

## t e a c h i n g   p h i l o s o p h y

Teaching art and design is one of my greatest passions. The desire to pursue a career in higher education began when I was in my undergraduate program and has grown throughout my professional career. The professors and peers I encountered throughout my master's program continued to reinforce my desire. Ultimately, working as an art and design professor has proven to me that my passion is absolute. There is no greater feeling than to see a student's eyes light up when a concept takes hold or when a breakthrough is made on a project. The professional and personal experiences I have been a part of have reinforced my passion and I am enthusiastic about continuing to pursue my career as a professor.

Throughout my professional and academic career, I have distilled my goals for my students into three distinct areas, which I strive to develop in each student I teach. These are:

- 1) The expertise needed to successfully transition from the classroom to the professional world. In the classroom I strive to incorporate actual projects into my curriculum. In doing so, I help my students build an understanding of a true client experience. Working against real deadlines in real-world scenarios gives students the knowledge they need to work with clients, printers, art directors and colleagues. I believe these experiences are invaluable and give students an upper hand when leaving school.
- 2) The ability for each student to be analytical and critical of their own work and of each other's work. I use discussions and critiques to educate students about how to properly and effectively examine their work on their own and with their peers. Being analytical and critical allows students to see how others perceive their ideas and concepts. I encourage my students to always ask "why" and to delve deeper into a subject. Design is about communication, not beautification. By helping students understand the concepts of critical thinking, I inspire more successful outcomes and more successful designers.
- 3) The skills needed to develop a design methodology of thinking and designing outside of the computer. I encourage my students to hone their process skills through project research, sketching and idea-generating by hand, and creating artwork without the assistance of the computer. In using these techniques students can bring to light ideas that they may not have foreseen.

Producing successful designers is our ultimate goal as professors of higher education, and I believe these three skills are critical in the development of each student's understanding of design.

Looking back, I see how influential my professors were in the development of my career and how they provided me with the necessary tools and knowledge to get where I am today. They sparked my passion to pursue a career in higher education. Having the opportunity to impact just one student and make a difference in their career, as my professors did for me, has always driven me to become an educator. It inspires me to know that my influences will carry on with my students throughout their careers.