

Iman Parsa | Teaching Statement

Overview

Growing up in a family of teachers, I observed the teaching side of education and developed an interest in teaching from a young age and learned about the importance of factors such as student engagement in teaching. I later developed and improved my teaching skills as I received training in teaching and accumulated experience through teaching multiple courses in different environments and different formats (in-person, online, and hybrid). For instance, I have taught core supply chain management and business analytics courses at Arizona State University (ASU) for which I was honored to receive the **Teaching Excellence Award** in Fall 2019 from the ASU Graduate and Professional Students Association and also earned high student evaluation ratings (e.g., 6.7/7.0 for the overall course). At INSEAD, in collaboration with faculty members and a biomanufacturing company, I was involved in developing a pedagogical case study for MBA classes.

My primary goal in teaching is to create a learning environment that students look forward to and has a long-lasting impact. The key, I believe, is that students are actively engaged in a two-way learning process. I consider this in designing a course, delivery of the material, interactions with students, giving feedback, and evaluating students' work. My second goal is that, beyond learning the subject matter, students improve their critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills.

Teaching Experience

Business Analytics: At ASU, I taught three sections of Business Decision Models, a business analytics course focused on applying tools that allow for better decision making with the use of data. In this course, students are introduced to tools and techniques such as datamining, optimization, decision trees, and simulation and learn to utilize these tools using software such as Microsoft Excel and Tableau. I taught an online class (28 students) and two hybrid sections (total of 44 students).

Supply Chain Management: I taught Global Supply Operations, an introductory course on Supply Chain Management that is required for all undergraduate business students at ASU. The course covers a wide range of quantitative and conceptual material related to the functions and coordination of supply chains, such as the newsvendor model, queuing, corporate social responsibility, and buyer-supplier relationships. I started as a teaching assistant (TA) and later taught the course with full responsibility for two semesters. I taught a class of 49 students (in-person) in Fall 2019, and 74 students (online) in Fall 2021.

Production Planning: During my master's studies in Iran University of Science and Technology, I was the co-instructor and TA of a production planning course for undergraduate Industrial Engineering students for four semesters. I was responsible for half of the lectures and also supervised lab sessions. The course covered concepts related to supply chain and operations management, e.g., Just In Time and Material Requirements Planning. This course was in a hybrid format where I delivered lectures in online live sessions and in-person classes.

English: I taught English in one of the top language institutions in Tehran for one year, before which I completed a teaching training course. Although this course was focused on teaching languages, I learned concepts and techniques that are applicable in other settings as well. In particular, I learned

how to design and deliver the material so that knowledge is discovered by the students in two-way interactions. My performance in this course allowed me to be among the few who started as a Level-2 teacher. I taught English classes at different levels to a wide range of students, from beginner classes for teenagers to IELTS preparation classes for adults from different backgrounds.

Teaching Strategies

In order to create an engaging environment, I design lectures that are well-organized and have a logical flow. Further, I try to make my classes student-centered. For that purpose, I try to introduce concepts through simple real-life examples that are tangible for all students. This allows them to learn the key concepts and methods more easily, avoiding the potential confusion that may arise from complexity of industry examples. Further, I encourage students to share stories from their work experience that are relevant to the topic at hand. Through examples given in the course, case studies, and practice problems, they later get to know the real-world examples and applications in business environments. I further engage students by making use of various multimedia like infographics and videos. For instance, students in the Supply Chain Management course enjoyed watching two videos providing a behind-the-scenes view of an Amazon fulfillment center and a Prime Now warehouse and discussing the differences in how they are designed and operated. To ensure that students fully grasp the material and develop their teamwork skills, I also design and include group exercises and projects that engage students in a hands-on manner.

Communication and interactions with students are also key to engagement and learning, especially for online courses. I attempt to establish and maintain a strong sense of instructor presence when I teach online. This helps students to feel connected to the course and their instructor and to not feel isolated. In order to achieve this, I regularly post announcements, respond to student correspondence promptly, actively facilitate discussions, and provide them with meaningful and timely feedback. For instance, I took advantage of the option to use Slack Workspaces at ASU. This is a communication platform that enables real-time connections between the students and the instructor. It helped me create a digital classroom environment where students could discuss and share their thoughts, coordinate and work on group assignments, and feel more connected to their instructor as they could reach me more easily than via email. I also ensure to make myself available for students, in both online and in-person courses. For instance, I created a calendar page where students could see my availability and book appointments. In this way, they are not constrained to specific office hours and feel that they can receive the help they need as it arises.

Teaching Interests

I am enthusiastic to continue improving my teaching skills and adjust my course contents and teaching methods as business practice and learning environments evolve. With this background, I am prepared to teach a variety of topics including Supply Chain Management, Business Analytics, Operations Management, and Logistics. Since my research involves various empirical methods as well as game theoretical models, I am also interested in teaching methods courses in Econometrics and Game Theory.