

I was raised in a household that prized knowledge as being among the greatest of human achievements. Extending that knowledge through education was one of the most sacred of human rights, and teaching was a social responsibility for those who were capable. From a young age, I was taught that education not only consisted of the collection of knowledge, but was balanced of human experience and critical thinking. Nearly every influential adult in my life, including parents and grandparents, were educators. Education is a family value.

As an educator, I have learned that teaching is an exchange. I give lessons, perform hands on demonstrations that impart techniques, and relay information to the students through various methods. However, the students bring their own ideas, philosophies, personal histories and values to their educational experience. Unlike other subjects, photography assignments inherently divulge a great deal about the student. In those moments they teach me about themselves, I learn from them.

Within that exchange is my evolution as an educator. I am committed to reach every student to the best of my capability. I achieve this by employing differentiated instruction and curriculum adaption with the specific needs of each student in mind. In order to maintain a positive learning environment during student interaction, I utilize elements of dialogic instruction for critiques.

My classroom demeanor is centered on a deep regard for inspired leadership. I believe that teachers are most effective when they are entrenched in the subject they are teaching, and passing their enthusiasm directly to students throughout the learning experience. I have a strong background building positive, solid working relationships with students, artists, administrative faculty, technical staff and management to improve teamwork, cohesiveness and productivity.

There are many facets to teaching photography. Students are guided through the process of making a "gallery-ready" print. That process begins with slide lectures that cover the historical, chemical and technical aspects of a particular section of the class, followed by live, hands-on technical demonstrations of a process.

One of my primary responsibilities of an educator is to articulate expectations clearly. Once stated, however, I encourage my students to interpret the instructions as creatively as possible. Assignments often include written proposals, so that concepts are discussed before work begins, and I highly encourage students to connect with me for in-progress critiques.

Possessing the ability to write about and discuss work is imperative. I place a great deal of emphasis on verbal and written communication development. Student work culminates in critiques and students are expected to discuss their work using key terms presented throughout the semester. Students are also required to write on a number of subjects designed to encourage critical observation and thinking.

I firmly believe that every student deserves the opportunity to receive an A. My grades are assessed in a number of areas, including the quality of their work, their conceptual development, and their effort in and outside of class. The real educational goal is to help students become self-sufficient. Mistakes are taught as a crucial element in the learning process and I give my students confidence in their ability to take risks and solve problems. I demonstrate effective problem resolution management each time a student comes to me with questions or issues with their work, frequently using lessons from class to create solutions.

As a photographer, artist, and educator, I find no greater reward than sharing my passion for art and photography with others. I measure my success as an educator by the success of my students. This is the final phase of the exchange. My job as a teacher is to ensure that the information I have imparted to them has been impactful, and helped them understand art, while becoming self-reliant and proficient. Invariably, my goal is to create a successful artist and peer.