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TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

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My first goal as a teacher and mentor is to challenge my students to become the future designers that our society needs. Although, GRAPHIC DESIGN is a field that is rapidly changing, what has not changed is the academic theories that are applied to the field. The designers of tomorrow need not only learn the technical aspects of computer software but have a full understanding of how to solve design problems using *conceptual thinking*. To be successful these designers need an understanding of how the crafting of images, color, and typography—no matter the medium—can have lasting impact and influence our society. My role in the classroom is to create a positive learning experience where students can explore their individual passions, continually grow as visual communicators, and develop their critical analysis skills.

My approach to developing the learning environment includes media enhanced lectures that are reinforced with demonstrations. These lectures include topics concerning TYPOGRAPHY, COLOR THEORY, INTERACTIVE MULTIMEDIA DESIGN, GRAPHIC DESIGN, WEB DEVELOPMENT and professional software demonstrations. Before beginning any project, I believe that every aspiring designer should use critical thinking in the development of an initial idea. Students are required to write a creative brief, develop a mood-board, and complete a series of thumbnail sketches before starting a project in the software. I set high, yet attainable, standards which I feel are critical to maximizing the learning experience. It is most rewarding when I see my students pushing themselves out of their comfort zones and achieving results that they didn't think were possible. Since my goal is to foster confidence in learning—I believe I can best serve my students by providing them with effective analytical tools that will help them continue the discovery process of learning after they leave my classroom.

In the classroom, I encourage open class discussions about the material to help reinforce the conceptual concepts of the weekly readings they are assigned. I require students to write their responses to articles and essays on contemporary theories and historical design perspectives. The weekly readings allow my students to exercise their minds around some of the theoretical concepts in GRAPHIC DESIGN while allowing them to better articulate themselves more effectively in class discussions and critiques. These conversations and critique sessions are by far the most important part of my courses. As an instructor I believe that it is important that students develop their own critical point of views and be encouraged to feel confident to judge the work of their peers. In my class—it is essential that students learn how to critique the work of other students. Active participation in these group discussions is crucial, not only to the learning process of the course, but also in giving students the critical confidence to become artists and designers who can raise their own voices in their professional fields. The classroom is where students can practice their future role analytically, creatively, and collaboratively—to become confident not only in their skills, but in their vision and voices before moving to the real world.