Teaching Statement

I firmly believe that teaching well is a fundamental characteristic for scientific scholars. It is also one of the most noble pursuits in our lives. As a researcher and an educator in Management Information Systems (MIS), I have developed three principles in my teaching philosophy: (1) learner-centered approach with students actively and collaboratively working together; (2) maximizing course relevancy to students by engaging hands-on exercise as well as critical thinking; and (3) creating a safe and diverse learning environment with universal design for various backgrounds.

In Weimer's classic book "*Learner-centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice,*" Weimer stressed the necessity and effectiveness of an active and learner-centered learning environment. I fully embrace the learner-centered teaching approach and have implemented in my teaching practice. In summer 2018, I instructed 33 undergraduate students with diverse background in a MIS course (MIS 111: Computers and Internetworked Society) at the University of Arizona. To expose students in the emerging world with cutting-edge information technologies, I instructed students to actively read news articles with topics ranging from data mining, web analytics, and artificial intelligence to more specialized areas such as cybersecurity, health analytics, and cryptocurrency. With the news article prepared on a daily basis, students shared their understanding and critics on the news articles amongst the class. To encourage collaborative learning, I involved group discussions and let the students lead the discussion and share with the class. Various technologies, such as shared Google Doc, were also used to help students learn within and between groups. My efforts resulted in students learning the key aspects of the MIS discipline and effectively communicating the role of MIS in their own discipline.

MIS is an actively evolving field with emerging technologies. To keep pace with the technological evolution, I involved many hands-on practices and challenged students to think critically. In fall 2018, I had the experience to teach graduate students as well. I organized a graduate level mini-course (Introduction to Data Science) with 52 master students. To effectively prepare the students for their jobs in the technology industry, I used many examples and real-life experiences to introduce the techniques in data science. I also went through many programming examples with the students with them coding together. At the conclusion of this course, I designed various scenarios that could happen in the technology companies. Students are encouraged to think critically and apply the techniques that they learned in class to solve those real-life problems.

As an educator from a foreign background, I truly understand the necessity of engaging a diverse group as well as designing a universal approach to accommodate special needs. I have worked as a voluntary English teacher in a rural primary school in China. I have also been a voluntary math teacher in a primary school in Kenya as well. For the past four years, I have taught undergraduate and graduate students in the United States. Those diverse teaching experience has shaped my firm understanding for students with different culture, family background, and personality. I believe designing a flexible and universal teaching approach should be able to maximize the learning opportunities for students at large.

To summarize, my three-dimensional teaching philosophy – learner-centered approach, hands-on practice and critical thinking, and universal design – has been and will continue to be my inspiration for educating future generations.