

Martin C. Reynolds
Statement of Educational Philosophy

The role of the music faculty member, particularly the ensemble conductor, is to serve as a role model, facilitator, and mentor to all students of music regardless of their degree pursuit. As a professor in higher education, I diligently work to serve the students in the music degree program but I am also pleased to cultivate the musical interests of non-music majors as well. I prepare professionals for their vocation but I also promote artistic depth and diversity within the academic community and support those with a continuing passion for learning and artistry.

I value professionalism in my work and I seek that from my students. By personally exhibiting a high level of preparedness and a strong work ethic, my students observe the drive and desire to achieve at the highest levels. Part of my philosophy reflects this personal maxim: "I do not ask of students' things that I would not do myself". Leading by example is one of the strongest forms of influence in education.

Fulfilling the role of facilitator is an enormous component of the thoughtful educator's mission. Whether providing materials, direct instruction, or meeting during office hours, the university professor should provide the stimulus for learning. I work diligently to guide my students toward self-discovery. This type of learning is experiential and the outcome is personal ownership of a body of knowledge that is lasting, practical, and applicable.

Advising and mentoring skills are also valuable commodities for a liberal arts faculty member. A meaningful mentoring experience should lead to a sustained and enduring relationship between teacher and student. Through continuous involvement, an educator offers students' academic guidance, support, and assistance. All students go through difficult periods, face engaging challenges, or work to correct problems. By implementing solid advising and mentoring strategies like goal setting, collaboration, problem-solving, counseling, and collegiality, student success is greatly enhanced. Due to the natural intensity and long hours inherent in music study, close relationships between educators and students are formed. A solid mentoring approach improves student achievement, retention, and professional success.

The greatest attributes a twenty-first century music student, pedagogue, or performer can display are flexibility and a life-long love for learning. By displaying these attributes, musicians of all types cannot only survive in a highly competitive artistic endeavor but they can also expect to flourish as individuals and community members. The art of teaching should mark these attributes as cornerstones and should reinforce them in philosophy and substance. By making these attributes priorities, teaching can maintain its societal stature as an enduring and noble profession.

As a large ensemble conductor, I value the work that is done individually with the student in the applied studio. It is this type of work that is the cornerstone of any success that an ensemble enjoys. A positive relationship between ensemble conductor and studio professor is a critical piece in the success of the student and the applied faculty. It becomes increasingly clear to me that each member of the faculty shares a vital mission in the development of those we serve. With a true sense of respect and collegiality for everyone's effort, a music school can attract, develop, and maintain a successful faculty that fosters a cooperative and healthy learning environment for students. A motivated faculty that engages students provides the forward momentum for successful music programs. Together, faculty and students can create a synergized environment for music study.

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Vision Statement

Liberal arts institutions are strongholds of diversity, academic variety and freedom. Because the foundation and mission of most liberal arts institutions encapsulates those qualities, they tend to protect those precepts in an ardent manner. Creating an environment that supports that mission and those principles is central to the work I do as a collegiate educator.

A superior collegiate band program is one that demonstrates a vibrant atmosphere of participation and energy. I work toward those attributes by creatively establishing a strong classroom structure and a low-risk environment that encourages instrumental musicians to exhibit resonant tone and the exploration of phrasing, style, and nuance. I teach collaboration skills and I place a premium on creative differences between performers. By drawing on student talent, placing a premium on their ability, and further developing their musicianship, my students have been wonderfully successful in contributing to the musical advancement of department ensembles.

The concert programs I choose not only guide the learning of the students but is designed to engage the audience. At times, I have employed thematic programming while in other instances I take a “music for music’s sake” approach. I do believe that concerts are more alluring if they demonstrate an overtone of story-telling. Utilizing this concept, I have doubled audience attendance in the last few years.

The learning experience of the 21st century is unlike any in human history. Opportunities to access information are more proliferated than ever and those opportunities seem to grow regularly and exponentially. Information gathering and sharing have become virtually instant. As a result, teacher preparation is evolving. Most of that evolution is a reaction to the seemingly ever-shifting focus of PK-12 education. My vision for music education encourages flexibility and adaptation. Students seeking teacher licensure should be prepared to demonstrate those qualities as well. They should also learn skills that lead to creative curriculum development and delivery methods. The most successful young music educators are those that show the ability to adapt and enjoy being flexible in content delivery and collegial relationships.