

Teaching Statement

Jeffrey Alan Young

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is grounded in the belief that effective computer science education balances strong theoretical foundations with applied, experiential learning. I strive to create an inclusive and engaging learning environment in which students develop both technical competence and critical thinking skills. By emphasizing real-world relevance, ethical responsibility, and iterative problem solving, I aim to prepare students for success in industry, graduate study, and lifelong learning.

I adopt a student-centered approach that encourages active participation, collaboration, and inquiry. Courses are structured to progressively scaffold complex concepts, enabling students from diverse backgrounds to build confidence while maintaining rigorous academic standards. I place particular emphasis on transparency in expectations, timely feedback, and the use of formative assessments to support continuous improvement.

Teaching Experience

I have served as a Graduate Teacher of Record at Clemson University, where I independently taught both undergraduate and graduate courses in System Administration and Security. In this role, I was responsible for all aspects of course delivery, including syllabus design, lecture preparation, laboratory development, assessment creation, and grading. The course covered topics such as operating system administration, access control, system hardening, virtualization, and security best practices in contemporary computing environments.

In addition to formal classroom teaching, I have extensive experience mentoring undergraduate and graduate students through research supervision at Clemson University, Georgia Southern University, and Armstrong State University. These mentoring roles have involved guiding students through research design, implementation, technical writing, and conference presentations, providing individualized instruction tailored to each student's goals and experience level.

Instructional Methods and Curriculum Development

My instructional methods combine traditional lectures with active learning strategies, including hands-on laboratories, case studies, and project-based assignments. I integrate current research and industry practices into course content to help students connect theoretical concepts with practical applications. Drawing on my industry experience as a Data Scientist, I incorporate real-world datasets, tools, and workflows into coursework whenever appropriate.

I am committed to continuous curriculum improvement and to aligning course outcomes with departmental and institutional learning objectives. I actively seek opportunities to update course materials to reflect emerging technologies, ethical considerations in computing, and best practices in pedagogy. I am particularly interested in developing and teaching courses in areas such as artificial intelligence, data science, machine learning, cybersecurity, and systems security.

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

Evidence of my teaching effectiveness includes my repeated appointment as a Graduate Teacher of Record, positive informal student feedback, and successful student outcomes in both coursework and research settings. Students in my courses have demonstrated strong mastery of technical concepts, effective problem-solving skills, and the ability to apply course material to practical scenarios.

My effectiveness as an instructor is further reflected in my mentoring record. Students I have supervised have contributed to peer-reviewed publications, presented research at national and international conferences, and pursued advanced study or technical careers. These outcomes demonstrate my ability to support student learning beyond the classroom and to foster academic and professional growth.

Commitment to Student Success and Inclusive Teaching

I am deeply committed to supporting student success and to engaging with institutional initiatives that promote retention, accessibility, and equity. I strive to create a respectful and inclusive classroom environment in which all students feel valued and supported. This includes being attentive to diverse learning styles, providing multiple pathways to mastery, and maintaining open communication with students.

At Georgia Southern University, I look forward to contributing to a culture of teaching excellence through thoughtful instruction, curriculum development, and collaboration with colleagues. I am enthusiastic about mentoring students, participating in teaching-focused initiatives, and continuously refining my instructional practices to meet the evolving needs of students and the discipline.