

Teaching Statement

Philip A. Wilsey

Philosophy of University Education

I believe that university level education needs to address two principle aspects of a student's development. First, course work helps students obtain information that forms a foundation of their personal and professional development. Second, students need be empowered with the capability to move beyond the structured learning experience and into the realm of self-actualized learning. As a professor, it is my goal to create an environment that enhances both aspects of a student's development.

While success in the classroom requires dedication to the mechanics of teaching, helping students learn to teach themselves requires dedication to the personal aspects of education. Long after students forget the details of a course, the methods behind their education will continue to influence their understanding of the world around them. The professors that gave me the keys to my profession did so by assisting me in understanding, not by handing me facts. By providing a positive role model (through active research and personal study), by promoting self confidence in and out of the classroom, and by challenging the student to search beyond the lecture hall for understanding, I believe the practice of life-long learning are passed from professor to student. Perhaps the highest canon educators can give their students is teaching them the confidence to ask a question and the satisfaction of finding the answer.

I am convinced that excellence in teaching doesn't just happen. Rather, it comes as the result of hard work and dedication toward understanding the constantly changing needs of the students and the discipline. The mix of teaching *and* research found in today's Research I Institutions is an ideal environment to maximize these educational opportunities. With a little extra effort, professors can combine an active research program with a powerful educational experience for the students. When given the opportunity, resources, and guiding support, students are more than willing to meet the challenge of a research centered education. For me, the highest level of satisfaction comes when a student's eyes suddenly light up with understanding then fill with pride at having solved a cutting edge research problem. In that moment, I feel both rejuvenated and eager for the next chance to explore and teach.

Classroom Capabilities

I have taught courses in Assembly Languages, Computer Organization, Computer Architecture, Parallel Processing, and Compilers (as well as a number of advanced courses in CAD and High Performance Computing). While I am able to teach almost any class for students in an undergraduate computer program, I prefer to teach classes in systems. Ideally I prefer to have a recurring and principle responsibility to one or two undergraduate classes so that I can maintain currency in the subject matter. I enjoy teaching undergraduate students and appreciate the chance to positively influence their their future careers. I have always maintained an open door policy and invite students to drop by my office for discussions on any topic (professional or personal). I enjoy these interactions and am often engaged by former students on a variety of matters. In addition to my classroom activities, I am also involved with undergraduate education by serving as Editor-in-Chief of IEEE Potentials and as a CSAB evaluator.