**Teaching Statement**

David Vasquez

I feel that being an effective teacher means being centered on student success and creating a supportive and inclusive atmosphere. I also feel that effective teaching is engaging and exciting and allows students to have fun. A lot of the courses I have instructed have been longer than two hours so I have worked hard to create classes that utilize a range of learning techniques and engaging material to allow students to learn and enjoy being in class. In the day to day of teaching this means getting to know the students, supporting them and teaching material in a clear and easy to understand manner that allows every student the ability to master the subject. I also view effective teaching as providing timely feedback on tests and homework that aligns with what has been taught.

I have developed my view of effective teaching through my experiences as a student, teaching assistant, instructor and software engineer working in industry. As a Graduate Teaching Assistant I began to observe which classes I loved the most and began learning not just the material but also what it was these effective teachers did differently. When I taught my first class I realized how much I loved it but also how challenging it was. Since then I have continued to work to improve through taking graduate level teaching courses, speaking with professors and learning on my own through books, published research and online resources.

There are a number of ways that I work to be an effective teacher. For me it starts with planning engaging material and activities that promote learning and critical thinking skills. I work to build an inclusive and accepting classroom from the first day by having students interview and introduce a peer. During the weekend I will review the course material and create a teaching plan with a range of activities for the coming week. For example we might discuss Airbnb’s decision to move from React Native to fully native or watch a short startup pitch and discuss their finances or technology stack.

During my lectures I try to keep things engaging by moving around the room, pulling up different resources, writing on the whiteboard or even sitting down and creating a more informal discussion atmosphere. I also have in class activities that allows students to work with other students. These activities encourage hands on learning and allow me to take time to sit down and get to know the students one on one as they work in their groups. These activities also allow me to gauge how well students are learning the material. Finally, I like to encourage students to speak up and contribute and often have short student presentations that allow them to gain public speaking skills. At the end of every class I keep notes about what went well, what could be improved upon and ideas for the next class.

On my recent review the Dean wrote, “You do a wonderful job creating an open, welcoming, supportive atmosphere. It’s clear your students feel at ease.” I was excited to receive this feedback as it is something I strive towards. If selected as a Project Instructor I would work hard to support students through this challenging process. My goal as a Project Instructor would be to help students excel in the software development, technical and writing components of their project in a way that would allow them to leverage this experience as they move forward in their careers.