

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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I try to engender three main things in my pedagogy, each of which reflects my own core values as a working artist and professional: creating a consistent rhythm of work, promoting curiosity, and planning for the workplace. I believe these three elements are crucial for fostering sustainable student success. I will address each, with a final encompassing statement about equity-minded teaching.

In music, as in any discipline, gaining a true facility with the language requires consistent work. Very early on in the semester I try to convey to my students that there will be a regular interval of work they are expected to complete. I center my lecture time and assignments around the basic question, "What are students going to learn to do by the end of the class that they couldn't do before they walked through the door?" In turn it is imperative to provide consistent feedback. In this manner I get a very good sense of students as individuals, and I can also adapt accordingly for trouble spots.

A structured learning environment is important, but I also value curiosity, tangents, and permitting investigation of topics not necessarily in the syllabus. Students become invested when they feel that they are learning what they want to learn, and with proper guidance, this type of discovery can be incredibly constructive. I particularly enjoy scenarios where I don't have the answer myself, and we go about figuring things out together. This has at times lead to dead ends, but when students see that I am just like them, we gain a deeper sense of community, mutual respect, and humility.

Learning as an end unto itself is laudable, but I also want my students to be able to get jobs and make positive contributions in the workforce. I have established standing relationships with local studios and employers in my area. I believe in actively including students in my research pursuits. Much of my instruction is oriented toward modeling professional situations.

The 21st century is a precarious time for those involved with digital media and the arts. Entertainment and creative content industries are undergoing dramatic upheaval and evolution. For students who are now just getting degrees in the arts and entering into professional life, it is a remarkably fertile yet unstable landscape. It is therefore imperative to equip them with skills that will transfer well into a variety of professional situations. Combining rigorous training cycles and curiosity with real-world application can help prepare students to serve effectively and wisely.

Finally, in recent years I have become increasingly interested in teaching through the lens of equity. I am mindful of the great disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes of the students I serve, and am trying to understand systems of *inequity* that create this landscape among students of differing backgrounds and circumstances. I have likewise sought out diversity training (called "Safezone" at our College) to become a visible ally to lesbian, gay, transgender and questioning students. It is my aim to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment on campus for members of the LGBTQ+ community. I make an effort to get to know all my students well enough to kindle a fire, set high expectations, and provide guidance and support to meet those standards to reach their full potential.