

## Teaching Statement

One of my strengths lies in being successful at motivating my students. I challenge them to challenge themselves, but I am also fair-minded and transparent. If the classroom is to be a place where each student feels enfranchised, then it is my duty to establish the ground work upon which dynamic interaction takes place. I encourage participation at each turn. I aim to be clear and concise in explaining principles; I go to great lengths to demonstrate how a course has been structured, and where it is that we stand in the progress toward our goals. First and foremost, I am a musician, and that is what I want my students to recognize of themselves.

Music theory has a fundamental place in the curriculum, and it is my obligation both to promote and to shed light on the many roles that it can fill. The student focusing on any discipline must be able to take from my classes skills that they will find applicable in their engagement with music writ large. Music theory will enrich that experience: if the student does not understand how this is so, then I have not accomplished my task.

As a teacher of composition, I believe there is an ideal educational connection between performing ensembles and students learning orchestration. While it is valuable to teach standard approaches with regard to instrumentation through textbook examples, the most useful encounter is experienced directly through applied explorations and inquiry with live musicians. My experience as a conductor gives me unique insight into the importance of such an approach. I actively encourage interaction between my composition students and performers as a way of vitalizing the teaching of instrumentation as a part of composition instruction. Furthermore, I encourage students to dissect the scores of other composers; to use skills learned in music theory to gain comprehension and insight into their own work, and to expand their working knowledge of all of the resources available to them.

Music is my passion—it is also something that I need to share. Teaching at the university level is a source of inspiration that carries over equally into my professional activities and into my personal life.