

Statement of Teaching Philosophy **Kathryn Farley**

Students in my classes learn in the interactive, experimental, and supportive environments that I create. In these environments, I encourage student-centered and -initiated activities that seek to instill a comprehensive understanding of digital art research, history, and theory while encouraging students to hone their practical production skills.

A common thread running through my teaching is my desire to cross boundaries in the arts and to theorize media arts practices in a contemporary cultural context. Anchored in my commitment to achieving a dialectic between the creative and the critical, the imaginative and the intellectual, making and interpreting, my approach to teaching encourages an in-depth and interdisciplinary examination of both traditional and emerging art forms set against the backdrop of 21st-century life. Specifically, my classes invite students to consider the ways in which performing arts practices and art education curricula are shaped by the overarching media structures in contemporary life.

As a proponent of active learning, I use a variety of tools and techniques to encourage student discussion and interaction. By including computer-based resources in educational and production settings, I have been able to experiment with the creative potential of a wide variety of digital technologies and to offer students cross-school approaches to art production and analysis. By integrating computer-based technologies in the classroom, I connect with and expand upon the myriad ways that students opt to use media in their everyday lives.

I am also eager to offer students opportunities to experiment with familiar technologies. For a literary adaptation course at Northwestern, for example, I constructed a wiki (editable Web site) and asked the students to contribute an entry to a journal that mirrored Bram Stoker's approach to writing Dracula (the text under investigation). The assignment helped students consider ways in which the novel's storyline might be understood in a contemporary context. I found that almost immediately, students began to insert images, sounds and videos in their entries. Thus, without realizing it, they were composing a multimodal text.

In addition to working with both familiar and new technologies in educational settings and integrating multimodal assignments into my courses, I seek to foster dynamic classroom relations by empowering students to assume leadership roles in teaching/learning processes. For my current composition class at Georgia Tech, for instance, I have invited students to lead a class session in which they orally present the results of research they have conducted concerning comedy as argument. Students are also empowered to take responsibility for their own learning by preparing questions designed to promote class discussion, to present short analyses of specific readings, and to work together on their final projects.

What would I like to do in the near future? Given time and resources, I look forward to developing classes for presentation in virtual worlds, such as Second Life and other emerging formats that engage students in innovative methods and tools of discovery. Such an environment is another venue for students to learn more about digital art and production.