

Teaching Philosophy

There are at least three steps to creating an image. It is my philosophy that to be a successful teacher I have to instill in my students the importance of conceiving, executing, and resolving issues in their work. With each step, the student must address different questions. For example, they must ask themselves what they want their work to do, what tools will they need to create their work, what is successful and what is not successful with their work, and how can they make it better. I see myself as a character in a coloring book. I am there to suggest options, but ultimately it is up to them whether or not coloring outside of the lines is a part of their artistic vision.

I feel that to be successful a student must be able to interconnect technical tools and know-how with conceptual ideas in an expressive way. It is my job to provide my students with a broad, yet thorough understanding of the many tools available to them and when it is most appropriate to use these tools. I feel it is key to allow students to work in the manner that is most productive for them while still meeting and exceeding the requirements of the course. Some students start with strong conceptual ideas while others develop ones as they work. Some students need constant feedback while others need to keep outside influences to a minimum. I encourage my students to be open to unexpected changes, to new ideas, and to always explore what interests them and affects them as artists. I teach my students that art making is ultimately a process of problem solving. I provide them with the skills they need to successfully resolve technical, creative, and conceptual issues in their images.

It is important to me that I echo the passion I feel for my craft in the classroom. Art plays a multi-faceted role in our society. Artists create work that facilitates the awareness of issues that have happened or are happening in society, they delve into new ideas and possibilities, and they inevitably serve as society's most powerful visual communicators because they create profound connections between the past and the future. When I see a student realizing the rewards of such a role, I feel I have been successful. It is this feeling that pushes me to continue striving for excellence in teaching.