

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

My teaching is informed by constructivism, contemplative practice, and the Feldenkrais Method. Both in the classroom and in rehearsal I relish being part of a community of learners. We dive together into a text, a concept, a fear, a question, a discussion – consumed by curiosity and emerging transformed.

The following is a list of what I value and attempt to foster in every class I teach:

Presence: An atmosphere conducive to learning requires that I create an environment of trust that encourages artistic exploration and risk taking. I am committed to being fully present and prepared, modeling my excitement for learning, and encouraging participation by asking real questions and truly listening to students' answers. I teach students to relish time together and honor the work space. In designing curriculum, I try to make my expectations as clear as possible, set reasonable but firm limits and reward students for what they *do*. I am often told by students that they have never worked as hard but feel the challenge of my classes lies in their effort, not in their fear of my disapproval.

Articulation: Whether students are working to master movement isolations, clarity of speech, or focused argument, articulation can be difficult and requires disciplined practice. In a broader sense, articulation takes courage and self-knowledge and requires accountability. Students – whether using written, spoken, or kinesthetic expression – need to be given the opportunity to discover, practice, fail, and reflect if they are to become articulate. They also deserve to have articulation modeled for them through my clearly stated objectives, careful attention to detail, and guidance in recognizing the very different facets of rigor in process vs. product.

Liminality and Growth: I want to problematize established notions of what students learn, how they learn, and why. Students have said they must redefine "student" for themselves in my classes. My goal is to encourage thoughtful questioning of what is casually revered and careful reverence for what is too easily overlooked. The "thing" to be accomplished can and probably should be daunting, but I believe energy is best spent attending to circumstances and methods which lead to an end result. I try to stimulate active thought in my classes with less concern for reaching a conclusion than for experiencing the process. My emphasis on process does not mean I lack expectations but that I emphasize growth.

Integration: Knowledge is not simply a collection of "facts." Knowledge is made meaningful by those who are learning and using it. Skills, tests, and grades are not useful if students are not inspired and empowered to apply their knowledge. Learning is difficult to apply unless students can make connections and integrate new ideas into their beliefs about the world. My ultimate goal is helping students to grow in critical awareness as they connect their learning to their lives. To that end, I practice (and encourage the practice of) the following:

- To work toward knowing oneself without judgment and revealing oneself without competition
- To actively cultivate curiosity and wonder
- To acknowledge multiple ways of knowing
- To relish superlatives
- To embrace listening despite the fear that we may be altered

As a theatre artist and Feldenkrais practitioner, my creative and contemplative life is integral to my beliefs about teaching and learning. I envision a *theatre of transformation* where artists and audiences come together and are changed in the process – expanded in empathy, enriched in community, enlivened in expression, and enlightened in the art of being human.