



Teaching Philosophy


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I teach to give students the knowledge and processes they need to achieve success. Theatre uniquely addresses many forms of art and technology allowing students of all ages to explore and create, two fundamental actions necessary for advancement. Exploration encourages discovery, exchange of ideas, and in-depth investigation that leads to understanding processes in order to accomplish tasks effectively and efficiently, reaching conclusions in order to move onto the next idea, and finding vision by learning how to think and becoming inspired. Vision comes alive through creation, which allows us to further develop our ideas and apply our knowledge and skills to make something new, exciting, and relevant. Working in theatre demands exploration and creation along with hard work, self-respect, confidence, originality, craftsmanship, collaboration, and communication. With the interdisciplinary skill sets developed through theatrical study and production, a student is equipped to navigate their future regardless of their chosen path.

My goal is to guide my students so that they may explore their talents, refine their existing abilities, engage new perspectives, and develop successful processes and techniques. I strive to show each student how they can use their unique combination of skills to achieve their goals and endeavor to help expose each student to not only the world but to his or herself. I instruct using a hands-on approach to learning in order to infuse each student with the practical ability as well as the theoretical knowledge to achieve mastery and express his or herself artistically. I require my students to not only read about art, theatre, and design but also see it, touch it, and experience it first-hand. Nothing teaches like experience! I strongly encourage each and every student to get out there and get dirty both in and out of the classroom.

In the classroom, I employ a combination of lecture, discussion, and lab work in order for my students to become familiar with theatrical production, to verbally explore it in depth, and then to develop design and production skills through practical application. For example, while studying color theory, I first lecture on the basic principles of color including studies involving the effects that color has upon people from varying cultures as well as the technical differences between pigments and light. This opens a discussion regarding the effects that different colors have on setting and mood. I then provide the opportunity, through an interactive lab, for students to experience the effects of color and color mixing on several different materials and surfaces. Practical application closely following the associated lecture and discussion stimulates excitement as students see how the theories discussed work in reality. Excitement leads to more in-depth discussion, skill development, and increased opportunities to process and solidify the information learned. Students learn to further explore alternative techniques and apply newfound artistry.

In order to continue melding the theories, principles, and fundamentals of design with practical application, I require each student to attend every main stage production put on by the department and compose a written response. This assignment stimulates each student to respond to the production's impact on him or her personally, leading the students to consider the effect that the design and production values had upon the audience. I also encourage every



student to experience as much theatre outside of the university as possible so that they may gain exposure to alternative and unique methods, become aware of current trends, and be current and involved in their field. My goal is for each class to visit a professional production as part of their course. Viewing and, better yet, participating in professional theatre gives students the opportunity to employ and further expand their skills, develop critical thinking, and expand their working knowledge of alternative equipment and processes.

In a continually evolving field affected by a constant influx of technological advancement, students must be familiar with both old and new practices and equipment. Throughout the semester, I ask my students to bring in and discuss articles from the past and present to gain insight into the evolution of our art's aesthetics and infrastructure. These articles continually present students with new tools and ideas and help keep them informed of current industry trends. A thorough understanding of theatre design history and developments, coupled with exciting new innovations and modern technology, encourages students to explore a wide variety of styles, conventions, and ideas in order to create a work of art. Knowing and understanding the mechanisms of the past and present helps students explore and create by keeping the doors open to limitless possibilities.