The following samples are written by winners of the [Graduate Associate Teaching Award(link is external)](http://www.gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-associate-teaching-award.html) at Ohio State, and are examples of various formats you may choose to use.

**Philosophy of Teaching Statement**  
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More than anything, I want students to recognize my genuine passion for teaching and interest in them as individuals. I want my classes to be challenging but fair, valuable beyond their time at Ohio State, and fun. I am obligated to provide a high quality experience and strive to be the teacher I want as a student. To accomplish this, I integrate things I have learned in my own classes, student evaluations and a variety of studies and books I have read about teaching on the university level.

First and foremost, I want to challenge students and push them out of their comfort zone. I tell them the first day: if school is not challenging, their investment of time and money is trivialized, to the detriment of their value to prospective employers. Being demanding yet fair is by far my most difficult task. There are always gifted, self-motivated students who will rise to any challenge I offer. What about those less driven, or less able? It says little of me if I set the bar high and then watch dispassionately as students sink or swim. That is not how I work. I implore them to make a consistent effort, with the promise I will provide support for anyone who demonstrates as much. Many of my students struggle early. I reassure them as a class, and privately: ‘Don’t panic, don’t quit; as we progress through the quarter, this will become more and more normal.’ This reassurance does not work like magic, but eventually it does take hold. My rules are simple: Don’t panic, don’t quit, come talk to me. I always find a way to reward effort. This includes extra credit opportunities, but never ‘free of charge.’ I trade points for knowledge. On my Carmen site, I post an entire section of additional readings of interest. Students know up front that at the end of the quarter, they can do additional reading and take a quiz. I credit any points they earn toward prior quiz grades, allowing them to make amends for earlier disappointments. Ultimately, most students trust me and buy into the system. My grades are relatively high; not because I give students anything. The grades are earned. In addition to challenging, I want my class to be interesting and fun.

My methodology entails heavy reading (approximately 100 pages per class period) and abbreviated lectures (approximately 30 minutes). Research demonstrates that reading improves vocabulary and language use, which improves writing skills – all of which improve public speaking skills. All are premium job skills. I adopted shorter lectures based on student feedback. Students find interaction and discussion more interesting. To ensure that students read with a sense of purpose, every class begins with a brief quiz. We review the answers in class, and as we do, I expand on the content and add detail by referencing other sources. This tends to spur interest and further discussion as we walk through the quiz. In addition, I allow students to ‘negotiate’ with me. In other words, I allow them to ask if what they put is sufficiently accurate. Sometimes I say no, sometimes I give half credit, and sometimes what they write is not at all what I was looking for, but I am so impressed with the level of detail they absorbed, I give them full credit. This is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the class because, while the heavy reading and daily quizzes can seem daunting, students quickly realize that they are empowered to make their case and earn credit. This is my way of acknowledging that creating each quiz is not an exact science, nor are the items I select the definitive aspects of the reading. The give-and-take of these exchanges inevitably leads to laughter, inside jokes related to prior quizzes, and mutual respect between us. The level of enjoyment these ‘negotiations’ generate is most notable at the end of the quarter when I offer the extra credit quizzes in my office. Students arrive sporadically over the course of two hours, take the quiz and leave due to time constraints. Almost all of them say something to the effect of ‘this is not as much fun without the negotiations; I miss that.’ To hear this is priceless because many of these students struggled a bit throughout the quarter, and to hear them lament the fun being over is truly amazing. In addition to being interesting and fun, I want to be organized and responsive. This manifests itself in three ways: 1) daily game plans; 2) e-mail response and personal meetings; and 3) immediate grading.

During the last 5 minutes of each class, I review the up-coming readings. I tell them why we are covering this material and how it connects to prior readings and our larger plan moving forward. I provide a general guideline to what they should focus on, and what they can gloss over. By articulating these connections, I help them organize their thoughts and synthesize the readings. It also alleviates the sensation of being pounded by wave after wave of readings. As mentioned earlier, I know that a certain portion of the class will struggle early on. I allow for time to meet with students after class, am very diligent about responding to e-mails quickly, and devote 4 office hours per week for personal consultations. Students always know that I am there for them. Without question, the organizational aspect that students most appreciate is my quick and detailed grading. Quiz grades are posted by late afternoon. Rather than extensive papers at mid-term and final, students write 5 papers between 600-700 words in length at a time of their choosing – giving them freedom to manage their time. I grade and return these papers with detailed comments the same night they are submitted. To earn their participation points, they post 10 opinion paragraphs between 200-230 words in length on our Carmen discussion forum. I read and post these grades the same night. The final component of the class entails a group presentation where each student presents a media sample related to the current content and poses discussion questions to their classmates. These grades are also posted immediately, along with my comments. All told, students know their grade in real-time, where they stand, and why. This is a show of respect and organization they really appreciate.

*Self-improvement*  
I have done many things to further my development. Last fall, I shadowed one of our full professors for an entire quarter, and wrote a 1500 word essay about my observations for class credit. I wanted to pursue the teaching specialization minor but realized I could not fit the class requirements into my other class and teaching schedule, as well as pursue all my research projects. Nonetheless I learned a lot by watching a seasoned veteran for ten weeks. Last October, I conducted a two hour workshop for new graduate students who were scheduled to begin teaching later in the year. This was mutually beneficial because the preparation and subsequent discussion forced me to reflect on my own teaching, triggering new ideas. Upon request, I have served as a guest lecturer in six undergraduate Comm classes. I was also invited to give a two hour lecture on the political history of the Middle East and Central Asia for graduating Air Force ROTC cadets. This opportunity came because a former student recommended me to his superiors. I am currently writing and producing a series of television shows with a group of students majoring in television production. I work directly with their advisors to ensure the project warrants class credit. I am also helping a former student on his undergraduate thesis project. He has enlisted my help in acquiring sources, and also for editing the paper. I also make an effort to read books and studies that examine teaching on the university level. These include Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses, by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa; one study by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and one by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. All told, my passion for teaching leads to opportunities to teach more, which enhances my skills and creates further opportunities. I am never ‘good enough’ and am always seeking opportunities to hone my skills and contribute to others, including fellow graduate students.