

Teaching Philosophy

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Self-discovery and practice are the foundations of my teaching philosophy. Students are paying universities to prepare them for jobs in the real world. Rather than limit a student's potential through only career specific training, I use Costume Production (the process of generating wearable costumes) as the substrate through which students learn about themselves, each other, and the techniques to make costumes.

Do you need learning accommodations? Do you need physical accommodations? What is happening in your personal life? How do you personally solve problems? Humans are complex beings. Busy as you are, have you ever questioned your methodologies- how you do things? Are you copying what someone else taught you or have you found methods that actually serve you and make you feel more fulfilled as a person? Students arrive in higher education with presumptions about themselves and how they "should be." A goal in my classes is for students to question their learning methodologies and discover how to accommodate themselves whether that's through adjustments in their behavior or advocating for support from institutions.

Understanding yourself opens your creative potential. No longer are you bound by preconceived notions, but you can assess any situation and provide new solutions that solve the problem more effectively. Creative problem solving is essential for any adult in the work force. Jobs fulfill a societal need. They solve a problem. Careers are made by people who adapt to new problems with creative solutions.

Developing project-based classes, students practice techniques learned in class, putting the focus on process and self-discovery. Students conduct experiments, creating a plan of action to satisfy a prompt and solving the unforeseen problems that arise. By working physically, we cover a variety of learning styles raising student knowledge retention through firsthand experience.

Students monitor their own progress using Reflections. Reflections are digital, weekly assignments that ask students the following questions; "What did you work on this week? Did you have struggles and how did you overcome them? What were your successes or aspects that you enjoyed or want to celebrate? How much time did you spend on your project this week? Do you need to re-evaluate your schedule or approach to meet your desired outcomes and deadlines?"

By utilizing these assignments, students stay engaged with their process and develop an understanding of how long it takes to produce high quality work and how to better balance their lives. They discover what their strengths and weaknesses are in a concrete and reviewable method that shapes how they accommodate their needs. Reflections also provide a window for me to understand each student's experiences and how I can best help them progress in their development.