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Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is grounded in the belief that meaningful learning occurs through the intentional integration of theory, artistic practice, reflection, and application. Since my first semester at Saint Vincent College, I have taught extensively at the graduate level, primarily within the Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction and the Master of Science in Instructional Design and Technology programs, while also teaching undergraduate courses across education and art education. These experiences have shaped my approach to teaching as one that values creativity, visual thinking, and expressive processes as essential components of learning and professional practice.

Across all levels, I design learning experiences that move students from foundational theory to authentic, real-world application. Undergraduate teaching emphasizes broad conceptual understanding, skill development, and professional identity formation, while my graduate teaching invites a deeper exploration of instructional complexity, design decision-making, and leadership in educational settings. In both contexts, I intentionally incorporate visual and expressive strategies, such as visual journaling, design-based inquiry, arts-informed reflection, and creative problem-solving, to support deeper understanding and sustained engagement.

A central focus of my teaching is helping students develop flexible and variant ways of thinking. Rather than prescribing uniform instructional models, I encourage learners to analyze context, experiment with ideas, and construct solutions that reflect their unique settings and learners. This approach is especially evident in my work in curriculum design, instructional technology, and art education, where students design, implement, and evaluate instruction that blends theory with creative expression and purposeful communication.

I also place strong value on the role of expressive arts and nature-informed practices in supporting educator wellness and resilience. Through reflective assignments, visual storytelling, and experiential learning opportunities, I guide students to consider how creativity, time in nature, and attentive presence can restore balance and sustain professional practice. In these moments of reflection and making, I invite students to recognize learning as both an intellectual and spiritual endeavor, one that honors the gifts of each learner and acknowledges a greater purpose in the work of teaching, grounded in faith, care, and service to others.

I view teaching as an evolving and reflective practice, shaped by humility and openness to growth. My courses are continually revised to reflect advances in learning theory, instructional technology, and arts-based pedagogy. Assessment emphasizes authentic, design-oriented deliverables supported by clear rubrics and opportunities for reflection and revision, encouraging students to see learning as a process of discernment, practice, and transformation.

Three foundational instructional approaches guide my teaching:

- Theory to real-world practice – grounding learning in research while emphasizing creative and contextual application
- Application of knowledge through artistic and instructional design – engaging students in purposeful creation, implementation, and evaluation
- Self-reflection and transformative thinking – using expressive and reflective processes to support professional growth, wellness, and vocation

Ultimately, my goal as an educator is to prepare reflective, creative, and resilient educators who are confident in their instructional decisions and responsive to the learners and communities they serve. I strive to create learning environments that value artistic thinking, honor diverse ways of knowing, and support both professional excellence and personal well-being, guided by faith, respect for human dignity, and a commitment to teaching as a calling.