Max Willsey Diversity Statement

As a faculty member, I will work to help make computing an inclusive and welcoming environment to all. This is especially important since computing is an increasingly powerful vector for socioeconomic mobility, so inequities in our field quickly become inequities in society at large. But we have a long way to go, and I acknowledge that as a privileged and relatively powerful faculty member, I have a responsibility to continue to learn and take action towards this goal. I have been and continue to be committed to taking active steps toward a more equitable future for computing. In particular, I will:

- Engage in teaching and mentoring from a compassionate, anti-discriminatory perspective, working towards more equitable outcomes for all students, especially those from nontraditional or underrepresented backgrounds;
- Work with and lead my colleagues to combat structural inequities through departmental and community-wide service initiatives.

**Teaching and Mentoring** As a teacher and mentor, I understand that it is my responsibility to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students, and I know that traditional, one-size-fits-all approaches are not sufficient to achieve this goal, especially with respect to students from non-traditional or underrepresented backgrounds.

I have experience as a TA and an instructor for large (> 100) undergraduate courses that serve a diverse range of students. As an instructor, I gained valuable experience working individually with students with various learning needs both in office hours and outside of class. Some students required more support or resources, and others needed additional time to complete the course outside of the quarter due to extenuating circumstances. While most of my current teaching experience comes from traditional course formats, I am eager to learn and apply new teaching methods in the future.

Over the course of my PhD and postdoc, I have served as a mentor to a diverse range of students ranging from high school to PhD students. In my relationships with these students, I have placed a strong emphasis on individually tailoring technical mentorship to each student's needs. This is especially important since these technical skills are critical to success in research but are often not learned in the classroom.

**Service** I have led and participated in many departmental service activities with a focus on diversity and inclusion.

I co-organized the inaugural UW CSE Pre-Application Review Service, in which current PhD students mentor undergrads through the application process for PhD programs. The program is now in its third year, and it specifically targets students from underrepresented groups in computing. The mentorship process is split into two phases. In the first phase, mentors meet with mentees curious about graduate school to address questions about PhD life in general and what the application process is like. The second phase is targeted towards students who are applying (not necessarily to UW CSE), and mentors review their mentee's drafted application materials.

Recruiting and retention are two important areas where DEI efforts can create a visible and lasting impact on our community. From 2018-2021, I served on the PhD student application reading committee, where current PhD students read PhD applications and boost the profile of students from diverse or non-traditional backgrounds who are more likely to be overlooked. In 2018 and 2019, I organized PhD student orientation and visit days, respectively. In both roles, I worked to make the events more inclusive so as to effectively recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups.