

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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As a teacher, my goal is to perpetuate knowledge and help my students to develop the skills necessary for lifelong learning. As a landscape architecture faculty who teaches courses on design visualization, landform design and construction documents, I introduce students to the principles, process, tools and techniques of design visualization that will become the foundation of their ability to problem solve and communicate visually throughout their education and into their professional careers. This involves not only presenting a body of knowledge appropriate to the subject matter, but also teaching them important visual thinking skills. In the studio, I encourage students to become fully engaged with the material being covered, with me and with each other as part of the learning process.

My teaching approach in the classroom seeks to accomplish these goals through several approaches: lectures, demonstrations and individual critiques. Since being successful at visualization and communication requires thoroughness and attention to detail, I try to reflect that in my lectures. I make every effort to not only make them complete and well organized, but also well designed, engaging and visually appealing. I typically integrate several forms of multi-media to better engage the students and present material in a more dynamic way or connect material to things they are familiar with. Being able to demonstrate how principles and technique can be applied is essential to helping students apply their knowledge in an effective way. It is also an effective way to demonstrate my own understanding of the subject matter and earn their attention and respect. Individual critiques have been one of the core teaching methods in studio based courses where students complete design projects to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter. In my critiques I seek to maintain a delicate balance of encouragement and constructive criticism that recognizes and responds to the strengths and weaknesses of each student.

In summary, I believe my teaching philosophy is an extension of the principles that I seek to apply to my life in general: Make every attempt to do all things well but have a reasonable view of your own abilities, we all have strengths and weaknesses and there is always room for improvement; never be afraid to admit that you don't know something; be slow to speak and quick to listen to others; never stop learning. After twenty-five years, I'm still excited about the opportunity to teach and learn from my students.