

## Teaching Statement

Educators have the responsibility to help students to succeed within the classroom and in their future careers. To best support my students, my teaching philosophy consists of providing opportunities for 1) **structured independent learning**, 2) **applied skill development**, and 3) **bridging science with real-world applications**. Building on these foundational areas, my teaching practice constantly evolves to reflect my experiences and trainings, and most importantly, the feedback I receive from my students.

1) **Every student is unique in their learning styles, abilities, beliefs, identities, and educational backgrounds. To embrace these differences, I employ structured independent learning techniques** exemplified by my instruction of Human Brain and Mind – An Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience (HD 2200). Students develop their own research proposal throughout the course. First, students pick a neurological disorder and propose a research question. Next, they propose methods, hypotheses, ethical concerns, and potential pitfalls. At each step, I provide extensive feedback to help them refine their ideas, which they compile into a comprehensive research proposal. Through this structured, self-guided process, students are more motivated to understand and apply their neuroscientific knowledge to their research proposals.

2) **Classrooms and research labs are opportunities for students to advance their academic, personal, and professional skillsets. As a teacher and mentor, I strive to empower students to develop skills that will help them succeed in their future careers.** These include skill development opportunities, engaging discussions, and assignments requiring critical analyses. This past summer, I created and conducted a series of professional development workshops for 20+ trainees in my research lab. Topics included academic reading/writing, science communication, data visualisation, and work-life balance. These workshops provided students with a safe space where they could learn and improve skills crucial for success in both academia and industry.

3) **Neuroscience is part of our everyday lives. In my teaching, I bridge neuroscientific concepts and real-world applications using examples from popular culture media.** In the attention unit for HD 2200, students investigate how media companies target our attentional networks to keep us engaged. In the motivation unit, students infer how technology companies manipulate our reward circuitry to foster social media addictions. In the memory unit, students examine how food/beverage companies exploit our associate memory processes to trigger emotional responses to different taste profiles. Throughout these exercises, students can apply their knowledge to understanding the reality of how our neurobiological processes play a role in our day-to-day activities.

Being an educator is as much a learning experience as it is a teaching experience. As I strive to shape and cultivate minds of future change-makers, the process continues to shape and cultivate my teaching practice.