

Jeff Larson
Teaching Philosophy

As a teacher, I strive to engage, challenge, and inspire growth in my students. It is my belief that every student is capable of tasting the passion that I feel for photography by becoming collaborators in the exploration of art theory, research, and practice. To appeal to my students in the study of photography, I begin by engaging the student with the manipulation of the camera and the magic of the dark room and that then draws them into the thick of the learning experience. Behind every art technique, art history theory, and theoretical argument there is a vivid anecdote and project, and I believe that it is my job, in part, to share these anecdotes and entice my students with assignments and projects to become better artists.

I believe that my students who will be future leaders should be in control and responsible for what they learn (of course I will be directing them.) Furthermore, I believe their accepting responsibility for learning does not occur in a vacuum it also involves those with whom they work. I develop a sense of community in my classes. As members of that community, students are responsible not only to themselves, but to the other members of the community including all individuals using the lab.

My goals are to promote the learning of the skills photography and the idea of how to look at photography as art. I also try to help the students learn to think logically, learn creative problem-solving methods and techniques, and improve craftsmanship (creating prints that have a wide tonal range, compositionally interesting, and thought provoking). In addition, I try to help students see the course material in an all-encompassing context by requiring them to synthesize the various concepts of the course by applying them together for a final project.