

# NIA ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

ARTIST, WRITER, DESIGNER

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Facilitating empathy, accessibility, and creative solutions that support liberated ideals are at the core of my teaching philosophy. To develop these skills, there are a few tools that I implement when working with students:

- Introduce the “How Might We?” question, which encourages students to answer the questions of who, what, and how they are going to change with their creative solutions.
- Urge students to look at world issues not as “problems” when designing, but instead to approach them as “conditions”. This allows students to approach topics from an explorative point of view and limits creative tunnel-vision.
- Promote the dismantling of the teacher/student hierarchy by being transparent with students, limiting frontal teaching, and allowing both playfulness and stress to exist whenever it develops.
- Teach through use of visuals, video, oral lecture, written exercise, and reading assignments to accommodate for the reality that each student engages with information differently. I pair this with asynchronous learning, independent learning, and collaboration between both students and instructors.

Specific lessons that I want students to take away from any class I teach include:

- Using empathy and respect throughout their creative practice, especially when communicating with artisans or exploring a subject that pertains to a particular community.
- Acknowledging the importance of intersectionality in academic and creative spaces.
- Understanding that technical knowledge is equally as important as conceptualization, and that creative solutions can manifest in a variety of different ways.
- Feeling comfortable embracing synthesis as it pertains to their creative practice. I want students to understand that their creative practice can be interdisciplinary, and that they are free to embrace any skill sets & interests they have, even if it does not align with traditional definitions of creative solutions.
- Accepting that perfectionism is not the goal of neither education nor one’s creative practice.
- Understanding that one’s privilege can be used to help others through one’s creative practice.

I offer students a learning experience I feel will benefit them in the long run of their creative practices, and in return, I am inspired as an educator, a creative, and a person. Having experienced some of the obstacles the western education system places upon Black women and girls, I am passionate about making sure no student endures similar challenges. I have had marvelous role models speckled between my educative hardships and seeing the way they helped me grow as a person and a creative inspires me to help students in that same way. I see education as a form of activism, and thus, exchanging knowledge between myself and students gives me a deep well of motivation and the comfort that I am contributing to a healthier tomorrow.