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Teaching Statement

I have made the decision to teach in the field of biology with sound choice. The decision is derived from developing tools in foundational, analytical and relatable education in biological sciences. Since my days as an elementary student, my favorite lessons were always related to science. They required the ability to have logical thinking from early on. As I developed mentally and emotionally into higher education, this requirement only intensified. Logical thinking allows you to analyze biology in the world around you and explore those questions that come to mind, often to later define what you value in the natural world. I can still recall immersing myself in the cause-and-effect anomalies that occur in nature, as I stood on my parents’ property boundary to witness a house fire ravage acres of woods that surrounded it. I burned with questions about the biology of the trees: how long would it take for pioneer species to return to the land and what happens to the tree-dwelling birds and mammals? Furthermore, what about their biology allows them to survive in these habitats? To gain the knowledge of the natural order of biology remains central to my teaching core. As a teacher I model these interests into my course design by creating a holistic agenda. This requires students to practice skills paying attention, synthesizing, and applying information to a larger image of the coursework. In ornithology coursework, students would learn the foundations of bird structure and behavior, synthesize the information, and relay it on a final project that incorporates relaying compounding knowledge. A perfect example of this would be identifying a species, describing its behavior based on auditory-specific characteristics, and describing possible scenarios that could arise.

Lecturing in the classroom and the lab will allow students to gain confidence in one setting and apply it in another. This is important when learning analytical tests due to the sometimes complicated nature of learning and mastering lab skills. I think it is very important to improve memory, listening and writing skills to generate work that is accurate and relatable. I think students will find success if they are able to find a mentor in me. By demonstrating an appreciation for the field of science, students can look to me as a relator to conquering learning challenges in the course. In practicing a hands-on method for teaching analytical and field techniques, I can demonstrate the skills I have learned working in the biopharmaceutical industry as well as in academia. This approach lets the students not only see what sort of science career options exist upon graduation but also that I am passionate to continuously employ the skills I have gained in my journey. As a previous molecular and microbiologist, I know that students will learn independent learning skills when completing or validating protocols and analyzing data, just as I did in previous professions.

I enjoy teaching because of the opportunity to network with other people and share my passion of biology. Each educational and career setting has provoked a desire to conquer the challenges that define me as a teacher. In the future, I would like to take advantage of attending seminars and training opportunities, pursue further analytical testing, and contribute to break-through research by enlisting the minds of my students for help. I currently work with the Indiana State University Bat Center where I study physiology and behavior on endangered and non-endangered bats. I have enjoyed this experience because I have met other people that come from a variety of education levels and experiences. As a teacher, the ideas developed from these connections will be utilized at everlasting self-improvement continues throughout my career.