



## VINICIUS LIMA

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

WWW.VINICIUSRLIMA.COM

ME@VINICIUSRLIMA.COM

@VLIMADESIGN

### STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

As an instructor, I have as my utmost objective to provide students with life-long abilities. Instructors are the ones with the role of preparing students to the future by making them professionals who excel at their craft, can analyze critically works and more importantly are conscious of the role a designer has in today's world.

A large part of this preparation must foster the student's development of a research process based on problem solving skills combined with a solid foundation. The fundamental concepts allow one to think thoroughly about the essence of what needs to be solved. I have found in my experience that relating content with real-life examples facilitates the understanding a topic. For that, visual aids such as digital presentations, books, magazines and the internet play a major role. Magazines and the digital technology aid the presentation to the class of contemporary design, connecting the classroom content to recent developments in the field.

While in this discovery phase, I encourage students to keep their minds open to new concepts and not to be afraid of making mistakes. Designers need to keep their eyes open all the time. Brainstorming with many sketches helps mature a solution and one can learn from the mistakes just as much as they learn from the successes. In this process, learning how to present their work is a way to connect the students with their practice. Being able to articulate ideas is a fundamental skill and this can be practiced in classroom discussion. Discussions become an effective method of collaboration, nurturing an environment where everyone is welcome to participate.

During presentations, I become one who provides guidance to students about their work while respecting individual expression. This guidance is always tailored to the level of the student. The discussion with beginning students addresses the clarification of fundamental principles, the development of a design literacy, structure and guidance during times of struggle. Students on advanced or graduate status already have the fundamental skills and are in search of polishing their craft. The advices then evolve towards self-expression, being proactive for problem solving and self-assessment, towards defining a cohesive body of work.

Most design works rely deeply on technology. This should be embraced by prospective designer so that they can be prepared for market demands. I have the responsibility to introduce new possibilities of expression, turning myself into a continuous learner. I research software and materials that are suitable and share the conclusions with the class. I encourage them to start their own research and share results with the group, turning the classroom into a collaborative, creative laboratory. *(cont)*

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After fulfilling project requirements, a student is aware that he developed a process and can continue his journey with confidence. This process also becomes a measurement for the students' outcome. The ability to connect to the introduced concepts and the problem-solving strategies are as important as the final product in the evaluation evaluation process.

In and out of the classroom, I find necessary that students perceive me as someone who knows them by their names, who believes in their full potential and to whom they can ask questions or bring suggestions. When planning a course, I consider suggestions that can come during the semester or from the evaluation forms. The latter are an important method of teaching improvement and I ask my classes to report their honest opinions so that I can assess the effectiveness of my teaching and make the necessary changes, if any.

In conclusion, there is nothing as rewarding as a sincere "thank you" or a "I really enjoyed and learned a lot from your class" said by one of my students. That is the moment I know I had a positive contribution in their lives and that is the main reason teaching is so important. If one does not go to school to reflect and change his mind about a specific topic, there is no point in attending it. And this role I chose to have is what I always remember and what made me want to become a professor.

*Vinicius Rebelo Lima*