

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My approach to teaching is grounded in a deep commitment to justice, equity and antiracism. As a queer, non-binary, Latinx first-generation American raised in a mixed ethnic household, I bring lived experience to the classroom that informs my understanding of the structural barriers many students face. My pedagogy reflects this awareness — centering empathy, community, collaboration and care as key tools for learning and transformation.

I believe education must be a reciprocal process — a space where both students and educators grow through mutual engagement. I strive to create open and democratic classrooms where all voices are heard and where diversity is not only welcomed but honored as essential. This involves flattening hierarchies between teacher and student to cultivate a space where power is shared and knowledge flows in multiple directions. In these environments, students are encouraged to safely challenge dominant narratives, question inherited systems and locate themselves within broader social contexts.

Justice in the classroom means setting rigorous expectations while building trust. I emphasize process over product and encourage students to explore problem-solving beyond the confines of the assignment or institution. I work to actively dismantle systems of oppression — colonialism, patriarchy, cisheteronormativity and whiteness — that are deeply embedded within educational structures. This begins with acknowledging how institutions have historically excluded and harmed marginalized voices and continues by resisting tokenism and performative gestures.

I draw inspiration from radical pedagogical models such as Black Mountain College, the Antiuniversity of London, the Black School and the Museum of Care, alongside the work of Sister Corita Kent, Paulo Freire, bell hooks and David Graeber. These influences reinforce my belief that the classroom is not a neutral space — it is a site of potential liberation. Through interdisciplinary inquiry and collaborative learning, students are invited to embrace failure, celebrate complexity and take creative risks.

I incorporate underrepresented voices and histories throughout coursework, ensuring students engage with multiple perspectives across ethnicity, gender, class and ability. I emphasize the importance of listening — especially to those whose experiences differ from our own — as an act of care and solidarity. Through dialogue, collaboration and community-building, students are invited to imagine creative practices rooted in collective care and mutual support. We explore how art can function not just as expression but as a tool for solidarity — challenging dominant systems while nurturing shared values, sustainable labor and social connection.

My studio practice and research mirror and inform my pedagogy. Whether through studio work, installations or collaborative projects, I investigate how art and education can catalyze social change. Participatory methods and conversation are central to my process, shaping how I build learning environments that challenge the commodification of creativity and offer tools for sustainable, community-driven engagement. Ultimately, my teaching is an ongoing commitment to nurturing a more equitable and just society — one in which education, like art, becomes a tool for freedom, healing and collective possibility.

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