

I'm not very good at professional jargon. I've probably written up a teaching philosophy in the past, but in starting this writing I'm trying to be more honest than I have been in the past, and also have obviously evolved in my teaching. So this may come out a little ramble-y, I hope that's fine.

I teach with intentions to understand my students. I construct lessons for them that will carry them away from my classroom to wherever they choose to go next.

I chose art for this specific reason. Art has an interesting place in American society and culture. I find a lot of things that people think about art to be wrong and destructively self-detrimental, and I hope that I can lead students down different paths than the ones given to us by modern day society. Because art isn't as prioritized as other subjects that I was interested in, specifically English and Math, there's less pressure from stakeholders, and less standardized testing. Art asks the viewer always to consider emotion as well as sociopolitical contexts. Both of those things are taught primarily in art history classes, and hardly ever in public schools, where the focus goes to processes that students can't even get at home – like photography, and ceramics. I find value in these processes only as experiential horizons to introduce newness to students, but I understand that these art processes are incredibly difficult for many students to continue outside of school. I hope for my students to treat these materials as opportunities.

I want art to be accessible to students in both the making and the theory. I want students to understand that everything around them is designed, from textbook covers to famous paintings, to the phones they watch their tiktoks on to the educational system.

Students should expect accountability and responsibility from me. For students, I want to be a knowledgeable and dependable source of information and support. Students should expect to own up to their mistakes, and for me to own up to my mistakes as well. Students should expect to be challenged in both their skills and their thinking.

Ultimately, I want my students to learn how to grow as humans. I think of art, and thinking about art, as a vessel for that. In trying different hands-on processes and then learning about who made pieces, why, how, where, and when, I want my students to be able to not only place themselves in their own historical and contemporary contexts, but to also be able to understand the other humans around them. It's a lofty goal. My hope is to measure this by the engagement of the class, and the connection of students to each other. When students are able to willingly show interest and care in each other without bias, that's when I will feel the most success.

I create an engaging and enriching learning environment by speaking to students at their level. I want to know their interests and teach them that what they like has value purely by it being what they like. I want to teach students that aesthetics are an important pillar of art, but not all of it, and that it's perfectly acceptable to not like art that textbooks tell us to. I want my students to bring in art that they enjoy to study from, and in turn learn how to make art that they enjoy.