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Since 2005 I have been privileged enough to find myself, first as a Chicago Public School teacher, later as a professor of practice and now as a tenure-track, professor of Media Arts. In the intervening years, I have had the opportunity to work with thousands of students, undergraduate and graduate alike, in the pursuit of their creative dreams and professional careers. Over that time, I have developed myself into a more realized, focused, and useful artist and teacher to those who would entrust me with their time and education. It has been a rewarding experience and I continue to look forward to my teaching responsibilities every semester.

As such, I would like to codify some of my pedagogical experiences and values in this document. My course load usually revolves around the aesthetics and production workflows of new media, gaming, virtual reality, and current creative internet trends. Naturally, these topics attract excited and passionate students who wish to transition their personal interests into creative outlets and/or future entrepreneurship. I see my role as one of support and practical leadership—helping them hone these pre-existing interests into marketable, interesting, and sharable futures. Whether their goals are to become involved in the games industry or produce design work for Pixar or to move abroad and set up a new media practice, it begins and ends with them, with their fervor. It is my prerogative to provide the expertise, experience, and opportunity necessary during their time in my class to amplify that a-priori spirit.

My students do not leave my classes or research teams as different people, but hopefully stronger, more authentic versions of themselves. I came to the Columbia College Chicago from the Art Institutes. That transition presented a number of truly interesting opportunities. Firstly, I was able to move an ongoing, externally funded research project to the Columbia campus and directly integrate it with my teaching duties. The project, PDI Check, is A Nintendo 3DS video game designed as a tool for Pediatric Ophthalmologist and techs, for the use of diagnosing various eye diseases in kids. Supported through the National Science Foundation and Alaska Eye Center, my team and I conducted primary design research in remote, war-torn parts of Burma. I later took this project into the classroom and used it as a tool for teaching. This was a great experience because I was able to directly mirror concepts from class through very real world examples in the software's development.

While I have had other opportunities to connect undergraduate coursework with research projects, that first educational research venture conducted with Columbia College students will always stand out to me. I believe it is very important to maintain an environment where all students, even the most inexperienced, can feel empowered while using unique and cutting edge media technologies. As such, I have made a specific effort to, not only modernize my current department's student-facing technology offerings, but directly connect these facilities and capabilities with our course designs. For example, over the last year, I have helped in developing a virtual reality lab space for student research. This facility has fed into student-run virtual reality demonstrations

and creative productions across many classes in our Media Arts program. The lab has directly expanded the opportunities afforded to undergraduates by giving them access to this new and invigorating technology while simultaneously pairing those experiences with in-class instruction on development of creative and professional virtual reality software.

I firmly believe that these hands-on, creative technology opportunities, coupled with in-class pedagogy, have led to some wonderful student outcomes. Qualitatively, I believe that my students are creating some of the most interesting new media and gaming artworks in the United States. I am truly proud of these students and am constantly impressed with their efforts and final productions.

Concerning outcomes, I can speak to where they find themselves after graduation. My undergraduates have gone on to very prestigious graduate programs where they focus on games research. Even as recently as this year, I worked closely with a Media Arts undergraduate on a research project concerning racial and gender intersectionality through video game representation. That student was promptly offered a graduate position with a full graduate assistantship at Depaul University here in Chicago. Others have gone on to work in the games industry at major studios like Blizzard and Electronic Arts.

Still others have remained in Chicago, transitioning their coursework and new media skillsets into entrepreneurial opportunities, creative studios, and personal practices. Staying connected with these former students and watching their life trajectories is one of the great pleasures in my life. Beyond the classroom, I have worked with several entities in Brazil and Burma to educate the community about creative technology, video games, and the work being done at Columbia College.

I truly enjoy the hours I spend teaching and, as with anything one enjoys, I hope to continue to mature and grow as an educator.

My students are all in process. During the semester, they grow and develop into young creative minds and the artistic leaders of tomorrow. I, too, am in process. With each semester, I hope to be able to do more, do better, and become the sort of teacher I was lucky enough to have when I was an undergraduate and graduate student. I work hard to stay engaged with the evolving needs of my students, to stay relevant in the professional community, and, with each class meeting, attempt to empower my students' own creative voices.

In closing, I believe teaching interactive media is more than the distributing information about technology but to cultivate an understanding between human beings. Interactive media fundamentally changes from year to year, precludes traditional mastery. So, we must cultivate in ourselves and our students work that explores, expands and innovates on current artistic paradigms and results in new personal and meaningful works.