

## Teaching Philosophy

My goals as an instructor in higher education can be described in terms of three related ideas. First, I strive to inspire students to engage, both with the course content as well as with each other as peers in the studio environment. I attempt to initiate this engagement through a clear presentation of class material, and then further students' interests through thoughtful discussion of students' responses and related ideas. Second, stemming from this engagement, I seek to develop viable knowledge foundations in each student. These foundations, while similar due to the parameters of a given course, are not intended to be identical between students, but rather uniquely suited to support students' individual goals. Finally, I work to cultivate a sense of curiosity within students and inspire them to build on their knowledge foundations with life-long learning goals.

The strategies I employ for achieving my goals as an educator are many and diverse. Yet, they are unified by my commitment to establishing a personal connection with as many students as I can. I use the approach of a personal investment of energy as a means for motivating students to do the same, and thereby create a classroom environment conducive to engaging interactions. My use of this method is consistent across traditional teaching strategies, such as large-group lectures, as well as more contemporary active learning strategies, such as peer learning. In large-group lectures, I work to engage students' critical thinking by pacing my dissemination of information with questions and time for reflection. In turn, when students offer responses to these questions, I attempt to both address them by name, and accentuate what I feel is the most valuable aspect of what they have put forth. With peer learning activities, I seek to emphasize the value of the personalized knowledge students can assimilate on their own. More, I believe that the process of explaining this knowledge to another serves to both expand and solidify its merit.

I believe the most appropriate means for evaluating my effectiveness as an educator can be found in the creative output of my students. While this is an inherently subjective form of measure, I feel that the work of my students consistently demonstrates deliberate and complex analytical and synthetic consideration. Further, due to the interdisciplinary nature of the fields of art and design, I believe that collaboration between students can be a uniquely rewarding experience. Thus, the success of my methods can also be found in students' cooperative efforts.

My decision to pursue a career as an educator in higher education derives from a sincere desire to make a difference. It has been my experience in life that the most rewarding activities

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are usually a product of helping someone else. This idea is a significant contributing factor in my practice as an artist and designer, but it is the primary driving force of my commitment to teaching. As well, I believe one of the best ways we, as humans, can assist each other is through the sharing of knowledge. In my opinion, an integral part of the knowledge sharing process involves conveying an understanding of the power that knowledge brings. As a result, one of the most satisfying experiences, for me, is found in inspiring students to become life-long learners.