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STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

In thinking about my teaching philosophy, I always return to a quotation from Jacques Rancière's *The Emancipated Spectator*: "...from the schoolmaster the pupil learns something that the schoolmaster does not know himself." This eloquently and succinctly describes the complicated situation of teaching. My intentions for the space of the classroom, for fostering relationships, and for sharing knowledges do not necessarily seek consensus. Instead, my pedagogical goal is to offer various registers for interactive learning, from active listening and direct conversation to projects that require embodied practice and team workshops.

While I believe in multi-vocal dialogue in the classroom, I also believe it is my responsibility to help establish the tone of the class. In addition, undergraduate classes earlier in the semester provide opportunities to offer historical and theoretical information on the subject as important background to our inquiries and as a way of offering my presence as one of the resources available to the class. For seminar formats, students generally take turns leading class discussion in teams. This is a chance for me to step away from the front of the classroom and let students lead the conversation. When I intervene, it is generally to make sure we have understood the nuances of a larger argument or to ask students to rearticulate a difficult concept under discussion. I have found that it is vastly more respectful to allow students to struggle through a conversation than to over-determine the direction of dialogue, which does little to develop facility in critical thinking.

In the field of contemporary art, students often struggle to adapt to the various theoretical languages found in many texts. In this event, I will often dedicate a class session to the problems of this kind of language in order to foreground intellectual and cultural labor as a meaningful and respected subject of class. A student should not be expected to become critically reflexive about other materials if she has not developed this awareness and facility in her own thinking. My classes have also become increasingly practice-based. Even in a course that intends to introduce students to a wide variety of cultural theory, the final project generally includes some kind of practice component, from art projects to the creation of multi-media digital spaces. At times this produces anxiety for more traditional students who have excelled in academic systems that reward the simple duplication of information. In my mind, projects that require students to use different skill sets in their problem solving are more likely to create grounded knowledges.

I do not believe in punitive testing measures or pedagogies of shame. In fact, in all class exercises, from exams to papers to art projects, I am not asking students to know everything we are studying, only asking that they know something. Learning happens over a lifetime. If students feel supported as they are challenged, they are more likely to return with curiosity and enthusiasm to the areas that speak to their own projects in the world. Finally, while all students are held to the same deadlines and class rules, I understand that everyone enters each group with different backgrounds, biases, problems, and privileges. There are, therefore, a variety of class formats over the course of a semester to expand the possibilities for everyone to be involved. This means, for example, that a student who may not have spoken much in class discussion for whatever reasons will have the opportunity to participate in other ways. All classes and semesters are different, but in each instance there is evidence of work.

Near the end of the semester, I have a casual conversation with my class about some of the themes and issues we have engaged. At the end of such a conversation, I am often able to point out how much work has been accomplished. Bringing a sense of awareness to the fact of their own intellectual labor enhances their ability not only to reproduce culture and discourse, but also to shape it. This is, for me, an important step in understanding something much larger: we can be subjects of history, not just objects, and by engaging culture we can produce it. A liberal arts education informs all aspects of our humanity, expanding our thinking and resources as artists and as citizens. I have taught in art schools, as well as private research and state universities and am happy to provide past syllabi, evaluation tools, samples of former students' work, and teaching evaluations from both former students and observing professors.