

Teaching Philosophy

I have cultivated a specific type of teaching style through my, almost, ten years as an educator. My teaching philosophy has a lot to do with how I treat my students. As a student, I've always learned best through trial and error and I have found that when I teach in a fashion that allows students to try, fail and try again, my students succeed. The best method for me to learn, has also been the best way for me to teach.

My classroom is one built on patience and gentle guidance. The best way to begin any lesson is to dive into the subject matter as quickly as possible and show students the basic processes as they go along. In costuming and makeup there is always a mockup or a practice run. Giving students the opportunity to practice before the final product is an important part of their growth and development as budding designers.

I have taught introduction to costume design and stage makeup to undergraduate students. In both classes it essential to do practice versions or mock ups of final products. Mockups of costumes allow students to see if the pattern is correct and what needs to be altered. I have students do the same thing when applying stage makeup. Not everyone realizes that makeup is unique to their individual face and students see that through the mockup and trial technique.

When my students are working through a difficult process, I often work through it with them. For example, in introduction to stage costuming my students create a pattern for a bag that they will create. Sometimes I will have a student or two that want to make a more complicated pattern and they will ask me how. So, I often show them an example through a quick mock up of how the pattern would actually be feasible. I'm very visual and I find that students are more responsive to this type of teaching.

Evaluation is never an exciting or fun thing for students. I use a variety of methods, but I focus on application evaluations. There are of course terminology quizzes and tests but I see much more growth in a student applying their knowledge doingbase projects that allow me to see their growth and development. I also try to have them talk to me about their experience so that I can understand their comfort level. My favorite experience is when they surprise themselves and feel proud about their makeup design or the products they've created

Students have deadlines for projects and evaluations because that is the way the theatre world works; however, theatre is all about collaboration and evolution of design. Because of this I allow students to re-submit work for more points if they fix their errors or improve upon their original work. I like them to know that during a production we are constantly improving and evolving as designers so they should never reach a stopping point in their work.

I enjoy teaching and helping student's progress, but I also really enjoy learning from my students. There isn't always one specific way to do everything in costumes and makeup. I grow because students also students also help me progress.