

## AN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

*You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him discover it in himself.* – Galileo Galilei, astronomer

**teach confidence** > To what degree a student benefits from a program of learning largely depends on attitude and energy. Communication design principles and practices are best learned through experience, by making objects, solving problems, and discussing work, over and over. Critical, methodical exploration enables a design student to develop skills and confidence.

*Imitate. ... You'll never get all the way, and the separation might be truly remarkable.* – Bruce Mau, designer

**teach history** > Before students can learn to trust their own abilities, they must learn from those who came before — by attempting to duplicate, mimic and recreate published work. Know your history. It is a poorly educated student who graduates knowing less about themselves and the work of their predecessors, peers and professionals, than when they entered a program of study.

*The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity.* – William Butler Yeats, poet

**teach inquiry** > Design is in the details. Context is everything. But what of vision? Passionate intensity inevitably produces something, but not necessarily something effective, worthy of respect. Ask big questions. Who makes the rules? Who do you work for? Why work at all? What are the implications of your work? Who benefits? Who suffers? Who cares? Who understands?

*If you haven't got discernment, you simply repeat what you're used to.* – Matthew Carter, type designer

**teach awareness** > Design reflects individual taste, expresses personal style. However, without professional standards and a sense of consensus, design is adrift, uninformed, inadequate. Every student must become aware of personal preferences, while continuing to build their knowledge of best practices and precedents. What is left to invent? To redefine? To improve? To recontextualize?

*Limitations focus the mind like gravity.* – David Barringer, design critic

**teach discipline** > Designers need boundaries. Absolute freedom, akin to absolute power, is a vacuum, a voracious black hole. Students learn best when creative freedom is offset by practical constraints. Be consistent, practice what you preach. Deadlines produce results, rules prevent chaos, and structure provides strength. Learn to play by the rules, if ever you expect to break them effectively.

*To require perfection is to invite paralysis.* – David Bayles and Ted Orland, art critics

**teach productivity** > To err is human. Learn from your mistakes. Students cannot receive feedback until they produce something. Even the most passionate discourse is empty if not wedded to action. The more you make — multiple versions, unusual shapes, different sizes, other colors — the more opportunities you create: to grow, to adapt, to learn. Eliminate what doesn't work to arrive at what does.

*The artist is a superior craftsman. ... Therein lies the source of all creative work.* – Paul Klee, artist, educator

**teach craft** > No degree of novelty, flash or vigor will forever deflect criticism aimed at faulty craftsmanship. Aspiring communication designers who never learn to convincingly space a headline, or color-correct an image, or prepare a file for final output, cannot expect to be of much use to clients or employers, much less earn the respect and support of their peers.

*You have to be interested in culture to design for it.* – Lorraine Wild, designer, writer, educator

**teach tolerance** > We are not alone. We live in a multicultural, interdisciplinary, hyper-connected global marketplace. Today's world is a myriad of shifting styles and choices, of strangers passing at hyperspeed. It's a lot to keep up with, but designers must. Different points of view inform and enrich your own. Travel far away, try weird foods, meet new people. And take notes.

*I think my imagination dictates the technologies I use.* – Michel Gondry, filmmaker

**teach different** > Don't be a slave to technology; ideas come first. Make a difference, before someone else does. Somewhere inside you is the mind of a child, waiting to be rediscovered. Play first, then work. Don't rely on old habits, make new ones. If you can dream it, you can create it. What if there were no rules? So you can't \_\_\_\_\_ ; don't let that stop you!.

*Never, never, never give up.* – Winston Churchill, statesman