

Great teachers from my past help shape my ability to create an engaging learning environment for students. I build on valuable teaching advice gleaned from these varied instructors to foster an educational space for creative exploration and personal growth. Through a liberal arts framework, students explore natural and internal environments, fostering habits of considered thought when confronted with challenges. I aim to advance the goals of modern civilization by helping the students I work with to act as contributing members of an increasingly interconnected and diverse society.

I value the importance of work in the development of an idea, solving a visual/spatial problem or testing a creative hypothesis. Through the physical process of creating artwork, students gain an applied knowledge of materials/techniques and develop personal problem solving skills. Projects and exercises present an opportunity for students to explore personal design solutions, strengthening an awareness of the individual's value in the classroom setting. I make an effort to relate material and concepts to socially relevant issues. I present content from areas around the world and through time. Showing artwork beyond the Eurocentric canon helps create a culturally sensitive learning environment. I establish and reinforce the language of the visual arts, presenting concepts using different media (video, slide-show, sound, books, demonstrations, etc.) to help students form a greater context for specific topics. I use gender neutral language and encourage students to do so. With a common language and a positive environment, critical analysis (spoken and written) by peers and the instructor provide encouragement for growth and an understanding of potential. I provide a safe workplace and foster a personal sense of responsibility in students by making them aware of safety resources, best practices, and materials handling; encouraging wise exploration. I use assistive devices and technologies to facilitate learning for all students. The applied knowledge, unique problem-solving skills and passion learned in a fine arts program will aid the individual in facing life's challenges. In conjunction with a liberal arts education, free of vocational imperatives, students learn to question assumptions and accept doubt as a useful emotion. These valuable attributes prepare students to act as responsible citizens of the world.

My studio work, research and teaching practice reinforce one another and foster growth. As a practicing studio artist, I demonstrate to students the commitment necessary for a career in the fine arts. Through my practice and research, I remain current with contemporary theory and criticism. My continued enthusiasm for meaningful artwork spreads to the students, inspiring individual artistic development and intellectual inquiry. I encourage an environment of open communication where students feel free to discuss, question, and seek guidance in class, through office hours or from a casual conversation. By patiently listening and observing student behavior, I learn to effectively communicate on an individual basis and tailor my instruction. I encourage students to visit museums, conferences and travel on study abroad programs to expand their understanding of fine arts and gain a greater understanding of professional practice. Through example and curriculum design, I reinforce a liberal arts education by helping students investigate alternate disciplines - broadening their knowledge base and preparing them for effective communication in group environments. As an educator, I want the students I interact with to gain a broader vocabulary (verbal and visual), a deeper knowledge of the specific subjects, an increased awareness of their environment, and a desire for continued personal development. By teaching visual art, I aim to enrich the lives of students and reinforce the institution of higher education.

-Bartholomew Lynch