

# Teaching Philosophy

**Dr. Afifa Anjum Khattak**

I believe that Project Management education must move beyond the mechanics of schedules, budgets, and tools. At its highest level, it is the cultivation of disciplined judgment, ethical responsibility, and governance-centered leadership. My work as an educator is guided by a central question: How can I prepare students not merely to manage projects, but to lead them with accountability and societal awareness?

Since 2002, I have taught graduate-level Project Planning and Management, and throughout this journey, my pedagogy has evolved into a research-informed, experiential model grounded in governance theory and performance evaluation. My doctoral research examined public sector healthcare projects through governance principles advanced by the United Nations Development Programme—transparency, accountability, participation, and consensus. These principles are not abstract concepts in my classroom; they form the analytical lens through which students evaluate real-world project outcomes.

I consciously integrate empirical findings from my published research into course discussions. When we analyze project failure, we examine structural accountability gaps. When we design project charters, we discuss stakeholder legitimacy and institutional alignment. When students prepare risk registers, we explore governance implications rather than merely probability calculations. This integration ensures that theory, research, and practice operate in a coherent framework.

I am deeply committed to experiential rigor. More than two decades ago, I institutionalized a Project Proposal Showcase model requiring students to develop complete project plans and publicly defend them before faculty panels using structured rubrics. This process simulates real approval environments and cultivates analytical confidence, professional articulation, and structured reasoning. It is demanding, but it transforms passive learners into accountable decision-makers.

Assessment transparency is central to my philosophy. I design detailed rubrics that clearly articulate expectations and performance standards. Students understand that evaluation is evidence-based and criterion-referenced. This clarity fosters motivation, reduces ambiguity, and strengthens academic integrity.

Alignment with international standards is also fundamental to my approach. My curriculum integrates predictive, agile, and hybrid methodologies consistent with frameworks promoted by the Project Management Institute. However, I emphasize that methodologies are tools; governance awareness and ethical leadership are enduring competencies.

Beyond my classroom, I view educational leadership as part of my responsibility. Through accreditation processes, curriculum development initiatives, and faculty training programs for universities in remote regions, I have sought to extend structured project management education beyond institutional boundaries.

What gives me the greatest professional satisfaction is observing former students lead public health initiatives, development programs, and corporate projects with analytical discipline

and ethical awareness. Their success affirms my belief that rigorous, research-informed teaching creates long-term societal impact.

For me, teaching is sustained commitment—continuous refinement of curriculum, integration of research evidence, and unwavering dedication to developing principled project leaders. It is not simply instruction; it is stewardship of professional standards and governance-conscious leadership for future generations.