

## Philosophy (Cover Letter)

I went into this field due to one factor; that I had been positively influenced through the inspiration of another human being. My past experiences made me realize I wanted to give others the same opportunity that my mentors have given to me. While my passion for music has increased exponentially over the course of my studies at both Texas Tech University and Indiana University, I have developed an even stronger passion for giving students the opportunity to better themselves in a craft that can ultimately be applied to real life.

Playing music in an ensemble teaches students collaboration in a way no other field can. It gives students an opportunity to interact with one another in a way beyond any other form of communication. Learning how to make black ink on a page come to life while developing an awareness of the other members in the ensemble and following the conductor are only a few skills that a musician learns how to do simultaneously. Other subjects have exams; we have concerts. It is the idea of every person in the room working toward a final product that will be performed for the community. It gives the students a sense of accomplishment and achievement.

There is no "perfect formula" that I consult with when working with my students. I believe that each student individually learns better in a number of different ways. A single lesson of the same material may be taught differently from student to student. Likewise, I teach an ensemble based on the overall character the group conveys. Each year, the group changes whether the director stays the same or not. I aim to seek the strengths of a group in order to use them to build their weaknesses.

In reality, I understand that the overwhelming majority of my students will find themselves studying in other majors when the time for college comes. With this in mind, in many teaching situations, I attempt to teach my students life lessons through music. In my past experiences I have come to understand the simple truth that everything in music can be related and applied to anyone's life at any age.

In my past observations of various teachers, I have taken into account not only the effective techniques I have seen but also the limitations. An important factor I have found in many programs is the importance of parental involvement. This is a very common factor often implemented in many of the more elite programs. Having parents and staff on the same page from beginning to end helps push a program forward. Above all else, I understand that most parents are looking for a genuine experience for their kids. I look to carry out this expectation by equipping students with necessary musical skills while maintaining a positive social environment where they have the opportunity to build character and morality. Most students that decide to join band do it for a number of different reasons, whether it be to learn a new instrument, fill a P.E. credit, because their parents want them to, or as a source for friends. In the end, it is absolutely paramount for my students to find fulfillment on both educational and social aspects when taking part in the program.

A final point I would like to make is the significance of autonomy when it comes to progress. We all do our best work when we do it willingly, and that is the true philosophy in my teaching. The best way to build a program in my opinion is create motivation for each and every student involved. Every student has the potential to be motivated, and sometimes it is not simple instruction. This philosophy is somewhat broad because, as I mentioned earlier, I aim to teach students music in a way for them to be able to apply in their future endeavors. Having an amazing program is a great thing, but ultimately, the experiences and practicality the kids get out of the program and are able to apply in their future is what really matters in my teaching.