

Teaching Philosophy

This is what I know to be true when thinking about the classroom and my pedagogy. The student comes first. They must come first. They should be challenged, they should be exposed to new possibilities, and they should be in an environment free of judgement and negative criticism. It can be humiliating for a student to be criticized or scolded by a teacher in front of their peers. The student can feel insecure, ashamed, and ignorant. They may even lose self-confidence and ambition to learn or participate in class. This is why I believe that students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment and in the manner that best suits them. By using different methods of learning such as: lecture, round-table discussion, group work, or student led classes, the student's outcomes will be a result of the effort and determination that they put forth in the classroom. This format allows students to have a chance to learn in a manner that best allows them to succeed.

I believe that in educational theatre the rehearsal space is just as important as the classroom. In both learning environments I build a positive atmosphere stressing respect, collaboration, and encouragement. Mutual respect, support and a sense of community can be established by empowering the actors and by forming a place where they feel safe to be expressive, creative and engaged. I also ask actors to set goals for themselves as a means to share the responsibility, show dedication to the production and as a way for them to improve their craft.

Along with respect, understanding, responsibility, and dedication, laughter will always be found in my classroom and rehearsal space for laughter eases tension, builds ensemble and expresses joy. By listening to the students, offering them advice and passing on my passion for the art that I love, I strive to inspire and encourage students to believe that all is possible.

Life gets hard, it gets busy, and what we must remember is that what happens outside of the classroom should stay outside of the classroom. By means of letting go of the stresses that hold us back. When challenging situations emerge in life it is important to acknowledge them and to ask: "What did we learn from this?" and "how will this help us in the future"? The classroom should be a place where collaboration, communication, and education are free to move. Collectively, these differing elements of my philosophy of teaching point back to my super objective of putting the student first.