

TEACHING STATEMENT

One of the key element that characterizes my teaching philosophy is that I aim to create a class environment that investigates contemporary areas of interactive arts, computational media, and experimental design, focusing on transdisciplinary and syncretic methods for speculation and artistic innovation. For each subject, I put an emphasis on balancing theoretical/contextual content with technical analysis and practical implementation, and I ensure students are thoroughly supported in developing concepts that emanate sophisticated artistic thought accompanied with skills of design and technological expertise.

In my teaching practice, I apply constructive alignment and active learning (Biggs, 2018; Exley & Dennick, 2009) to ensure that assessment tasks directly address the intended learning outcomes, allowing students to develop learning that achieves goals aligned with the courses' objectives. An additional aspect that I consider important is to balance theoretical and practical content and use experiential learning techniques (learning-by-doing, learning-from-others) so that learners actively engage through practice, ensuring that comprehensive reflection and understanding of the content has been efficiently made (Dewey, 1983; Kolb, 1984). Usually, this is achieved via activities and experimentation exercises that are introduced in associated tutorials and workshops. In my electives, in particular, I provide a range of technical sessions to feed and enhance production skills. I ensure certain degrees of freedom are provided for the materialization of the projects (often with a technology-agnostic approach) so that students can constructively accumulate knowledge from their own independent practice, experience, and prior skills.

In terms of evaluation, I mainly use coursework and portfolio assessment (both formative and summative), and I continuously provide to each individual student feedback reports (both informal and formal), ensuring that they are aware of the evaluation criteria throughout the semester. This helps to have students actively involved in the learning process and enhances performance by helping them gain confidence in what they need to learn/do and to what standard (Race et al., 2005; Cambridge, 2018). An additional requirement for the evaluation process is to ensure that students are aware beforehand of the evaluation rationale; for this reason, I use assessment rubrics that consist of criteria, quality definitions for those criteria at particular levels, and scoring strategies (Dawson, 2017). This assists both the students and the instructors in having objective measurements and consistent feedback reports (Popham, 1997).

Since Fall 2019, I have designed and delivered the electives "Media Architecture", "Responsive Environments", and "Extended Perception", co-taught the Foundation course "Communications Lab" (Fall 2019, Spring 2020), and have co-facilitated for two semesters so far "Capstone I" (Research and Methodology) and "Capstone II" (Practical Implementations). Even though these last semesters the planning and delivery of the courses have been affected by COVID-19, I have ensured that all students (plus associated staff and faculty) can receive extended and effective support; this has been accomplished with the combination and implementation of tools and technologies, such as the development of websites that include slides, practical tutorials, video recordings, readings, and more, having sessions in mixed-mode, and by offering additional tutorial slots for the support of students.



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Teaching should not be limited to the classroom (place) and the accomplishment of good marks (goals), but to expand to external resources and environments where challenges with additional growth opportunities are available. Thus, I have the habit of (a) organizing lectures with distinguished guests (academics, practitioners, artists), (b) arranging visits to exhibitions and related research institutes, (c) designing live industry client briefs, (d) exhibiting students' works in media facades, galleries, biennale, and (e) motivating students to further promote their projects in festivals, competitions, journals. These actions and activities become important elements for a comprehensive and rewarding learning experience. With the right support, resources, and planning, students can achieve exceptional results that give them a great boost in their academic and professional careers.

Finally, I am deeply committed to developing inclusive classes, allowing all students to participate and follow the covered content, even if other factors impact them negatively in achieving this goal. For example, there are occasions where students may have a disability, face health issues (physiological, psychological), or simply struggle to catch up with the material. On these occasions, I will take action to fully support them: inform necessary people and departments in NYU, communicate with experts, and adjust the pace and structure of classes. Providing additional support or assisting with services and technologies to a student (or a group of students) is fundamental to a successful design of a course. My main aspiration is to be aware that the dynamics of my classes are adjusted for successful performance and efficiency, and that my contribution as an educator - hopefully - assists innovative practices that engage, inform, and inspire.

COVID impact statement: As I have briefly mentioned already, the pandemic had an impact in my classes these last 3 semesters. In Spring 2020, I had to redesign my elective, and co-redesign the foundation course "Communications Lab". Strategies were employed to ensure all content can be delivered successfully: for this reason, I recorded lectures and selected workshops into videos of short duration with a condensed content, as studies show this method to be effective (Noetel et al., 2021). I often requested students to review the content prior to the scheduled session - i.e. as in a flipped classroom configuration (Platt et al., 2000). Even though the development of the content takes triple the time to be developed, it allowed students to discuss, reflect, and dwell on specific issues of the taught material, rather than being passive and inactive during the live streaming. One other extreme difficulty I faced was the delivery of my elective "Extended Perception", as this was a production class and students needed access to physical computing and digital fabrication facilities. To override this problem, I created development kits and shipped to them, provided prototyping tutorials with easy-to-find materials (such as cardboards and home utensils), and arranged additional office hours to work with each one individually. For the last 2 semesters, all of my courses are delivered in mixed-mode, and even though the larger percentage of students can continue their classes in person, there are still students online for which I have to accommodate. My students and I use a set of tools to ensure consistency, productivity, support, and good organization (Google Drive/Slides/Sheets/Forms, Miro boards, Slack, Zoom, Diagrams, and more), and I try my best to balance my focus, time, and attention to both groups (in person and remote). I often mix the two groups together so that remote students do not feel neglected, and I make sure that I meet with them all at frequent intervals.



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