

Teaching Philosophy | Monika Lohani PhD

Teaching Experience. I have 12 years of experience teaching courses to undergraduate and graduate students. My teaching interests are in applied cognition, cognition and emotion interactions, research methods, and statistics. I have taught students at the University of Utah since 2017. In 2024, I taught undergraduate students in an asynchronous online course on Human Factors. In 2023, I taught a seminar course that was taught in person, jointly to undergraduate (Honors Topics in Cognitive Psychology) and graduate students (Issues in Cognition). Since 2018, I have developed and taught the course *Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior* in the Department of Educational Psychology (EDPS). It was a core required course for graduate students from Learning and Cognition, School Psychology, Reading and Literacy programs, and Counseling and Clinical Psychology (note: some students from the Department of Psychology took it, too).

In addition to my substantive areas of teaching, another important area of my teaching has been to make applied quantitative methods approachable to all students. In the Department of Educational Psychology, I had revamped and taught the first-year Ph.D. student quantitative series, including the two courses, *Graduate Quantitative Methods I and II* (EDPS 7010 and 7020), which are core required courses for graduate students. I was also the Master of Statistics Track Representative in the EDPS and oversaw the Master of Statistics degree and Graduate Certificate in Statistics for the Department of Educational Psychology. I have also taught *Introduction to Psychological Statistics* at the undergraduate level at Brandeis University. Through these efforts, I am deeply invested in providing and expanding valuable statistical training to graduate and undergraduate students.

Teaching Philosophy. When I design my courses, I constantly consider my goals and philosophy as a teacher. I focus on promoting effective education and creating a safe learning environment. As an applied cognitive psychologist, I think deeply about how the basic cognitive science of learning, memory, and motivation can be applied to effective student learning. For instance, I structure my course materials to promote interleaved learning for effective student outcomes. I have accomplished this in my statistics instruction by following lecture components with contextualized real datasets from actual studies as class examples for students to get a hands-on and experiential understanding of the core steps they need to consider. This is followed by the in-class lab component, in which students gain hands-on experience implementing the statistical method they had just learned about in another study. This helps students gain confidence in the topics and their ability to connect the theory behind statistical methodology to its application in answering real-world questions. For homework assignments and take-home exams, I then assign a more challenging assignment that utilizes the core steps to solidify and generalize the concepts learned in the course. Thus, presenting material in small increments and introducing it in different ways allows for more effective learning.

For my graduate seminar course (*Issues in Cognition*), I build assignments that encourage students to learn new methods and literature relevant to their research. For instance, based on the research covered in the seminar, each student presents and writes about a grant idea on how they will adopt a new research method that they have never used before in their own research. This class assignment has led to successful student grants at the foundation and federal levels. To supplement conceptual knowledge, I intentionally select a combination of foundational theoretical reviews and cutting-edge empirical studies that students evaluate together. This has been effective for students in expanding their knowledge and confidence in critically thinking about research.

Mentorship. Extending my goals as a teacher from the classroom to the lab, I actively promote graduate and undergraduate student mentorship and training in all aspects of research. This includes training them on the theoretical and practical foundations of my lab's multiple observational and experimental methods, including daily ecological momentary sampling, psychophysiology, and behavioral methods. In Psychology, I am the primary advisor for one graduate student (Blodgett) while I continue to mentor one post-doctoral trainee (Janney) and one PhD student (Else) from EDPS. Before Fall'23, one student had successfully completed their master's with me. In my recent projects, I have collaborated closely with several students, including five graduate students and seven undergraduate students from the Psychology at the University of Utah, five graduate students from the EDPS, as well as students from the Univ. of British Columbia, Oregon State Univ., and Washington University. Such efforts have resulted in many recent manuscripts with graduate and undergraduate students as lead or co-authors, including 1, 3, 4-10, 12-13, 16, 18-21, 23-24, 26, F1-17.

^F The citations utilize paper numbered in my CV, where # is a published and F# is a Forthcoming paper (in the Appendix).