Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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Throughout the course of my career as a student, both as an undergraduate and as a graduate at the University of West Georgia, and as a teaching assistant I have observed many different teaching styles across a wide variety of disciplines, but the one commonality I have witnessed across all disciplines is a student-centric approach which I now share as a teacher. Essentially, I believe that the best method of teaching must focus primarily on the student. One can spout off all the material one wishes, but if students aren't able to understand the material, nothing has been accomplished. Material must be presented in such a way that it is understood by the majority of the audience, without compromising the integrity of said material, or the presenter is simply wasting his or her time.

I have had many opportunities to develop my teaching skills in a variety of courses including software engineering, program construction, and introductory programming. In addition to serving as a teaching assistant I have also had the opportunity to develop content, including assignments, lecture notes, and other material, for these courses. Examples of some of what I've developed can be found at http://stu.westga.edu/~jwestmo1. I have also worked in my department's tutoring lab which primarily serves students in the sequence of (3) courses dealing with introductory programming and endeavors to reinforce the concepts these students learn in their classes and also to assist them with any problems they may encounter with their assignments and projects.

Through my duties as a teaching assistant and a tutor I have worked with students at many different levels from undergraduate freshmen all the way up to fellow graduate students. This includes working with groups of students as small as 3 - 6 and as large as 20 - 45. I am comfortable with any size class, but I prefer smaller groups and even one-on-one meeting with my students because I believe that individual attention, or close to it in small groups, instills in these students my genuine interest in their education in computer science and software engineering. This becomes somewhat more difficult as the size of the class increases, but I believe that this is something worthwhile no matter the size of the class/group. I believe that engaging the students in such ways is vital to their learning experience.

Perhaps the most important and gratifying of my experiences as a teaching assistant has been my interaction with my students. I look forward to my office hours each day in anticipation of my students coming to visit me with questions about lectures, assignments, or anything else that may be on their minds. Though I have worked with students at many levels, I most enjoy working with students taking introductory programming classes because these courses allow me to win over new converts to computer science and assist them in learning the same material I find so intriguing. Though I most enjoy working with beginners I do also enjoy working with upper level students as well. I have worked with such

students in courses on program construction and a sequence of courses on software engineering. Though winning new minds to computer science may be extremely gratifying, I do find teaching and reinforcing advanced concepts in courses such as these to be quite enjoyable as well.

Most importantly, I consider teaching to be very enjoyable and look forward to each and every day that I get to do my job. I consider teaching to be a very fun job, and one about which I am very enthusiastic, but this does not mean that I do not take it very seriously. I honestly believe that teaching, on any level, is the most important job a person can do and this is why I take it as seriously as I do. My course development activities, teaching experience, and teaching interests are enumerated below.

Course Development:

CS 1020 & CS 1030
I developed and assisted in the development of several assignments for these courses including simple Microsoft Office assignments in Word, Excel and PowerPoint, simple webpage assignments in HTML and Google Pages, and simple programming assignments in Visual Basic and Excel Macros.

CS 1301 – Computer Science I
I developed a number of workshop exercises and solutions for this course and assisted in the development of other course material such as tests, assignments, and course management.

CS 3211 & 3212 – Software Engineering I & II
I developed and assisted in the development of material for this sequence of courses including, but not limited to, assignments, lecture notes, projects, and course management.

> **Example –** I am currently developing lecture notes on Java GUIs (using Swing), a tutorial on how to effectively use Jigloo (a Java GUI builder for Eclipse), and I am also developing a lecture on Scrum as it will be used extensively for the rest of the current course.

CS 5202 – Computer Science Fundamentals II
I am currently in the process of developing a great deal of the content for this course. This includes, but is not limited to, assignments, projects, lecture notes, and tutorials.

> **Example –** I am currently developing several modules and assignments for this class covering introductory topics on HTML and CSS usage and programming, as well as introductory database and SQL usage and construction.

Teaching Experience:

Graduate Research Assistant / Teaching Assistant
University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA
I worked primarily as a teaching assistant for courses in software engineering, program construction, and introductory programming. I also worked in a tutoring lab assisting students taking courses in introductory programming and CS service courses.

Graduate Project: "Scrum as Course Management in Software Engineering"
University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA
I am working with the instructor of the second course in the software engineering sequence, which typically consists of a large scale, semester-long project, in using Scrum as a course management tool, with the purpose of the students participating in a real world process, and evaluating the effectiveness of this opposed to more traditional ways of managing this particular type of course. This project is currently still in process and will conclude in late November/early December of this year.

Teaching Interests:

As noted above, I have assisted in the teaching of courses in software engineering, program construction, and introductory programming, and I am interested in opportunities to teach courses on these subjects, but I am very interested in teaching courses in system & network administration in the future as the was my secondary focus of study during my master's degree. In general, I am most interested in teaching courses in introductory programming, software engineering, and system & network administration, but I am quite willing to teach any course for which I am qualified.