

## Teaching Philosophy and Mission Statement Erin Coleman-Cruz

It is my teaching philosophy as an instructor of art to ensure that my students all receive an equal education through constructive criticism, group discussion, and individualized instruction and goal-planning. Throughout a course, I implement several different types of critique and encourage students to evaluate each other and to engage in self-evaluation. I provide honest, humane, and fair criticism through a variety of critique methods that expands the students' understanding of their artwork aesthetically and conceptually. I enhance the fluency of my student's visual literacy through immersion of relevant artists, art theories, vocabulary, and criticism. This is achieved via slide lectures, reading assignments and monthly research in art journals, trips to artist's lectures and exhibitions, and in group discussion and critique.

I believe in the social aspects of art-making, and introduce learning activities that foster within my students a recognition of the ability of art to transform society as well as their own social responsibility as artists. Through the encouragement to ask questions, generate discussion and synthesize experiences, I lead students in learning activities that cultivate intellectual and practical abilities so that they attain creative and divergent thinking skills and a strong understanding of the formal fundamentals of design and art. I heavily emphasize idea generation and exploration through a variety of methods, taking into account unexpected learning opportunities to reinforce the elements and principles of design and prescient issues in art-making.

It is my mission to balance my art-making with my teaching. Both are important and enhance the other as they overlap to be therapeutic and to communicate. Art-making is essential to my mental health, and professional development, of which teaching is an integral component, is essential to art-making because it helps center me within the discourse of art. Teaching and art-making are both avenues via which I create, which enriches me and my students as I help bring them into an awareness of current discourse, teach them how to access and generate ideas, utilize and select media, and execute work to the best of their abilities.