

## Teaching Philosophy

The study of music is a rewarding experience for anyone with a desire to learn more about the art. With each student, I strive to assist them in developing their abilities both as an instrumentalist and as a musician. To that end, I pursue the following objectives in my teaching:

Fundamentals – the “nuts and bolts” of playing your instrument. All aspects of producing the desired sound are covered here. These include (but are not limited to) tone production, finger technique, articulation, rhythm, and intonation.

Musicianship – the elements that transform music from notes on a page into the communication of an idea. Students will develop their interpretive skills and use critical thinking to determine which musical and stylistic elements will best suit the message of each piece of music. Realization of dynamics, tempos, and musical phrases are also pursued to achieve these goals.

Theory – the recognition of patterns and formal structure within the music. Using music theory, students are able to gain a much better understanding and appreciation of the music – both the details and the “big picture.” How does one musical phrase relate to another? How does one section of a piece relate to another? How does one movement of a multi-movement work relate to the others? Understanding theory leads to a more informed interpretation of the music.

Repertoire – introducing students to the full spectrum of music literature. Music varies in many ways: historical era, geographical origin, genre, style, etc. Exposure to such a variety helps the student learn in many ways. The student learns 1) which interpretations are appropriate for each piece, given their knowledge of its origin; 2) an appreciation for the various styles of music and the differences between them; and 3) how to practically apply the above concepts (fundamentals, musicianship, theory) to solo and ensemble literature.

Self-teaching – the ability to evaluate one’s own performance and recognize strengths and weaknesses within it. This aspect is especially important given the large amount of time spent practicing alone as compared to the time spent with an instructor. How do we develop effective practice habits? Once we have determined our weaknesses, which exercises will best help us improve these weaknesses?

The end goal is to create an environment that fosters student learning, growth, and success. With a strong commitment from both the student and the teacher, this result can be achieved, and the process through which it is achieved is enjoyable for everyone involved.