

Teaching Philosophy

The central tenet in my teaching philosophy is that students are exposed to both theoretical and practical problems. For this reason, I value my role as a teacher and practitioner. My creative work is essential to my teaching, and my students benefit from my experience as an artist and designer. Making is thinking, as it encourages a dialectical thought process that is continuously reinventing itself to serve an aesthetic end. To successfully make something that communicates intent requires a broad range of research and planning. Therefore, when I am teaching, I encourage students to focus on a system of reasoning that can be explored, explored and eventually deciphered towards a conclusive object. As a teacher, my objective is to emphasize that making is an activity that articulates process and is never static; it fluctuates with the dialogical exchange that an artist has with an idea and particular medium.

As a teaching method, constraint is extremely important to process and thinking. Developing an assignment or problem, either theoretical or practical, that is both hands on and limits the path to a solution is crucial to developing critical thinking skills. Similarly, the process of solving a math equation is never definite, but presents multiple strategies to reach a conclusive end. In my course outlines, I intentionally design assignments with rules of engagement that are intended to be recognized, explored and owned. There is never one solution to any problem; I expect and encourage infinite possibilities of interpretation from students.

Precedent is crucial to the learning process, as it familiarizes students with multiple vantage points (movements) and perspectives (artists) regarding aesthetic engagement. In order to refine an appropriate solution to an assignment or direction and curiosity for their own art practice, it is important for students to be familiar with what has already been done. My teaching method integrates formal lectures and informal conversations dedicated to art and architectural history, critical theory and insightful opinion.

When a student is actively engaged with a project and has taken a path that articulates an exploration of possibility, risk, success, and even failure, I feel a sense of great accomplishment and regard my teaching method as effective. Through trial and error, I want students to develop and explore ideas with autonomous confidence. As an instructor it is rewarding to facilitate a challenging path that is specific, yet can be owned and interpreted by a student independently. It is critical to encourage students to develop and pursue standards of practice that are personal and go beyond the written task.