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## **TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT:**

*I bring a lot of energy in my class. If I can't get excited about my subject, why should my students?*

My goal as an educator is to help students become knowledgeable independent thinkers. I try to encourage and challenge my students, foster critical thinking and pass on the inspiration I have received from my teachers. Most importantly, I try to create an environment in which students can realize that learning concepts and acquiring skills can be a natural side-effect of asking questions that interest them. Teaching is a wonderful opportunity to educate and influence that comes with an awesome responsibility.

I enjoy teaching because contributing to students' intellectual growth is profoundly satisfying. Interacting with students and sharing ideas is symbiotic: as a teacher, the process of improving on how I communicate concepts helps me refine my perspectives and command of the material. However, teaching is also a responsibility: passing on ideas and a love of inquiry is essential to a vibrant learning community.

I enjoy teaching very much. Good teaching requires a very careful balance of sensitivity, humor, acceptance, and willingness to demand the best from students while encouraging them and allowing them space to experiment. My most effective tools as a teacher are my love of the things I teach and my willingness to devote time and energy to helping students, understanding their perspectives, and modeling my approach to being an educator, a learner, and a researcher.

## **TEACHING METHODS AND STRATEGIES**

I use a variety of techniques to motivate my students. The easiest technique is to convey enthusiasm for the course topics. Most of my enthusiasm comes from my love of teaching, but my enthusiasm also comes from the recognition of the technical and societal implications of computer science topics. In most cases, students become enthusiastic in response to my very active lecture and discussion style. The use of examples from real-life also provides a source of motivation; associating topics from the classroom with either current events or my professional experiences help show the students why the topics being covered are useful and important.

Several studies have established that the human brain's capacity for focused attention to a lecture is between 10 and 30 minutes, with a maximum concentration of not more than 20 minutes. After this time, students cannot concentrate and engage in deep learning. To compensate for inattention and to offset ineffective learning, I use different types of stimulation during my lectures such as changing the lecture format with other styles of learning, alternating presenting medium, assigning students a short-learning task, and using instructor-learner interaction builds in the component of two-way communication, I also use clickers to assess students' progress and understanding in real-time and act accordingly.

In all courses that I've taught, I provided extra practice problems for students to practice (in addition to assignments), challenge, and encourage the students to practice and think creatively to solve problems. I also encouraged my students to use my office (and Piazza) hours to ask questions about course content and beyond and ended up providing

more than 10 hours a week individual support to students (and at least additional 10 hours a week on Piazza) which motivated them to study and do their best.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS AN EDUCATOR AND FUTURE PLANS

The Department of Education in Technology and Science at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa, Israel offers a Certificate in Teaching. The Certificate comprises 12 courses, which provide a comprehensive teacher-development experience by combining activities such as participation in workshops on teaching strategies, writing response papers on teaching topics, observation of lectures to evaluate structure and delivery, developing course content, developing projects, and assessment tools.

Furthermore, during my Ph.D. study I participated in the following courses and seminars: Systems Approach in Teaching, Integrating Models in Education, Evaluation of Educational Projects, Curriculum Planning, Innovations in Environmental Education and Assessments, and Seminars in Learning, Research, and Assessment.

Through my all years as an educator, I tried to keep myself up-to-date and educated myself about the publication on teaching, share experiences with my colleagues, and learning from their experiences as well.

My wish is to continue with my research plan about requirements engineering and also focus on conducting educational research and be more involved and engaged with professional teaching and learning communities and activities.

## EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING

Course	Section	Instructor	Term	Students	Surveys	Resp.%	Course Score
CS 445 / CS 645 / ECE 451	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1201	75	22	29.3%	4.5
SE 101	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1199	132	112	84.8%	4.2
CS 136	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1195	66	45	68.2%	4.6
CS 136	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1195	68	40	58.8%	4.6
CS 136	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1195	53	35	66%	4.6
CS 445 / CS 645 / ECE 451	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1191	57	20	35.1%	3.9
CS 115	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1191	77	52	67.5%	4.8
CS 115	004	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1191	76	44	57.9%	4.6
CS 116	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1189	87	44	50.6%	4.4
CS 116	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1189	86	50	58.1%	4.4
CS 116	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1189	76	43	56.6%	4.5
CS 246	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1185	57	43	75.4%	4.5
CS 246	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1185	72	57	79.2%	4.4
CS 246	004	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1185	64	52	81.3%	4.5

CS 445 / CS 645 / ECE 451	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1181	40	26	65%	3.9
CS 116	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1181	88	63	71.6%	4.6
CS 116	006	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1181	89	74	83.1%	4.6
CS 116	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1179	82	50	61%	4.5
CS 116	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1179	82	57	69.5%	4.5
CS 116	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1179	66	38	57.6%	4.4
CS 116	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1175	87	44	50.6%	4.4
CS 116	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1175	57	34	59.6%	4.5
CS 116	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1175	85	67	78.8%	4.4
CS 445 / CS 645 / ECE 451	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1171	67	12	17.9%	3.4
CS 135	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1171	83	70	84.3%	4.4
CS 135	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1171	86	66	76.7%	4.5
CS 135	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1169	84	66	78.6%	4.4
CS 135	010	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1169	79	68	86.1%	4.5
CS 446 / CS 646 / ECE 452	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1165	44	15	34.1%	3.6
CS 446 / CS 646 / ECE 452	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1165	58	14	24.1%	3.2
CS 445 / CS 645 / ECE 451	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1161	73	26	35.6%	3.4
CS 115	007	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1159	105	78	74.3%	4.4
CS 116	002	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1155	73	34	46.6%	4.2
CS 116	001	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1155	79	40	50.6%	4.1
CS 116	003	Sakhnini, Victoria (vsakhnin)	1155	58	25	43.1%	4.4

### Unsolicited comments

The following are some of the unsolicited emails I've received after the end of courses I've taught

*"Hi,  
I just wanted to say thanks for all your help over the term and for teaching CS 136! I really enjoyed the course and I learned a lot! I really appreciate the time you took to go over questions I had and to review my midterm with me and I hope that I will have the chance to do some of my studies with you again in the future! I will be sure to look for you if I have questions as we near the exam!*

*Thanks again,*

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*"Thank you for your hard work this semester. I've really enjoyed your course!*

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*"Good morning Professor,  
I just wanted to say thank you again for your amazing lectures and assistance throughout this term for cs 116. I can finally say I got the monkey off my back by passing the course. I guess you know what they say, the third time is the charm, haha.*

*Enjoy the holidays and best of luck in your career. I hope to have you again as my professor in future courses.*  
*Kind regards,*

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*"It was really fun learning in your class though. You are one of the best professors I have had the privilege of having. Thank you for a great semester.*

*Sincerely,*

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*Hi Professor Sakhnini,*

*I am Yiqun Wang, I am a student majoring in statistics and minoring in computer science. CS 330 is one of my required course intruder to receive a CS minor. My friends highly suggested me to take this course with you. She told me you are the best professor she had in UW. Can I know when would be the next time you would be teaching this course?*

*Thank you*

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*Dear Victoria, good evening.*

*I am one of your students in cs135 of this winter term. I should have sent this email to you before, but I was afraid that it would show like that I was trying to make you like me. So I waited for the day that I got my final grade of this course.*

*I really appreciate your support in this course. I am a student whose major is CS. I was a girl who is good at performing, hosting and art, and I could also do well in math in my high school. One of the reasons why I chose this major is that no one around me believe that I can do it well, even my parents believe that girls should not take CS course. At that time, the unsupported claim and my self-interest give me activation to choose UW. Even though I seemed like cool, I was so afraid that I could not do well although I study hard. I was so stressed. However, when I met you and knew you, I really found that I was supported. Your patience, teaching-experience, and your kindness all give me the power to insist learning. Thank you. I will still study hard in this way. I hope you have a great day every day.*

*Thank you.*

*Yours,*

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*Thank you Victoria! You are one of the best teachers I met in UW! Lucky to be in your class for this term! Sincerely*

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*Thank you Prof. Victoria! Even though I have graduated I would never forget those hours of your patient explanation of tree structure, double pointers & more back in 2013! These memories would outlast anything and it's been a real pleasure to be your student. Hope all is well & keep in touch.*

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*To the supercalifragilisticexpialidocious person reading this,*

*I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for being such a wonderful teacher. It is definitely not an easy journey to guide students from being students of a class to members of a class. Thank you for creating an environment of*

*enthusiasm for learning, appreciation for growing, and room for making mistakes along the way. I am grateful to have you as a guide, leading by example.*

*Thank you and have a wonderful week 😊*

*Regards,*

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*Dear Ms. Sakhnini,*

*Thanks for your respond and the whole CS116 lectures!*

*You really made me understand python and made me become more confident in CS since I cannot understand course notes and lectures in CS115. We all really appreciate your care for students always. And I already contacted the coordinator.*

*We all love you! You are the one of the best professors I ever had.*

*Best wishes!*

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*Hello, professor Victoria Sakhnini.*

*Thank you soooooo(infinite loop for "o") much for answering my stupid questionssssssss this term!!! I cannot use language to express my appreciation!!! I found that I never have questions stack up and thank you so much for emailing me during weekends. Actually, last term CS135 was a nightmare for me. I also have never expected CS116 would treat me well this term. But you give me confidence this term for CS and I even find that I have interest in it now. I told my friends how you change my view about CS and they all regretted for not choosing your section. I think I'm soooooo lucky to meet you!!!*

*Again, thank you so much, professor! If you have other CS lectures in the future, I'll certainly take it!!!*

*Hope you can take a good rest during break!!!*

*Best,*

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*Dear Professor Sakhnini,*

*My name is XYZ (not sure if you remind me, but it doesn't matter :P ) and take CS116 this term. I just want to express my deep appreciation to you.*

*You are always patient in explaining every details. When I felt worry about the midterm and afraid of checking my midterm score, your warm words encouraged me a lot. This makes me have more passion in studying CS and discussing with you.*

*Besides your awesome lecture and patience, the greatest part you brought to me is the encouragement to continuing studying in CS. In the past, I was unsure about if I can finish the CS courses. But after this term, I made the decision to develop my interest in computer science. Even if I don't know the my future in CS field, but I think it's worth to have a try.*

*So finally, it was a real pleasure to be your student!! Thank you so much!! And I hope I have to chance to take you lecture in the future ;-)*

*Best regards,*

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Hello Professor,

I am writing this email to let you know that I am really grateful for all the help and support I have received from you while taking CS116. I absolutely loved the style of your teaching and learned a great deal by taking this course. I hope you have a wonderful holiday season.

Thanks,

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Hi professor Sakhnini,

I know that I have said this today, but THANK YOU for teaching me! 😊 After today's class and our talk during your extended office hours, I have been always feeling sad because I might not have your lectures again (maybe I will? 😊). I truly enjoyed your lectures! Your personality and your advice really brightened me (and my future) !! THANK YOU AGAIN and I really hope to see you again! Have a great break after lecturing for so long 👍 and stay healthy and energetic as you always are! 😊 😊

Best Wishes,

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Dear Professor Sakhnini,

It was such a pleasure to be in your class this term. I appreciate that you took the time to make class both enriching and entertaining. 😊

Have a fantastic summer and all the best,

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Dear Victoria,

Thanks for your email. Appreciated it!

I learned a lot from you this term. You are the best teacher I have met, and I really enjoyed your lectures. Hope to see you next term in CS136 haha. Thanks again.

Have a great summer.

Best,

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Hi Professor Sakhnini,

Thank you so much! Also, just a little side note, this has been my favorite semester at Waterloo (although it's been tough). What really made this semester stand out is your teaching style. I haven't had a professor before that puts so much care into their teaching style and actually making sure their students succeed. I just wanted to thank you because my experience at Waterloo hasn't been an exciting one but you sure did make this summer term much more enjoyable and worthwhile! Thank you again!

Cheers,

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Hi Victoria,

My name is XXXX and I took your CS136 course this spring term. I would like to thank you for all that you did this term to help us out and teach the material. You were very motivating and incredibly helpful throughout the term and I

can't thank you enough for the boost of confidence you gave us. Especially with the pressure to do well and hardships that follow being in a rigorous program, your mentality and energy was a breath of fresh air.

I really appreciate all your efforts and hope you have a great rest of your summer!

Sincerely,

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Dear Victoria,

Thank you for everything you've done for me and all of the students in CS246. Words cannot describe how grateful I am to have had you as my teacher this past term.

Whether it was staying past office hours, extending assignment deadlines, or staying after class to answer questions, I want to thank you, and let you know that I appreciate every moment you took to help me and other students succeed in your class.

Thank you for sharing your amazing personality with us. You were more

than just an instructor; you were like a mother who genuinely cared about our success. It's so rare to have teachers like you, and I'm so thankful to have had the opportunity to learn from you.

It has been a pleasure spending time with you. The things you have taught me will go a long way into my life and in my careers. You made a lasting impact on my life, and you will always be remembered.

Thank you so much.  
I am going to miss you.

Sincerely,  
Eric Kim ♥



because it's not their job to console me. But as soon as I told you about my feelings, you turned your whole body around and stopped everything you were doing and gave me your full attention. Just that body turn almost gave me tears. You talked to me patiently even though there were students waiting outside and I wasn't asking course-related questions. I felt so much better after talking to you and I am still grateful. I just want to make sure that you know these small things that you did for us can actually make a difference. I just felt like you're a mom to all of us hahaha. But yeah, that conversation meant a lot to me. I think CS246 is by far one of my favourite courses, and a good part of it is because you were the prof. I remember at the beginning of the term when I told my friend that I'll be taking 246, and he was like is Victoria one of the profs, when I said yes, he said make sure you get her section, if not doing everything you can to switch. Now I understand why. Thank you!

Hope you have wonderful days and be happy!

Best wishes,

Andrew Chan

Can't believe the term has ended already. I know I wasn't a regular to your office hours (because of the line and also Frank and Jin were always there but I am actually a big fan of yours. You are truly the most understanding and kind prof I've had, your way of explaining and structuring your lectures were amazing. I like how you do the thing where you're like "but I'm greedy, I want to do more, so how can we make that happen? ... Okay, BUT, there is a problem with this..."; this way I always know why we are doing the things that we are doing instead of just blindly believing it. I also like how you treat the students with full understanding and respect because to be honest if I were the prof, I probably wouldn't have even considered those things. The only time I went to your office was when I got my midterm feedback and was really sad. I am not exaggerating when I said I had a breakdown when I saw my mark and I was feeling desperate. I want to get into CS so bad that every single mark counts. I talked to the advisors before coming to you, but

may your wish come true

