

Teaching Statement

The 21st century is a precarious time for those involved with digital media and the arts, and we are experiencing the beginning of what I hope to be a sea change in the way that music is taught in the United States.

In recent years I have become increasingly interested in teaching through the lens of equity. Even within that context, having taught diverse populations at Hunter College (CUNY), Purchase College (SUNY), and Moorpark College for over a decade, these recent years have been galvanizing for me as an educator, and I have found my passion artistically and pedagogically: I want to be an agent for real change within American education to help shape music curriculum to be reformed away from a euro-centric, white-privileging model. 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. My work in revamping music theory curriculum within our program reflects this change: to be mindful of representation in music selections, and to focus on legitimizing Hip Hop and other non-European traditions alongside 'canonical' works and composition techniques.

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.

Having taught at a community college, the need has been to build early undergraduate students to be prepared to achieve highly when transferring to four-year schools. With a possible transition to work with graduate students, I relish the opportunity to mentor students to develop and contribute to the larger global academic community. I believe in actively including students in my research pursuits. Much of my instruction is oriented toward modeling professional situations, whether that is working in a variety of music industry contexts, or preparing students to pursue careers in education via publication and conference prep.

Toward that end, 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. The establishment of the Moorpark College Music Technology program from the ground up reflects these values. We have a thriving internship network, a supportive community of students with varied musical styles and interests, and a culture of resourcefulness.