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PHILOSOPHY

I believe that design is a way of looking at and of shaping our world. Design takes iterative practice, physical interaction, communication, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

I am a teacher, a practitioner, and a lifelong student of design. I believe that learning is experiential. In the classroom, I am a listener, a nurturer, and a questioner. Students and I share responsibility for learning. Developing each individual—building confidence and providing opportunities to practice design skill, to use design language, and to develop critical judgment and personal design aesthetic, and to understand the problem-solving nature of design—these are the bases of my teaching. We explore topics through guided research and discussion, lecture and demonstration, and a wide variety of activities and opportunities for hands-on exploration of issues in theory, philosophy, culture, and practice. We examine how design fits into life.

Encouraging students and teaching them to self-evaluate are primary goals of my instruction. In the classroom, students learn how to look and they practice analyzing to develop discernment of not only what they see, but what they perceive internally as well. Providing a forum for open discussion and giving helpful critiques that aim for excellence and innovation, asking for peer feedback then providing instruction through non-judgmental listening and asking challenging questions helps students develop an attitude of problem-solving, to learn to think on their feet, and to be willing to explore alternative design solutions. Students express themselves, learn to command the tools at their disposal, they begin to ask novice questions, while advanced students develop the critical thinking skills that question authority—not only to promote their own personal sense of order and creative aesthetic, but in order to uncover the principled reasons anchoring their design solutions and to develop the confidence to expertly lead clients in design decision-making. Designers today must be able to embrace technology and embark on a path of lifelong learning and training—discovering and rediscovering the tools of the trade. Showing enthusiasm for the discipline is one of the least yet one of the most important things I can do to motivate student learning.