

Teaching Philosophy

I view my role as a teacher as being a facilitator and a human catalyst. My primary aims are to assist students in problem finding, foster the appreciation and production of diverse forms of knowledge, and encourage collaborative knowledge production. The significance of the embodied nature of the human mind guides every decision I make when designing a learning experience.

First, I utilize the premise that innovative media producers often go through embodied processes to design, test, and refine their approaches. My emphasis is that individuals enact a process of working with a medium to determine its limitations; an animator tests the properties of motion, while a basket weaver determines the material properties of willow versus rattan. Much like the evolution of language, these systems of knowledge build over time through production, testing, and cultural evolution. My goal is to build a collaborative and creative atmosphere for students to test, prototype, and reflect; giving them space to explore mediums and materials in order to discover the themes that are central to their worldviews. These processes help students master critical thinking and problem finding skills by allowing them to develop knowledge of a field, locate problems within it, and intuitively construct insights that are verifiable. It fosters respect for the knowledge of everyone from the professional to the laborer.

Second, I find that students benefit when exposed to multiple forms of learning. Therefore, I blend hands-on workshops with reading, viewing, and class visitors. In discussion, we frame readings for comprehension and personal resonance, analyzing media works to place content in context. We redefine experts and gather knowledge from diverse communities, as well as utilize workshops to teach process and body-based knowing. These rigorous and playful activities are motivating, and they demonstrate different models for embodied knowledge production.

Third, my commitment to the embodied mind is supported by a design philosophy known as worldbuilding, founded on heavy collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and design constraints. The ethos is of learning as an act of sharing knowledge, including giving and receiving critical and creative feedback. Therefore, in the teaching environment, students are incentivized to contribute to one another's success.

My teaching philosophy allows my students to respect and learn multiple types of knowing, ranging from the embodied, scientific, and verbal to ways of knowing that are non-verbal, visual, and auditory. This recognition of diverse modes of producing knowledge allows students to deploy varied strategies to problem finding and insight, but it also frames knowledge as fundamentally community-based and found in everyday life. This effort fosters an appreciation for a diversity of people, ideas, and cultures, and encourages an interest in different modes of thinking, knowing, and valuing. I am committed to expanding students and media viewers' models of the world on traditional concepts of disability, class, gender, race, and sexuality.

As a teacher, I aim to strengthen a student's ability to be internally motivated and self-reflexive, while also inspiring their desire to engage externally with the world through research and embodied knowing.

