

REFLECTIVE TEACHING PORTFOLIO

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Define your teaching philosophy.

I teach design through the 3D classes in the apparel area of the Fashion Design department. The core classes I teach are draping, pattern-drafting and construction. I teach the full gamut of students from first semester in the AAS program straight through to senior thesis in BFA. While my role as teacher is clearly driven by instruction, it is the mentorship piece of teaching that allows me to have an authentic connection with my students. When students feel a sense of guidance as opposed to dictation they begin to take ownership of their process and success follows.

Have you ever observed a master teacher? If the answer is yes, what do you recall most from the experience?

I attended a workshop on Subtraction Cutting by Julian Roberts. Mr. Roberts is a fashion academic based in the UK who conducts these workshops worldwide. The process involves simultaneous draping and cutting of fabric on a dress form to create conceptual and innovative silhouettes. The big take-away for me was to begin to embrace a greater sense of abandonment of standard practice. Infusing design development with experimentation and play can yield great results.



Give an example of your most successful lesson. Why do you feel it was successful?

I am proud of the work I have done with the Fashion Design AAS Capstone class. This is the exhibition class that showcases the student's cumulative knowledge over the course of their time in the AAS program at FIT. The main project for the capstone class is an editorial garment designed around a unified theme. A committee of FD department administration and FIT Museum representatives selects the stand-out work from the class for the Capstone exhibition in the Great Hall. In three separate semesters I have had full inclusion of student work in the exhibition; a first for the FD department. The students are under pressure to create innovative work that is consistent with and derived from the chosen theme. For many of them it is the first opportunity to have a public display of their work. Keeping them on track with development and ultimately the production of the garment is critical. It ties back to the idea of helping the students take ownership. This is reflected in my ability to teach them time management skills from the start.

With these capstone classes I continually encouraged my students to utilize technology in their design process. I have had students successfully implement 3D printing, laser cutting and digital printing in their capstone projects.

Why are you introducing and/or expanding the use of technology into your teaching?

The projects in both AAS and BFA capstone classes typically yield an enhanced level of commitment from students. There is far greater contact with students outside of class time. Opinions and guidance are regularly solicited on such things as silhouette development and fabric choices. Using technology such as Skype or Facetime to connect with students and review their work in real time can be very beneficial. I can be off campus and participate in a virtual fitting or discuss fabric assortment with a student. This allows for better time management and hopefully fewer mistakes.



How do you feel these technology innovations will affect the student experience? How do you think it will affect your experience?

I see technology innovations as a teaching partner that has benefit for both teacher and student. These new tools provide enhanced communication and better organization. The former allows me to have stronger and often more precise connection with my students and the latter affords me a greater breadth of time to the core of my teaching. Our students speak the language of technology daily; it is all they have known. By being able to properly speak the 'language' with them we can both learn from them and guide them. That reciprocal experience is exciting and beneficial to all.

Please describe new teaching ideas you plan to implement as a result of this technology certificate program.

I look forward to exploring and using the VoiceThread feature in Blackboard which I know will be advantageous. This will only enhance my post classroom virtual sessions with students.

I also look forward to working with James Pearce in the Faculty Research Space. The range of technology innovations that are available to us is impressive. While there are obvious and evident applications to design teaching, there will no doubt be 'ah-ha' moments by simply starting to explore and play in the Research Space. It's all about learning!