

2017

Why I Teach

Catherine Reinke
Linfield College

Linfield Magazine Staff

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine

Recommended Citation

Reinke, Catherine and Linfield Magazine Staff (2017) "Why I Teach," *Linfield Magazine*: Vol. 13 : No. 2 , Article 8.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine/vol13/iss2/8

This article is brought to you for free via open access, courtesy of DigitalCommons@Linfield. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@linfield.edu.

Why I teach

CATHERINE REINKE

*Associate professor of biology
B.A., Carleton College
Ph.D., University of Chicago*

ACADEMIC INTERESTS:

Molecular genetics and cell biology

LAB FOCUS:

Determining the molecular mechanisms of gene silencing by microRNAs, one class of small, non-coding ribonucleic acid (RNA) essential to plants and animals. Particular microRNA profiles are correlated with disease states, and the pharmaceutical industry is developing a number of microRNA-based therapeutics.



I teach because I want to share what I have learned. When I was very young, my grandfather, who attended one year of high school, told me that people feel badly about themselves when they can't solve a puzzle; my grandmother, who finished eighth grade, frequently asked me if I wanted to be a teacher. Their words were often on my mind as I decided what to do with my life.

Thanks to exceptional professors, as a first-generation college student I fell in love with a subject (biology) and a process (performing experiments to learn something no one else knew), and learned that I could contribute. During that time I also discovered that I loved explaining experiments and sharing conclusions as much as I loved learning from them.

I teach because teaching makes it my job to continually learn in a directed way. I am captivated by different ways of knowing, and by how much more there is to know within our

disciplines and at their intersections as each year unfolds. My obligations to my students ensure that I learn what will be valuable to our work together.

I teach because it is plain to see the danger in communicating in vague generalizations from a place of incomplete understanding. Genomics and molecular biology techniques are beginning to dramatically change the landscape of healthcare for patients and providers, and our students will benefit from knowledge of these subjects. I can't imagine more fulfilling work than helping students to develop their own tools of data collection, analysis and critical thinking, so that they are better able to solve the puzzles they encounter during and after their time at Linfield.

– Catherine Reinke

