

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Teaching requires balance. The work of an educator is a unique combination of directing, watching, coaching, guiding, and waiting. It is an enterprise quite unlike any other. Finding the balance between different modes of teaching as they flesh themselves out in pedagogical practice is a matter of responsiveness to given educational situations. At times, one can embrace more teacher-centered forms of *instruction* such as lecture. At other times, more student-centered approaches of *construction*, such as coaching, are required. In any teaching and learning situation, the teacher is directly responsible for making the provisions for one, the other, or both.

I seek this balance in my own teaching experience. In my smaller classes, I make specific efforts to engender dialogue among my students by arranging tables in an open circle. By providing this kind of learning environment, students are encouraged to engage with one another as they seek to understand the topics under discussion. At other times during the same class meeting, I have delivered illustrative information through lecture that is aimed at providing the students with a unique perspective on the material they have been reading and discussing. These lectures will often be followed up with in-class opportunities for my students to apply what they have learned.

Perhaps the most powerful way that I have struck a balance in my teaching is using interactive computer technologies. Such technologies have the potential for allowing students to make personal connections—particularly when the settings of my larger classes don't lend themselves to it—and they afford students with opportunities to make their voices heard.

In teaching art education, I believe that balance must be achieved as I guide students through the process of becoming art teachers. I say guide, here, because I believe it is crucial for art education students to gain practical experience in the classroom as they learn the real-world lessons associated with the knowledge they are exposed to during university classroom lectures and discussions. In teaching my art methods courses, I have often coordinated practicum experiences where my students can teach art lessons to children. In doing so, my students gain practical knowledge in how to design and execute lesson plans, manage classrooms, and assess student work.

I believe that such balance is necessary for any student's successful learning experience. I desire to make an impact on my students in and outside of the classroom by leading them to an acquisition of balance in their own lives, personally and professionally.