

As a dance educator, I believe that anyone can dance. I encourage students of all ages and levels to explore dance to the best of their abilities. Through my teaching methodology, I stress the importance of practice to grow as a dancer; the process of growth continues over a lifetime.

I highly value technique, for it provides a strong foundation for dancers to enhance their facility and artistry. I also believe that it is important to impart information to students about the history of the techniques they are studying, whether it be ballet, modern or Afro Caribbean dance, with the latter being the technique I am most passionate about. Dance history plays an important role in my classes, for I believe that dancers should understand that movement does not happen out of a vacuum. We are all a part of a continuum in history in the development of this art form, and we should all be aware of those who paved the way for us within that history. It is also important for students to understand the social contexts in which dance forms have been created, for it allows them further insight into the cultures certain dances arise from, particularly when it comes to the dances of the African Diaspora. While there are African roots that connect those dances, they are more diverse than people may realize.

I believe in challenging my students to explore their full range of motion without harming their bodies. I often provide anatomical information to my students on how best to execute movement to avoid injuries. Personally, I came to a stronger understanding of my own body and anatomy through having experienced injuries and undergoing physical therapy, such as my having patellar malalignment in my knees. I provide somatic awareness in my classes to prevent my students from having to deal with that same experience, and work to help them understand that any anatomical differences are not obstacles to their dancing, but that an awareness of them can only enhance their performance as dance artists.

When it comes to teaching improvisation and composition, I often pull from my students' embodied knowledge and life experiences in empowering them to create material; this helps them understand that they already have resources to be choreographers themselves. I also tend to use materials from other art forms, as well as explore social issues when creating movement with students to enhance their understanding of how dance permeates many different aspects of their culture. Overall, I want my students to be rooted in their technical and historical understanding of dance, as well as understand the resources that they already possess to contribute to the development of the art form.