

My teaching philosophy is deeply intertwined with interests in digital culture, participatory politics, collaborative arts making, and the ethical position of critical posthumanism. The posthumanist position is one in which one strives to question and destabilize established hierarchies to encourage diversity, community building, and a greater connection to multiple forms of personal agency. This follows “radical” pedagogical frameworks introduced by Paulo Freire, bell hooks, and Jacques Ranciere, among others. Using these philosophies, students are led to ask “why” and “how” so that they may develop pathways between knowledge, compassion, and action. This method is at the heart of liberal arts education where students are led to become engaged citizens through art versus cogs in the machine of artistic production. Part of my commitment to education and equity is based in evolutions in form, pedagogy, and process.

By completing a Graduate Certificate in College Teaching at CU Boulder, I gained exposure and became influenced by pedagogical models from Howard Gardner and David Kolb. Theories from each have helped shape the way I approach students as part of a community with needs and learning styles outside the conventional knowledge-banking or master/student model. Using a constructivist model, I work with each student as an individual with a unique set of background experiences to ensure they become part of a diverse community. This means working as a guide and facilitator toward their own educational goals using active learning, Socratic seminars, and student-centered approaches.

Fostering an ability to truly listen is the basis of my classroom practice. Students gain knowledge through a combination of experiential learning, collaboration, and discussion. Through discussion students learn how to navigate difficult topics concerning historical differences and the activities give them skills to make social change. Through active learning, I guide students toward nuanced perspectives on the role theatre plays in shaping and reflecting political, social, and cultural ideology in an ethically focused manner. In history and other survey courses, I emphasize understanding theatre and performance from a global perspective that expands content and form beyond those historically considered as part of the “canon” while pushing back against traditional hierarchies. Using an on-stage studies approach to survey material is another way of flipping the classroom and activating the content through embodied action. For example, instead of writing a history paper, students might be asked to develop a game as a presentation that expresses the historical content through performative means. This allows students a frame for experiencing the material as an embodied mode of learning.

In my creative practice I emphasize contemporary methods of devised and interactive performance making so students develop deep collaborative toolsets for working within and beyond the field. In previous courses this has led to students gaining a more holistic understanding of their own personal stakes in community engagement. I also emphasize protocols for consent while teaching students tools that enhance their personal creative agency. Projects are often structured around collaborative assignments that emphasize a horizontal power structure where students have equal agency to use their own creativity and requires a mode of cooperation where there is no individual leader. In courses such as Directing, students maximize their creative talents through participatory exercises and careful critique. This teaches them the necessity of careful observation and listening while allowing dialogue that is both critical and respectful. Devised and collaborative processes are often included allowing students an opportunity to actively contribute in ways that stimulate their ability to communicate and

create in group settings. Collaboration also serves to break down hierarchical ways of thinking and communication. This leads to richer, more sustainable, and engaging experiences for all involved.

Also influential to my pedagogical methods are educational psychologist Larry Rosen and media scholar N. Katherine Hayles who argue that the makeup of digital-born learners requires multiple forms of engagement that mirrors their constant state of multitasking with media. I focus on better understanding the cultural and social milieu of digital-born students by implementing the tools and logics central to their ways of understanding the world. This includes encouraging participatory dialogue, incorporating digital humanities methodologies, utilizing interpersonal communication using digital and non-digital interaction, and focusing on artistic creation through participatory politics. In large lecture style courses like Intro to Theatre, I have used digital devices and platforms to engage students in interactive ways of learning utilizing tactics of game play. These digital interactions are followed by discussion and short written assignments to guide the students towards thoughtful critical thinking skills. Developing modes of writing using digital tools is also an area I continue to expand into my teaching. In survey courses such as American Theatre, Theatre History, and Script Interpretation the students use digital discussion boards to offer analysis and insight into the ways they understand material. This includes utilizing video, hypertext, memes, audio, and social media as tools for demonstrating mastery of concepts versus relying only on formal modes of writing. These digital tools give students freedom of expression in ways found less intimidating and often more thought provoking than traditionally measured in-class participation. Discussion and digital presentation replace quizzes and tests, instead emphasizing the individual voice of the student, and introducing the necessity of ethical and respectful discourse through shared languages. The open-access nature of these tools and processes of transparency allow more thoughtful and respectful dialogue among the students while encouraging them to better understand multiple sides of an argument. They become moderators and proponents of critical thought through the process. When used effectively and proactively, digital technologies have the capacity to expand access to knowledge and creative expression.