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Teaching Philosophy

Graphic design is a field with high potential and diversity. It can connect us with everything. It can produce an emotion, captivate an audience, inform the masses and even help change the world. Therefore as educators, we must provide a learning environment where all these amazing attributes can be discovered. My teaching philosophy is based on creating a learning environment where these actions can be experienced by the students. In order to generate this environment, students are challenged to push beyond their creative imagination, critically think about design, experiment with different disciplines' practices, and explore the idea that design can be used as a powerful, thought provoking, and mind-altering tool.

Teaching the fundamentals, demonstrating working methods and practices, and developing research skills all play an important role in my teaching philosophy. While these elements are critical, establishing an open discussion environment is also key. Because every student has a different voice, personal experience, and thought process, this interaction and sharing of information can help inspire new ideas, fine tune an existing concept and even produce a different point of view. Therefore, I encourage and challenge my students to articulate and critically think about their design ideas and process, to ask questions, and to challenge themselves and others.

While developing a concept or idea is crucial to the design process, I also learned from my professional experience working as a graphic designer that understanding and knowing the technical components are also critical to the full learning experience. Students are introduced to current technology and practice current production techniques but then are encouraged to modify or improve the process, discover new or different approaches to creating, and consider different strategies for solving design problems. This technical process begins with the approval of the design concept and continues to develop throughout the entire design process. This allows students to experience the difference between the concept stage of an idea and what it takes to actually produce the final design product.

Finally, with a personal understanding that graphic design is an interdisciplinary field, I encourage students to seek inspirations, search for different methods of making and think about design in a different perspective. This in turn can help produce work that is visually stronger, that is different from the norm and is loaded with the best elements of graphic design and the chosen discipline. This is an exploration process that I would like to incorporate into my classroom. This will not only expand the student's exposure to areas outside of graphic design but will allow them to experience that design inspirations can be drawn from non-graphic practices.