



## **Sample Preservice Teaching Philosophies**

The following examples present teaching philosophies developed by preservice teachers Taylor Pourchot, Kiersten Maddox, and Kathleen Lynch during one of their practicum courses. Written prior to their student teaching semesters, these teaching philosophies reflect their emerging beliefs about their roles as art educators. As evolving documents, they will continue to update their teaching philosophies as they grow in the teaching profession and are shaped by their ongoing pedagogical studies, life experiences, and professional practices.

# Teaching Philosophy

Taylor Pourchot

Art's influence has been transformative throughout my life. As an art educator, I strive to use visual art to provide students with the same lifelong enrichment. I was raised around creative thinkers and problem-solvers who encouraged me to explore my artistic potential and find practical applications for creativity. These role models have inspired me to channel my intrinsic drive to create and pursue knowledge into becoming an art educator so that I can inspire and impact the lives of students. I believe that the study of art enhances visual literacy and that the empowering ability to express and comprehend ideas in a visual format should be accessible to students of all backgrounds and developmental stages. I also believe that the study of visual art provides students with powerful sources of knowledge, as the desire to create and express through visual language is a trait that has united humans globally and throughout time. As such, I believe it is important to take an inclusive approach to presenting historical artworks to students. An inclusive approach allows students to explore and deepen their understanding of cultures on a worldwide scale. In a time when the world is continuously becoming interconnected, I find it increasingly relevant for students to broaden their knowledge of visual art from cultures around the world.

During my undergraduate education, I have received a multitude of resources for designing comprehensive, standards-based lessons, as well as abundant field experiences that have allowed me to apply my knowledge of curriculum and instruction in real-world teaching scenarios. My experiences in K-12 classrooms have led me to the conclusion that a holistic, choice-based curriculum is optimal for students' development and engagement not only in the art classroom but in building skills and understandings that transfer to other aspects of life as well. I am passionate about holistic education and see immense value in integrating STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) into visual art curricula to enhance students' understanding of other content areas. I have also received guidance on how to incorporate effective formative and summative assessment tools, both of which I believe are important for gauging student understanding. In the classroom, I strive to create a positive learning environment where students can experience social and emotional development by modeling and facilitating respectful discourse, including small group discussions and peer critiques. I view students as active learners capable of applying what they learn in visual art classrooms to express complex ideas and find creative solutions to problems. I also believe it is important to encourage students to think independently and make connections meaningful to their individual lives.

I am a firm believer in lifelong learning. As such, I am committed to continuous professional development as an artist and educator, including membership in the National Art Education Association and Tennessee Art Education Association, attending art education conferences, and participating in art workshops. I am also dedicated to maintaining my personal art practice, as my artistic skillsets directly impact the quality of technical instruction I can provide students. I believe it is important to network with fellow art educators to develop a supportive network of like-minded individuals committed to sharing the enrichment of the visual arts with those in their communities. I also believe there is value in constructive criticism and welcome feedback from colleagues so that I can best meet the learning needs of students. Additionally, I am dedicated to advocating for art education through active participation in art advocacy efforts, including facilitating art club and workshop events, in addition to networking. As a leader in art education, I am driven to spread awareness of the value of visual arts to students, their families, and the community at large.

## **Kiersten Maddox**

### **Philosophy of Teaching**

As renowned classical author Oscar Wilde wrote, "Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has ever known," in other words, art is the vehicle utilized to convey our personal and internal perceptions, opinions, and ideologies of the world around us. Because communication had been an immense struggle of mine since childhood, art allowed me to employ a new method of conveying my emotions and ideas, which improved my artistic and individual confidence. Since I gained exposure to the visual arts, I can convey even the most profound perceptions of my waking world and devise solutions to the communication issues I faced prior, as I can express my individuality visually in addition to orally and in written form. Due to these experiences in artistic experimentation and exploration, it is my passion as an educator to ignite students' life-long curiosity and allow them to develop a deep appreciation for artistic research and experimentation. In understanding my personal experiences, I plan to enable students to experiment with a variety of subject matter that is relevant to the student's lives and connects to their immediate and broader world. In prioritizing the explorative and research-based process, students can progress their abilities to develop coherent creative ideas and better technical applications. Such explorative teaching methods will improve their artistic confidence and solidify their individuality, as they are encouraged to connect personal interests, ideologies, and concepts to each artwork.

In conceiving an educationally rich classroom, students must be provided with a well-rounded and practical explanation of what is expected of them and what they can expect of me as an educator. Through my mentorship and guidance, students will understand that the art room is an atmosphere for educational and artistic enrichment, investigation, and inquiry. I shall provide them with the abilities and methods required to effectively experiment, solve artistic challenges, explore individual topics of interest, and visually present their ideas and perceptions concisely. These abilities will be taught to students through motif-based comprehensive art lessons incorporating art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and art creation. Each of these tasks requires higher-order thinking abilities from students, as they will be required to research conceptual, technical, and historical components of specific artworks provided. Students will learn that I expect them to: (a) attend on time, (b) be prepared to work diligently, (c) participate actively in class activities, (d) be courteous, and (e) experiment with a variety of subjects and mediums. Their work will be of proficient quality; however, perfection is not expected, as the research process and exposure to artistic mediums, subjects, and concepts are primarily beneficial for student's individual growth and creative confidence. Each student is expected to understand that art is about remaining interested, creating connections, and communicating one's perceptions of the surrounding world.

I will continue to study the newest research and attend professional development seminars and conferences to keep current on the latest art mediums and approaches, teaching philosophies, and educational methodologies. I will continue to include this currency into my curriculum and teaching methods as it will make my topics relevant and meaningful to each student, fueling their ability to engage and experiment with complex concepts and mediums. By offering opportunities, support, feedback, and guidance to attain the learning outcomes, my teaching approaches enable students to fulfill their artistic potential and explore their individuality acutely, furthering their artistic confidence. As the educator, I will plan a full range of tasks and activities to accommodate the specified curriculum, students' learning styles, and real-life circumstances with the goal of students comprehending, engaging, practicing, and building products to demonstrate and reflect on tangible progress and intended results. Through these teaching techniques, I plan to make the classroom an enriching and explorative learning environment for all students, where their artistic and individual confidence can grow.

# PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

~ KATHLEEN LYNCH ~

As a child, one of my earliest memories was climbing all the way to the top of the refrigerator to reach a box of crayons. Up until that point, my only artistic exposure had been observing my mother during her scrapbooking sessions and embroidery projects. Being self-expressive with my own art did not occur to me until I was able to make my first mark on a piece of paper. From that day on, I was hooked. I took up painting, sketching, and even modeling clay. In my teenage years, I was gifted my first drawing tablet, and my love of digital creation quickly took off. These passions eventually went towards pursuing a degree in animation and graphic design. However, my dream of becoming an art teacher was not fully realized until mid-way through my college education. I was graciously given an opportunity to visit an elementary school classroom and participate in multiple art projects with the students. I immediately fell in love with the profession, and it quickly became my most desired career.

I continued to expand my teaching abilities through several different school visits by witnessing a wide variety of teaching methods and classroom management styles from different art teachers throughout Tennessee. By observing those teachers, I was able to shape my own teaching style, that being a fusion of humor, enthusiasm, and encouragement. These are all attributes that I have found to be instrumental in fostering positive changes in struggling students. In my classroom, this unique blend creates an engaging and supportive environment that empowers students to express themselves creatively while building up their confidence as young artists.

My main philosophy of education is about integrating art through social and emotional techniques, and emphasizing the fact that every child can be an artist. I have a goal to help each of my students see themselves as individual creators and give them full confidence in their artwork. As an important aspect to my teaching style, I strongly believe that good classroom management can play a large role in creating a comfortable and calming environment for my students, and through that, I aim to build a structured, inclusive atmosphere for each child who enters my room. I have expectations that my students practice peer collaboration to help them gain new ideas from diverse perspectives. I would also like to pass on my enjoyment and passion for art history to my students, building up their natural curiosity about the world.

Overall, every student should feel like they belong in my room and are capable of learning. To me, teaching is ultimately an opportunity to learn from my students, alongside my students, and to encourage a growing curiosity about the wonderful world of art.