

Teaching statement

Teaching is one of the core responsibilities of an academic. It is an intellectually enriching activity as it helps in re-enforcing one's own understanding of topics. The role of a teacher is to enable students to develop knowledge and skills useful in their ensuing careers. My teaching goal is to ensure that students not only get significant takeaways from my teaching, but also become better learners.

I enjoy teaching. As a graduate student, I have lived my dream each day for the past four years; doing research, writing scholarly papers and teaching multiple cohorts of competitive students. The MIS department, University of Arizona recognized my teaching efforts and awarded me the **La Salle teaching excellence award** in December 2017, encouraging me to continue my student-centric approach to teaching.

My teaching philosophy

My teaching philosophy is to plan learning, actively engage students in the classroom, and cater to diverse student needs.

Plan learning: Instructors are often required to include a lot of material in a single course as part of the program curriculum. While doing so, the instructor has to keep the students engaged in learning. This requires getting the students out of their comfort zones in order to learn new concepts within a limited timeframe. I find the backward design method useful for prioritizing the content in my courses. In this method, the teaching content and assessment are based upon the learning objectives. Learning objectives can be prioritized into the three topic categories – worth being familiar with, important to know, and must know topics. While just high-level introduction is required for 'work being familiar with' topics, a combination of pre-planned formative and summative assessment tasks are key to ensuring that students understand the topics in the 'important to know' and 'must know' categories.

Actively engage students in the classroom: Audience engagement is a skill that can only be perfected with practice. A good speaker must ensure that the audience are engaged and are able to later recollect the content covered. My faculty advisor taught me a simple three step process for effective presentation: (a) Inform the audience about the topic you are going to explain. (b) Explain the topic, and (c) Summarize to the audience what you just explained. Stating learning objectives at the beginning of a lecture and summarizing topics learnt at the end of a lecture are simple and effective active learning strategies. Secondly, I encourage my students to come up with solutions for a given problem before looking for a textbook-based solution. I use collaborative problem-solving, take-home exams and case-based assignments as formative and summative assessment tools to imbibe problem-solving skills in students. Lastly, I introduce collaborative tasks in each class session to encourage peer interaction and exploit collective intelligence. Collaborative learning is a great way to make the learning process to be fun as well as efficient. Interleaving collaborative tasks in between topics urges students to recollect and apply concepts they just learnt while making classroom experience more exciting.

Cater to diverse student needs: Some students are smart, some need additional guidance. Some are extroverted, while some are too shy to ask questions or respond in public. I observe student behavior in class as well as through offline communication (e.g., email, learning management systems, course discussion tool, etc.) and try my best

to ensure each student has a safe learning environment and is provided with equal opportunities to excel.

Teaching requires a sound understanding of the topic and the skills of conveying considerable information concisely in limited time. To improve my teaching skills, I keenly observe and learn from experienced teachers and peer instructors. I review my own recorded video lectures to determine scope for improvement in terms of delivery of content and student engagement. Finally, I take dynamic feedback from students through mid-course anonymized surveys to identify demand-supply gaps in the knowledge transfer process.

Teaching experience

I have taught the following two undergraduate courses in MIS department, University of Arizona: (a) MIS 111 – Computers and Internetnetworked Society (Summer 2016), and (b) MIS 331 – Database Management Systems (Fall 2017). In addition, I have worked as a teaching assistant during Spring 2016, Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 semesters for MIS 587 – Business Intelligence; an 8-week mini-semester course offered by Professor Sudha Ram in the MIS*online* Masters' program.

MIS 111 was the first course I got to teach in a university setting, with a class strength of 17 students. Besides the traditional topics such as database and systems design, I covered current topics such as cybersecurity, cloud computing, human computer interaction, business intelligence and big data in this introductory course. On top of take-home assignments, in-class quizzes and exams, two new grading components were included, namely news article write-ups and extra credit short-project. These inclusions were well received by students. Overall rating for teaching effectiveness in the teacher course evaluation (TCE) survey was 4.69/5.00.

I took up the challenge of teaching a more technical course during the semester by electing to teach the database management systems (MIS 331) course in Fall 2017. It was a larger class with 59 students, mostly in their junior or senior years of college. While teaching this cohort, I learnt the art of keeping the students engaged and simultaneously maintaining the pace for lectures while teaching the course. Overall rating for teaching effectiveness in the teacher course evaluation (TCE) survey was 3.79/5.00.

The Business Intelligence (MIS587) course which is taught by Professor Sudha Ram, is one of the most popular courses in the Eller MIS*online* program. My repeated appointment as the teaching assistant (TA) for this course helped me to gain in-depth knowledge on the content over time. I also got the opportunity to work with Professor Ram in designing the Social media interaction module introduced last year. Even the grading process was enlightening as I came across a myriad collection of view-points, presented by students with a rich corporate background. My role as the TA for MIS587 therefore contributed to my teaching experience in a significant way.

My teaching experience in the MIS department at Eller College of Management, University of Arizona has been a greatly enabling experience. It included experience in course design, coordinating with teaching assistants, exposure to a diverse student population, and teaching challenging topics. I am excited to teach as a junior faculty in my future organization and contribute towards their mission and goals.