

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.” Albert Einstein

As both professional and teacher I have several goals that I want my students to achieve in order to be successful. I want students to understand the connection between culture and design in order to have a deeper understanding of concepts behind visual solutions. With the ever-changing shape of the profession, flexibility and adaptability are necessities for students to succeed. I engage students in the analysis of the factors that drive the decision-making processes and motivate them to look beyond solutions that are satisfactory. I aim to teach students to embrace critical thinking, attention to detail, organization and craftsmanship as necessary qualities to succeed in the profession. Finally, I hope to instill a sense of confidence in my students, by encouraging them to feel comfortable not only creating design, but also to see themselves as culture makers. A thorough understanding of the design process, awareness of culture, design integration, and a commitment to learning will prepare students for the rigors of professional practice.

In order to achieve these goals, I require my students to be artists first, experimenting with sketches, and creating various solutions to a given visual problem, and then analyze which one is most worthy of execution and presentation in class. Fostering creativity through brainstorming, sketching, and critical thinking often gives students results in a range of concepts to a solution. With research as a base, technology as a production tool, and critical thinking skills engaged, the graphic design process develops naturally, allowing for future professional success. Classroom critiques provide a platform for students to articulate their own thoughts about design and demonstrate what they have learned. I challenge students to participate in a weekly platform (blogs) in which they must write and add visual content. This promotes opportunities for writing about design, self-growth as a designer, and interaction with peers. Furthermore, this platform expands students' cultural language of design. I also present students with clear expectations, a detailed syllabus, and semester schedule to provide organization and structure in their development.

My varied design experience has resulted in a wealth of practical knowledge to share with students. As a design educator and mentor, I strive to inspire my students to become creative problem solvers with a sense of respect for themselves and for the field of graphic design.