

Philosophy of Music Education

My calling is to help learning communities experience music so that we can learn from one another and about one another. It is vital for me to stay informed about current research and technological innovations so that I can better help students understand and reflect upon their own musical experiences. I believe making music is a process through which people can explore what makes us essentially human. Toward this end, my guiding principle is to “think big” while acting locally, because every little change is important. When I apply this principle to my teaching practice, I guide my students towards greater mastery of music through their individualized discoveries.

My teaching goals are to expand students’ awareness of music; facilitate students’ ownership of music making, and incorporate diversity in sharing our musical story. As I practice these pedagogical ideals, I demonstrate a passion for teaching, learning, and making music; and foster the same in others. I have learned that modern music education does not simply happen inside a classroom—it permeates society in its entirety. Thus, my role as a music educator is to teach skills and understandings that empower learners to engage with music in their everyday lives. In this role, I help students acquire knowledge by engaging in critical thought while balancing the ever-present creative mind.

To expand an awareness of music, I design student-centered, teacher-mediated courses of study emphasizing hands on learning. An example of this is using digital media tools in the classroom to remix and re-think how we consume and share music. Another example is leading students in informal, participatory musical experiences to promote openness and curiosity about the elements of music. As the expert in the classroom, I lead students in singing, playing, composing,, improvising, and responding to music. Another example in expanding global social musical awareness is seamlessly videoconferencing with musicians around the world.

To facilitate ownership of music making, I guide students towards a purposeful outcome by clearly articulating standards for performance. Because I teach in real-life conditions that reflect the diversity in our communities, I have a high regard to a learner’s particular goals. In response to rapidly transforming academic institutions, I remain committed to training students for success.

Effective teaching involves storytelling. I recognize music’s unique ability to serve as a narrative for individual and shared experiences. I believe that empowering students to build upon their own storylines creates pathways to literacy, creativity, teamwork and self-discovery. Tradition, reason and experience guide the search for creating and sharing our musical narratives. Through arts and culture, I endeavor to make positive, professional contributions, and impart a sense of community to my students, teaching peers, and administration.