

## **Philosophy Statement**

At UNIS we aim to promote the appreciation of the diversity of people and cultures by offering a global curriculum that inspires in our students the spirit and ideals of the United Nations Charter. As a result, we believe that, for UNIS, excellence in teaching and learning is based on a commitment to the following: a positive environment, a dynamic faculty, engaged students, varied and appropriate assessment, the UN mission, and social activism.

## **Principles of Teaching and Learning**

### **1. A culture of value and respect exists at UNIS to support students and improve learning.**

- 1.1. UNIS promotes an appreciation of and respect for students, their communities, and the diverse cultures and values of others;
- 1.2. The teacher builds positive relationships through knowing and valuing each student;
- 1.3. Teachers and parents communicate to support students' academic and social well-being;
- 1.4. The classroom environment enables students to feel safe physically, intellectually, and emotionally;
- 1.5. A supportive and intellectually challenging environment promotes both students' self-confidence and willingness to explore new possibilities.

### **2. Effective teachers have a detailed knowledge of how effective learning occurs.**

- 2.1. Teachers are responsible, individually and collectively, to teach the curriculum as determined by UNIS;
- 2.2. Teachers scaffold instruction so students can develop varied perspectives and different ways of thinking;
- 2.3. Teachers utilize a range of teaching strategies that support students to think and learn in different ways;
- 2.4. Teachers build on students' prior knowledge, experiences, and skills;
- 2.5. Teachers emphasize meaning and understanding by encouraging students to explore ideas and concepts;
- 2.6. Teachers use opportunities to integrate a range of appropriate technologies;
- 2.7. Teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their learning, their actions, and their interactions with others;
- 2.8. Teachers collaborate with one another to ensure excellence in teaching;
- 2.9. Teachers advocate for their students in order to help them meet their social, emotional, and educational needs;
- 2.10. Teachers continue to grow professionally in both their discipline and general pedagogy;
- 2.11. Teachers recognize their responsibility in having the ability to influence students as learners and individuals.

**3. Effective learners are empowered both academically and personally.**

- 3.1. Students engage, participate, and act appropriately;
- 3.2. Students cultivate strategies for learning across the disciplines;
- 3.3. Students cultivate different strategies to meet a variety of learning needs;
- 3.4. Students question and reflect;
- 3.5. Students utilize all the resources available within the learning community;
- 3.6. Students explore different perspectives and develop new ways of thinking;
- 3.7. Students apply concepts and skills beyond the classroom.

**4. Effective assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and should reflect the range of learning objectives.**

- 4.1. Assessment enables teachers and students to monitor present learning and plan for the future;
- 4.2. Teachers use appropriate and varied assessment tasks;
- 4.3. The assessment task is clearly defined and has explicit criteria for success;
- 4.4. Students have access to assessment criteria prior to the assessment task;
- 4.5. Assessment provides explicit feedback to the learner so the student can monitor progress;
- 4.6. Self-assessment and reflection are essential;
- 4.7. Students work with peers to review and reflect on their learning.

**5. The commitment to the ideals and work of the United Nations and recognition of our responsibilities as world citizens are central to UNIS.**

- 5.1. The community recognizes our responsibility and accountability to the world at large by encouraging students to think and act ethically;
- 5.2. The school nurtures responsibility, creativity, cooperation, respect, independence, and an international perspective in students;
- 5.3. Students understand the work of the UN and its mission;
- 5.4. Students are expected to take an active role in the school and community-at-large.

**6. UNIS is committed to developing connections with local and international communities.**

- 6.1 Parents provide essential involvement to further their child's learning and academic performance;
- 6.2 The school uses UN, local, and international resources to extend and enhance learning;
- 6.3 Students recognize the value of and engage in community service and action.

**Monitor and Review:** This policy will be reviewed every five years in order to take into account new initiatives, changes in curriculum, developments in technology or other changes that impact teaching and learning at UNIS.