

My goal as an educator is to provide students with resources to take ownership over their musical development, both during their time in college and continuing into their professional careers. I want for them to develop critical thinking skills, so they can ultimately become their own teachers.

I believe in teaching fundamental principles of technique that can be applied universally, and I encourage students to focus on one basic idea at a time. Scales, arpeggios, etudes and other exercises are an important part of daily practice, reinforced by weekly technique classes. The emphasis of these classes is to learn how to use the body's natural resources in order to achieve fluidity of movement that is free from tension. Utilizing forces such as gravity and momentum allows us to relax muscles and prevent injury. In the study of technique, it is critical that students set attainable goals for themselves, and I help them to organize their practice time with this in mind. Positive reinforcement is of primary importance, in order for students to have the confidence to trust and believe in their own ability to grow.

Learning how to bridge the gap between technique and musicianship is a crucial process. The purpose of technical proficiency is to be able to express musical ideas to their fullest potential. Every student has his or her own unique voice and point of view, and my job is to help them understand what they want and how to execute their musical vision. Having a clear idea of phrasing is the first step, and I teach my students that every note they play is either going towards a destination, or coming away from one. Learning how to tell a story through music is my favorite part of being a cellist, and I enjoy working with my students to create different colors and characters within their music.

Another focus to my pedagogy is allowing students to be teachers as well as learners. Students learn as much from each other as they do their teacher, and weekly performance classes can foster this type of learning. Studio class provides students with an opportunity not only to perform for their peers, but also to listen. Knowing how to give constructive criticism is an important skill, and I encourage students to make comments in class. I believe that learning how to be your own teacher begins with understanding how to listen critically. Experimentation is key to musical development, and I teach my students not to be afraid of trial and error. In addition, it is important to have chamber music experience and knowledge of orchestral excerpt repertoire.

Finally, public speaking skill, knowing how to write a convincing grant application, and teaching ability are as important to building a musical career as being able to play the cello.

By ensuring their well-rounded education, my hope is that students leave my studio equipped with resources for the future.