

## Teaching Statement and Philosophy

Today, in a world that is forever changing due to technological advancements, the accessibility of information, fashion trends, the mixing of ethnic and cultural groups, political challenges, economic flux, and the exposure to media coverage, students need a place to engage in analytical and conceptual conversations about visual culture, and how it influences cultural and social values and beliefs. Contemporary art education lends itself opportunities for active engagement through the investigation of relevant issues that are already impacting our students' lives. In essence, art education provides students the opportunity to participate in meaningful conversations, productive research, and creative self-expression in a mutable learning environment. Art movements have mirrored the fluidity of the times, addressing cultural demands, ideas, and the desires for progress and change throughout history.

Nowadays, the arts serve as a facet of visual culture, which is in need of interpretation and understanding. Everywhere we look we are exposed to some sort of visual imagery, which communicates the designer's intended messages to the masses. Throughout history, art has consistently served as a form of visual communication which invokes curiosity and provokes a responsive audience. As adults, we grapple with the intensity of the times. As progress causes our way of life to shift from one thing to the next, societal trends force us to constantly adjust our teaching methods and styles to be more attentive and caring to the needs and personalities of the students whom we serve. While understanding the insecurities of the time, it is our job, as educators, to reach into the hearts and minds of the students to address social anxieties, enhance self-awareness, promote multiculturalism, and value diversity of thoughts and actions in education. Art education functions as a vehicle to present relatable information to students in a creative and adaptive way. Unlike the traditional core subjects, art educators are not held to narrow curriculum requirements and restrictive standards - there is much more flexibility and freedom available for art educators in terms of curriculum development. The arts represent a realm of available content, which can be tailored in such a way, as to empower students with knowledge. Through thoughtful inquiry, students can make connections between their experiences within the world in which they live. This ability is crucial to the development of constructive, engaged members in a democratic society.

Furthermore, in terms of contemporary art education, I believe the most effective method is to establish a well-rounded curriculum that allows for objectivity and room to grow through student exploration. With the use of the disciplined-based art education model and an integrated art curriculum, students should investigate art through contextual and practical applications. The most effective way to do so is to employ local, regional, and global issues as a way for students to engage in active learning. In order to find relevant connections and meaning, students must creatively and aesthetically apply what they learn through investigations of self, past and present artists, art histories, and modern issues. My units will include lessons of visual culture, which involve investigations of stereotypes, racial and gender discriminations, fashion trends, social media, environment and sustainability, and more. Students will partake in creative assignments such as: historical research, presentations, personal interpretations, and studio art projects. The more I am able to connect to the student's world today, the better prepared they will be to understand the past and our future to come. The arts have played a substantial role in the histories of our world by guiding the trends of the times; it is these trends that I wish to explore with my students through collaborative learning opportunities and self-discovery activities.

To conclude, I believe it is essential to establish an active and creative learning environment that promotes academic and spiritual growth. My aim for my program is to facilitate an art-centered curriculum which shapes student's abilities to relate to the world. I plan to reinforce creativity while enlightening the students about the influences the arts have had on our everyday lives. Art education should cultivate critical and analytical responses to social and cultural issues through creative opportunities and objective lessons. By educating students to appreciate and understand the evolution of art throughout time, my hope is they will develop meaningful awareness to worldly concerns. Most importantly, I believe in teaching to a democratic classroom, which investigates national identity and applies life's lessons to class discussions. My ultimate goal for art education is to encourage students to use creativity across disciplines to promote self-awareness, strengthen cultural uniqueness, and hearten lifelong learning.