

# Teaching Statement

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Excellent teaching can have a significant and positive impact on students. I have been fortunate in my years of schooling to have experienced tutelage from several wonderful teachers in both disciplines of my education history. This experience has provided me with a rich assortment of styles and techniques to model my teaching philosophy. In particular, I would like to share one life changing experience that made me consider the teaching profession. As a first-year graduate student pursuing a master's degree, I had the opportunity to be taught by an award winning computer science professor. He was able to keep a fast pace while taking the time to answer questions, and made the material very interesting. He was also thorough, well-prepared, polite, and showed immense patience in responding to students. His delivery was eloquent, and effective. In my experience teaching, I have tried to emulate his style and, in the future, hope to positively impact a student's life as he did mine.

I also gained a wealth of experience and knowledge from my teaching experiences during graduate school. I had the privilege of teaching the laboratory course in Introduction to Biology for three semesters, and the Introduction to Computer Science course for two semesters. In my teaching philosophy, I encouraged students to see that their education is more than just completing assignments and studying for exams. I emphasized that the ultimate goal should be to think critically and independently.

When teaching a class my goal was not to simply deliver the information, but to develop the lecture as a guide that led students to discover the evolving nature of the science. In my computer science class, I integrated different methods of participation and group problem solving exercises by using strategies such as guided discussions and paired programming. This helped the students in developing critical thinking and problem solving skills.

I have found that knowledge is gained more readily in courses that demand an interesting application of the material rather than memorization of information, especially in introductory computer science courses. For instance, when teaching the introduction to computer science course, the students became much more cognizant of object-oriented design principles and practices, such as inheritance, in the design of strategies for a computer program to select the appropriate move in a simple puzzle game. I found that such interesting projects enabled students to develop a working understanding of high level concepts such as algorithm design and modularization. Although it was not always easy to create exciting projects, using the resources offered by my peers and discussions on potential ideas with experienced instructors provided valuable insight.

In my future career as an instructor, I plan to continually assess my teaching philosophy, ability, and technique. In doing so, I hope to provide an inviting classroom atmosphere, create engaging lectures, and construct challenging assignments. By incorporating best qualities from my previous instructors and the experience I have gained as a lecturer and instructor, I plan to provide a classroom experience that is interactive, fast-paced, and interesting. My primary teaching interests include virtual environments, computer graphics, human-computer interaction and intelligent systems/artificial intelligence. I would deeply enjoy the opportunity to teach undergraduate and graduate versions of courses in these topics. I would also like to leverage my research background in teaching advanced courses in topics such as embodied conversational agents, and intelligent systems.