Teaching Portfolio

Teaching Philosophy & Evidence of Teaching Excellence

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Preface

I am passionate about empowering college students through instruction in contemporary technologies and foundational concepts in computer science and information technology. This Teaching portfolio highlights my teaching philosophy, professional background, and student evaluations, underscoring my dedication to inclusive, rigorous, and engaging education in the fields of Computer Science (CS) and Information Technology (IT). Included are examples of relevant coursework, pedagogical achievements, and recent student feedback demonstrating my teaching effectiveness.

Contents

I. Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Guiding Principles

My teaching philosophy is guided by the belief that every student brings unique strengths, perspectives, and aspirations to the learning environment. Accordingly, I prioritize:

1. *Inclusive and Student-Centered Learning:* Fostering open dialogue, respecting diversity, and creating a welcoming classroom environment that encourages student engagement and participation.

2. *Applied Learning & Real-World Relevance:* Emphasizing hands-on programming exercises, practical labs, and projects closely aligned with current industry standards and emerging technologies.

3. *Academic Rigor with Robust Support:* Maintaining high academic standards paired with accessible resources, timely feedback, and personalized support to guide students toward academic and professional success.

4. *Continuous Improvement & Innovation:* Actively updating curricula by integrating cutting-edge technologies and contemporary methodologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, DevOps, and agile practices.

In all of my courses, I prioritize consistent communication and timely, constructive feedback, particularly in remote or hybrid instructional settings. I regularly provide recorded lectures and interactive coding demonstrations. To enhance accessibility and address student inquiries efficiently, I offer flexible virtual office hours through video conferencing. My teaching integrates cutting-edge technologies and modern software development practices, reflecting industry relevance and preparing students for professional roles. My courses frequently incorporate contemporary frameworks and tools such as Spring, Spring Boot, JavaFX, JPA, and JUnit, alongside industry-standard methodologies like Agile, Scrum, devops, Secure By Design, and Test-Driven Development (TDD). I make myself highly available for technical issues and troubleshooting, including remote connecting to a student's computer if necessary.

Prioritizing Academic Conduct, I create a learning atmosphere rooted in accountability, ethics, and professionalism. I consistently guide students toward a clear understanding of the ethical standards and professional norms within the IT industry. By reinforcing expectations of integrity and original work, I help students develop confidence in producing high-quality, authentic work and collaborating ethically. I proactively educate students on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct, ensuring

they fully comprehend the importance of academic honesty and professionalism in their future careers.

III. Student Evaluations

A. Current Evaluations (Fall 2023–Spring 2024)

STEM Evaluation — July 1, 2024 (See Appendix A)

1. **Adjunct Faculty Growth and Development**
   I joined the adjunct faculty ranks in Fall 2023 after completing the Master of Information Technology program at Virginia Tech. I also attended the New Horizons VCCS conference in Spring 2024 and renewed my Java certification from Oracle.

2. **Teaching Effectiveness**
   I have successfully revamped CSC223, ITP220, and most recently ITP246 Java Server-Side Programming. I have also taught ITP120: Introduction to Java Programming in Spring 2024, focusing on hands-on coding exercises that develop real-life programming and problem-solving skills. I aligned these courses with industry trends by integrating more unit testing, build tools (Maven), and JavaFX.

   - **Student Ratings:** 4.59 and 3.91 for CSC223, 3.96 for ITP220, and 4.49 and 4.86 in two sections of ITP120 (5.0 scale).

   - **Positive Comments:**

     - "He provided great tools, reading material, and even ways to solve issues."

     - "The in depth feedback helped a lot."

     - "Really, really knowledgeable and has prepared a lot of fun exercises to make us better coders."

     - "I love watching his code-alongs after the assignment due date."

   - **Classroom Observation:** My Canvas shell and materials were found to be solid and well organized.

3. **Institutional Responsibility**
   I was found to uphold college policies, maintain office hours, and handle administrative tasks efficiently. I am in excellent standing and considered a valuable

member of the CS/IT team. For more details, please see *Appendix A*, which provides the full Annual Adjunct Evaluation report for me.

B. Earlier Evaluations

In my prior academic career in Sociology at the University of Colorado-Boulder, I taught multiple subjects and courses in-person. My commitment to clarity, rigor, and inclusivity has generated consistently strong evaluations over a decade ago.

- **University of Colorado**

  - *Classical Sociological Theory (Summer 2014)*

    - Instructor Overall: 5.5 (6.0 scale)

    - "You have a contagious enthusiasm for this topic."

  - *Social Problems (Spring 2014)*

    - Instructor Overall: 4.8 (6.0 scale)

    - "Great teacher, knows his stuff."

  - *Contemporary Social Issues & Human Values (Spring 2013)*

    - Instructor Overall: 4.9 (6.0 scale)

    - "Discussions are by far the best part."

IV. Conclusion

My teaching philosophy centers on fostering inclusive environments, promoting practical and industry-aligned learning experiences, and providing robust support systems that ensure student success. My dual background as an educator and software developer uniquely positions me to create courses connecting theoretical concepts directly to practical, real-world scenarios. Committed to continuous improvement and pedagogical innovation, I remain dedicated to advancing student learning outcomes and preparing graduates effectively for their future roles in the dynamic fields of Computer Science and IT.

V. Appendix A

Adjunct Facult Annual Evaluation
Ben Lamb STEM
July 1, 2024

Is this an Initial Status or Ongoing Status Evaluation?

Initial Status (joined the faculty Fall 2023)

Evaluation Components

I.   Adjunct Faculty Growth and Development

Ben Lamb joined our adjunct faculty ranks in the fall of 2023. Ben completed the Master of Information Technology program at Virgina Tech with a Graduate Certificate in Software Development. He also attended the New Horizons conference spring 2024 and renewed his Java Fundamentals certificate from Oracle.

II.   Teaching Effectiveness

Ben was tasked with revamping the current CSC223 and ITP220 classes. He also taught the ITP120 spring classes. He added hands-on coding exercises to develop reallife programming and problem-solving skills. He also aligned the classes closer to recent trends and technologies in the software development industry including more Unit testing a JavaFX.

Ben's student ratings were very high including 4.59 and 3.91 (CSC223), 3.96 (ITP220), and 4.49 and 4.86 in two sections of ITP120. These are out of a 5.0 scale. These are very good scores!

Positive student comments were numerous! These includes "He provided great tools, reading material, and even ways to solve issues." "Professor Lamb's feedback and notes on graded assignments helped me out a lot for understanding my faults but also my achievements of learning from the tasks." "The in depth feedback helped a lot." "flexible and willing to help no matter how last minute." "really, really knowledgeable and has prepared a lot of fun exercises to make us better
coders." "I love watching his code-alongs after the assignment due date". "Thank you for your knowledge and teachings". And so many more like this!

Constructive comments were very few. These included maybe more videos and lectures. But this will certainly be fixed once he teaches the classes for a second time. Technology tools included Zoom, Canvas, and cutting-edge software.

The classroom observation was done as an online content evaluation and Ben's Canvas shell and information was solid and well organized. GREAT JOB!

III. Institutional Responsibility

Did this adjunct faculty member
- YES - Adherence to laws, policies, and procedures of the college and the VCCS;
- YES - Exhibit collegiality;
- YES - Maintain office hours; and,
- YES - Complete administrative tasks (e.g. posting of syllabi, completing no-show rosters, maintenance of online course resources, administration of student evaluations, posting grades, etc.).

Is this adjunct faculty member in "Good Standing"?

YES. Definitely. Ben is a very valuable member of the CS/IT team and I hope he continues with us far into the future.

Evaluation Completed by: Dr. Diane Wolff, Program Chair, 7/2/2024