

Judith E. Morehouse, MMus
J.Morehouse@memphis.edu
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Philosophy of Teaching

All students have a personal responsibility to pursue their education with fire and determination, and each teacher is responsible for providing expertise pertinent to a student's current course of study within the subject matter. I utilize experiential and active learning in all my classes to present my expertise in a way that educates my students and broadens their scope for discovery.

My hybrid experiential-active learning method is exemplified in both Singer's Anatomy I and Performance Workshop. In Anatomy I, I establish student knowledge of breathing method by first asking students from where they breathe, and I expand upon their answers by having students simultaneously palpate their chests and diaphragms. As they breathe deeply against their hand placements, I ask where they feel movement. After some experimentation in this manner, I can open a discussion on the organs and musculature of the breathing mechanism. By questioning, I assess present student knowledge; by experimentation, I present new ideas; and by discussion, I broaden on the theme and allow students the freedom of guided discovery and practice. I take this methodology a step further with more advanced students in Performance Workshop by requiring a more analytical thinking element. I ask students to consider what makes their assigned melody vocally challenging versus what they are doing to make it easier to achieve. After they answer, I then ask them to demonstrate the staging for that particular portion of music and tell me if their acting choices are adding to or easing the difficulty in their vocal performance. This then leads to them discussing their choices, seriously assessing the vocology of their total movements, and making adjustments for a more fluid and professional presentation. Through this critical thinking based, experiential-active learning model in Workshop, I allow students to question their own application of vocal practice and performance, which enlarges their understanding and performance capabilities.

My current research is in Vocology, which I apply in the private studio, voice class, choir, workshop, and anatomy. My research centers on vocal changes and anomalies within college-age adults. Upperclassmen and graduate vocology students recruited to help research will have the opportunity to teach non-voice majors in lessons under my supervision, write reports, and present their findings to both faculty and prominent members of the vocology community. My research feeds into my philosophy of experiential-active learning by allowing my students opportunities to directly apply the methods they learn in my classes to their personal practice, teaching, and research efforts.

Through experiential and active learning, students become curious, driven, critical, and analytical academic citizens. A good teacher is one that learns alongside the students and encourages them to journey toward academic excellence, inspiring them through research and pedagogical methods to seek after knowledge on their own.