

Teaching Philosophy

As an artist, educator, and life learner, I am dedicated to the facilitation of educational opportunities to promote student advancement and to provide students with the tools and skills necessary for students to become productive members of society. Within higher education it is important to be able to anticipate the needs and abilities of students. In the years I have spent teaching in higher education and studying pedagogy for a variety of educational levels, I have become well versed in the necessary progression of advancement in standards and curricula a student must travel, from public education, to higher-level learning, and finally to postgraduate level research. Within my courses I facilitate student research and self-discovery by developing diverse opportunities, integrating innovative practices, and fostering social discourse.

Art as a field of research should be an experience where all students can learn more about themselves and the world around them, so that they are better prepared for the futures they will build for themselves. For students to truly develop as artists, they must be given a variety of methods, materials, and practices to explore their identity, message, and content. It is essential for students to learn to work and think in an interdisciplinary fashion, incorporating strengths from 2D, 3D, and 4D Arts. By focusing on diverse perspectives, students can build connections using their strengths. For example, in my drawing courses I implement a project where students build 3D forms out of paper or Styrofoam before drawing them, so that they actively engage with the subject matter and planar surfaces before creating a 2D illusion of the form. I have also incorporated video into my drawing and 3D design courses to be used as a method of documentation and to explore time as an element of design and process. Pushing students to consider diverse approaches opens them up to further reflection on how their own work will be ultimately viewed from multiple perspectives, helping them become well-rounded artists.

My goal is not only to help students foster a drive for continual growth and exploration, but to develop new skills and techniques utilizing contemporary theories and practices within the art world. Digital and interactive art are providing new paths for harnessing information and developing discourse and artistic inquiry. The rise in technological creations and content has sparked a demand and budding opportunity for research within the digital arts. By integrating new technologies and curricula, such as interactive art, digital media, and new media into core curricula, students can build new connections within their artwork. I believe it is my duty as a fellow digital artist and researcher of user experience to promote the advancement and exploration of these technologies as they integrate with emerging and traditional art practices.

In my own work I have been researching how user experience and interactive art can alter and shape cultural experience. Whether it's through video, sound, web, coding, or virtual reality, digital art helps us to develop new perspectives and connections to the world around us. Over the years I have continued to explore how to integrate arts and technology within education. This year I gave a lecture, at Talk 20 MHK, over the benefits of using electronic textiles as a focus in STE(A)M to introduce electronics to new learners. Digital art lends itself well to interdisciplinary collaboration. Whether it is integrating electronics into fiber art, using 3D modeling as a tool in sculpture and metals, creating interactive sound art, or creating animations,

digital art can be used as a tool to incorporate technological and contemporary art practices into core curricula.

Integrating technology and digital practices into core curricula open new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, whether within the arts themselves or by building connections within STEM disciplines. As an instructor, I believe it is important to create opportunities for collaboration within the classroom, across campus, and in the community. As a graduate student, I worked closely with my faculty to plan and promote art events that encouraged connections between the college and community. I worked as a student liaison in planning an art event and parade, called Artigras, that invited the community to celebrate in the arts and join us in congratulating our graduating students. Within my time arts department I worked with faculty to plan and coordinate video art screenings and video projection mapping installations within the downtown areas of the local community. I plan on creating the same types of opportunities for my students, so that they can learn not only what it is to create art, but how to be a larger part of the art world and community around themselves.

It is essential within higher education to give students opportunities to connect with the world around them and to explore artistic inquiry using diverse approaches and contemporary techniques. By integrating interdisciplinary practices, innovative technology, and collaboration into core curricula, students will be better prepared to explore their own research and its future impact within the art world.