

LINDSAY M. MCCORMICK

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Partnership and collaboration are keys to success in learning. When student and teacher are receptive to each other, the meaningful exchange of ideas, knowledge and creative experimentation are not only encouraged, but become the cornerstones of academic success. No one approach to the acquisition of skill and knowledge is universally successful, therefore interdisciplinary exposure, constructive discourse, and open minds between students and instructors are important for development.

Creativity is necessary in all disciplines, but is quintessential to art and design. When teaching art, I encourage creativity by asking students to engage with their environment. To draw upon and question their own experiences, and to ask them to seek meaningful relationships between themselves and what informs their perspectives, leads to more purposeful concept development. Providing students with exposure to other artists' work, practices, and writings, helps give them the breadth of knowledge necessary to increase the scope of their own ingenuity. Flexibility is advantageous during the development stage; working critiques provide an opportunity for students to formally articulate their ideas and receive constructive commentary from both their instructor and their peers.

I highly encourage experimentation with media and technique. Although I feel that excellence in technique is very much necessary to success — craftsmanship is important — encouraging both skill and concept is of vital importance when teaching. As I believe that they are not mutually exclusive, I feel it is necessary to teach them in tandem. I strive to create an environment where high-level concepts and excellence in craftsmanship can be in harmony.

Understanding that educators influence as well as inform, incorporating sustainable systemic thinking into my own practice, and in the classroom, encourages sustainable behavior through inspiration. Aspiring to employ economy motivates, rather than challenges. Continuing my own education strengthens the relevance of practice I encourage my students to engage.

I believe that when these philosophies (collaboration, open mindedness, experimentation and sustainability) are put into practice, students are equipped to make informed decisions. The vulnerability that accompanies personal expression is supplemented with information and tenacity, qualities necessary for artistic success.