



REFLECTIVE PORTFOLIO

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1. Define your teaching philosophy.

My teaching philosophy is rooted to a visual and tactile experience the moment a person attends my first class. It is about tapping into that space within a person where they want to learn my subject upon our first meeting. I do this by getting students excited about product. In the case of rugs and carpets, my area of expertise, I take them into industry the first class and we visit a beautiful space which is a showroom where high end luxury carpets are sold. I have done this every year since 1997 when I began teaching at FIT. I don't say much initially, I let them absorb and start to think and imagine as they walk around and see and touch some of the world's most beautiful area rugs. My goal is to motivate. Motivating one to be successful is about stimulation of interest through visuals. I feel strongly, with creative people, that what they see and how they see it opens the doors to infinite possibilities. If there is no interest in learning, it's hard to get optimum results. Every person sees things in a most unique way and allowing that process to reveal itself, without judgment, is essential. I let it happen with little demand initially. This is a door opener, it has never failed me to excite students to possibility. When the mind is ignited and open, it thrives and it grows. Ideas are undoubtedly born in this first visual and tactile session and almost every student creates a conceptual design that has infinite possibilities to become a beautiful rug. I often receive in return A work for project one.

Other than speaking about my journey in industry and our attendance policy I say very little this first meeting and in that silence curiosity is born and the will to create and produce occurs with little effort.

My philosophy in teaching grows upon this visual and tactile rooting and the introduction of industry standards and processes are then introduced. As the lessons become more demanding my teaching personality is about patience and professionalism. I build upon a foundation of desire and those that remain connected create superior pieces. My goal is to keep the course exciting and motivating, through product samples and examples of work. Visuals are the bait in desire for guidance and knowledge. My teaching always requires a student to follow guidelines and to remain serious. I am no push over as a teacher. Showing up prepared, producing and following directions are a part of becoming successful and creating work that earns high grades. I stay steady and firm in my requirements with little waiver.

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

I have observed master teachers in spinning and yoga. I am a certified star II spin instructor and I have also recently completed my 200 hour yoga certification. I also observed, a master leader, when I road my bike from Prague to Vienna. Here I learned a huge lesson in patience and perseverance. I was humbled by the more experienced cyclist and I was rewarded for effort to stay when at times I wanted to quit. My observation and experience in physically demanding sport is about trust. I learned vital lessons from leaders who demonstrated and never judged but encouraged me to keep going and when I failed they encouraged me to reboot and continue on.

Every Master Instructor I have observed I learned from their ability to capture and hold the attention of a crowd. I learned from their teaching abilities through telling a story. Their stories told of their failures and their will to continue on despite the hardest of times and through many rejections. In knowing they have failed and then succeeded to great successes I grew motivated and inspired. They were relatable. I have observed their ability to control a large group through great presence and confidence. I have felt their energy fill a room. They were powerful and attractive in that I wanted to watch them and hear them. I have noted that when they speak, I want to listen and learn because they have achieved a great goal or they have been practicing for many years and share their experience in a detailed way. I often recall a touch of humor coming into all they share. I recall them speaking of failure and rising above and moving on.

3. Give examples of your most successful lesson. Why do you feel it was successful?

My most successful lesson was bringing in a guest speaker I was designing for on a big hospitality oriented job and showing current developing work by sharing what I was doing. In the weeks that followed I continued to update students on this project which aligned with a similar project in the course. This meant showing all the changes and versions that happen in such work as time flowed and the clock ticked. The design firms appreciate anonymity but without disclosure of anything too private I shared with students how a current large property was redesigning their look. This was with ballrooms, corridors, stairs, elevator lobbies and public spaces. We shared the numerous options we offered based on the mood boards from client and the emails of directions that were given. Plus we had samples that connected to the actual artwork in hand. This was a lesson in patience and producing what the client wants. It was centered on a custom job and it taught how creating "specific to request" is essential for most high end hospitality work. We were able to get our hands on current samples between client visits and retain them for this lesson. This can be rare as clients keep their samples. Samples speak volumes. The student work was inspired from this experience. Their mood boards came to life in an elevated way and ideas were fantastic, creative and very professional. The stories of students visiting various properties to observe and see how these properties come together with design especially on the floor followed. They went and visited properties on their own without prompting because they wanted to see. I sensed excitement on this project, which can be overwhelming at times for some. I felt a true connection regarding critical thinking for such large hospitality properties like four star hotels and elaborate casinos. The lesson conveyed the seriousness of listening when it comes to important projects for massive properties worth millions of dollars infused with lots of opinions. The lesson stresses that it is more

than creativity and skill. It is about doing your best even if you have to do it again and again. It is about going with the flow and being ok with changes. Industry is demanding, a good designer must be adaptable. This was truly a clear point and a true aligning of timing with the scheduled course project requirements. I try to duplicate this experience each time I teach my hospitality design lesson currently.

4. Do you have an example of an unsuccessful lesson? How did you address the challenges?

I taught wilton carpet design along with axminster carpet design one semester in my early years of teaching. This was without a computer program to demonstrate the plants of yarns into a wilton carpet. The students tried and they made a great effort to follow along and get the concept but it was evident the lesson was not landing and I saw frustrations and confusion in the conceptual work. I noted more than half of the students not getting it and the work was weak. I now stick to axminster design only and thankfully now we use Texcelle a Ned Graphics software. I found less is more with complexities. Designing for jacquard is complex. If a student is faced with wilton design in their position it will rely on what the company goals are and what software they use anyway. They will have a strong foundation with axminster carpet in their knowledge bank.

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

After many years of teaching without the use of the computer, I began using Angel and then Blackboard. This was a great way to stay connected and share vital information through posting my syllabus and sharing links, files and current industry headlines.

I rewrote TD353 to become TD452 and started teaching my carpet design course with technology in 2017 fall. The rewrite included Texcelle; a Ned Graphics software. The course went from 4 hours to 6 hours and it became an in-depth logical course in understanding carpets and rugs and how industry creates artwork that is producible as product. We spend 3 hours of practical design where we use our time exploring physical samples, speaking about execution, developing concepts, color ways and sketching designs in scale. We follow into the digital portion of the course where we spend 3 hours of time exploring the intended design in a *grid based* full scale software.

Bringing in Texcelle allows students to experience otherwise expensive proprietary software. It teaches sensible design through its full scale grid capabilities. In other words, it demands you simplify. Students can fantasize in any program but coming into Texcelle they are forced to see the design as it can be when made in yarn either knotted, machine made or hand tufted.

I also communicate through email and blackboard for all course essentials. The use of technology allows me to keep students informed through posting links to areas of learning such as courses in Lynda.com or U tube. I can share articles and links to images or websites. I am able to keep a syllabus visible and all school policies up front and center. It develops a better sense of responsibility and requires students to pay attention on several levels developing a better strategy for design and production based careers.

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

I believe technology innovations can create or ignite integrity. It requires the individual to own it, to follow along and stay connected to be current. I feel it creates strong character and better prepares our students the demands of our creative industries. With the innovative technology of today, the student experience is multi layered and it encourages learning through reading, visual experiences with video or tutorials. It is also accessible any time and therefore can reach more students and encourage a heightened level of understanding. If there is a quest to learn or review a lesson there is always an opportunity.

For me it keeps me on my toes too but it also protects and documents my efforts to share information and offer help to foster learning. There truly are no excuses to not be prepared or informed. It allows me to encourage growth and maturity in my students. It gets them to own their actions and be in integrity. It also keeps me in integrity.

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

I plan on encouraging the use of Lynda.com through the available lessons and tutorials more extensively in my teaching. I think on many levels these teaching platforms are essential for personal growth and the growth of our students. I would like to create videos of myself using a scale ruler, using the color wheel and understanding different rug qualities. I think this would be especially helpful in my course as it is 6 hours and missing a class is missing a lot of information.

I am now getting comfortable with students submitting digital files through Blackboard. This is very new to me but I appreciate the convenience. I would like to create video segments with well known designers and produces offering tips and guidance in creating beautiful rugs and carpet.

I am still exploring how digital forums for discussions regarding projects and opinions can work in my course.

8. How will these new technology tools/approaches contribute to your classroom practice?

I believe the many new technology based tools and approaches will allow the information in my course lessons and lectures an opportunity to root better into the mind of each student. As each person learns differently the use of videos and links provide vital reminders and reviews and therefore encourage a deeper level of understanding and stronger skills development. The announcements, links and lessons through Blackboard allow the learning to far surpass what is possible in the classroom. The connection to the library and vital information and resources helps students design intelligently encouraging superior work and rewarding portfolios. I feel my class topics will thrive by remaining relevant and demonstrable through a continuous flow of information. In a world where meetings extend past the walls of ones office to satellite offices in other countries and time zones as well as through video, Skype or other digital means a variety of communication tactics are essential to keeping designers on their toes and in the loop with

information. My hope is that classroom practices with advancing technology at the helm insure the ultimate in higher education, keeping developing minds current and helping insure our students success for viable futures and promising careers.

9. How will you evaluate the success of your activities?

I always encourage feedback from students and will continue to do so. I will continue to use rubrics and watch how the submitted work evolves. I will also utilize evaluations and discussions both one on one and through surveys to see how students apply and utilize the various tools offered and encouraged through technology. I will continue to attend CEC events to update my skills as well. I also like to keep in touch with certain alumni who work in industry fields that are relative to my course teachings to get feedback through their recall of how my course teachings and practices influenced them towards a successful career direction. I will remain open to changing the process and trying to new things if they are not working of the feedback is negative.

10. What do you consider to be the bigger picture items with regard to technology and learning?

In my opinion the digital classroom and on line learning are the way of the future for higher education and many other types of courses and certifications. They are ever present, convenient and here to stay. In some cases this is a fine way to deliver a course and reach people worldwide. I also think many courses require hands on and to fully embrace the attributes of learning being physically present is essential. There is no doubt today technology helps us prepare students for vital industry roles through software knowledge and proficiency. Learning to work in a digital environment and utilize tools, printers, plotters and a variety of electronics insures the creation of product faster and more efficiently. For the well rounded experience and a superior education I believe it is vital, particularly in the arts, to keep a connection to the hands on experience. Painting, mixing color, the tactical experience of touching fibers and feeling the hand of a fabric or grouping of fibers is essential to product development in textiles and surface design overall.

We have a responsibility as educators to promote the use of digital libraries and date banks for sourcing and research. Our libraries must grow and be preserved in every aspect of the experience even with the use of digital practices. We must never forget the value of the booklet or periodical or photograph, in this I mean the originals. I think the vast research tools available to our students need to be a part of our teaching practices so they never lose sight of history and archived items.

A vital big picture item is the responsibility as teachers and leaders to instill manners and decency in our students, which we can demonstrate through example. As time passes and all this amazing technology grows and evolves; manners matter. We must continue to prepare students with skills to communicate face to face in person as their skills develop in the world of ever advancing technology. The importance of basic common courtesy, eye contact, kindness and manners will forever be important and should be a part of the learning experience.