my classes learn many different types of writing by practice and process. Process emphasizes self-editing and revision as well as cognitive reflection.

As a college-level instructor, I believe my job is to promote my students' success not only in the subject matter but also in life. I believe that all students are capable of success. By teaching students to communicate well, I am providing them with a skill necessary for that success.