

# Kalani Hasanthika Pahalapathirage Dona

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## Overview

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6+ years of teaching experience with introductory and advanced Statistics.  
3+ years of working as a **Statistician** with high-dimensional statistics, causal inference, statistical machine learning, statistical genetics/genomics, computational statistics, data integration, robust inference.

## Education

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Degrees	Ph.D. in Statistics University of Nebraska – Lincoln <i>3.62 Cumulative GPA</i>	August 2018 – Present
	M.S. in Statistics University of Nebraska - Lincoln <i>3.64 Cumulative GPA</i>	2018
	B.S., Statistics (Honors) University of Sri Jayewardenepura, ( <a href="http://www.sjp.ac.lk/">http://www.sjp.ac.lk/</a> ) <i>3.98 Cumulative GPA</i>	2015 Sri Lanka

## Professional Experience

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Associate tutor, Third Space Global (PVT) Ltd., Sri Lanka August 2015 – July 2016

## Publications

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Dhatt, B. K., Abshire, N., Paul, P., **Hasanthika, K.**, Sandhu, J., Zhang, Q., ... & Walia, H. (2019). Metabolic dynamics of developing rice seeds under high night-time temperature stress. *Frontiers in Plant Science*, 10, 1443.

## Presentations

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Invited Talks	<b>Hasanthika, K.</b> , (October 2022). "My research and Graduate life". Talk given to the Statistics undergraduates at Doane University, Crete, Nebraska.
Conference Presentations	<b>Hasanthika, K.</b> , & Perera, H. "Climate zonation of Sri Lanka using R". International Conference on Multidisciplinary Approaches (ICMA), University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka, 2014

	<b>Hasanthika, K.,</b> " Energy demand forecasting for selected sectors in Sri Lanka". International Conference on Multidisciplinary Approaches (ICMA), University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka, 2015	
Selected Internal Presentations	"Advanced topics in MCMC." STAT951 Course Presentation, of Nebraska-Lincoln, December 2020.	
	"Comparative analysis of DE gene analysis tools for RNA sequencing time course data." Dr. Qi Zhang Research Group Meeting, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, November 2019.	

## Teaching Experience

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UNL	<b>Graduate Teaching, Instructor of Record</b> Department of Statistics, University of Nebraska - Lincoln STAT 218: Introduction to Statistics (3 credit hours) STAT 380: Statistics and Applications (3 credit hours)	Lincoln, NE August 2016 - Present
	<b>Lab Instructor</b> Department of Statistics, University of Nebraska - Lincoln STAT 801: Statistical Methods in Research (F2023, F2024) STAT 802: Design and Analysis of Research Studies (S2023, S2024)	Lincoln, NE

## Research Experience

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Research	<b>Ph.D. Thesis at University of Nebraska - Lincoln</b> Co-Advisers: Dr. Stephen Kachman and Dr. Qi Zhang Dissertation Topic: <i>Multivariate mixture regression models with known group membership and informative priors</i>	Lincoln, NE
	<b>Graduate Research Assistant</b> Advisor: Dr. Qi Zhang	Lincoln, NE 2019 – 2020

## Skills

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Research and Technical Skills	<b>Proficient:</b> R/RStudio, RShiny, RMarkdown, Jupyter Notebooks SAS, Latex, Git/GitHub. <b>Intermediate:</b> Python, SQL, Bash, Tableau, HTML.
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## Honors and Awards

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Awards	Chancellor's Fellowship, University of Nebraska - Lincoln	2016
	"Professor R. A. Dayananda gold medal for Statistics", Faculty of Applied Science, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka	2015

## PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP (Selected Articles)

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- "AI and the Next Generation: Shaping Communication, Empathy, and Social Dynamics." *Medium*, April 23, 2025.
- "Can You Code a Vibe? How "Vibe Coding" is Revolutionizing Software Development." *LinkedIn Article*, April 21, 2025.
- "Rewriting the Rules: How AI Is Transforming Higher Education." *Medium*, April 14, 2025.
- "PhD-Level AI Agents in 2025: Accelerating Change and Redefining the Future of Advanced Research." *LinkedIn Article*, April 07, 2025

## Professional Development

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Professional membership	American Statistical Association	August 2016 – Present
Short Courses and Workshops	<b>Introduction to Data Storage and Transfer on HCC</b> Holland Computing Center (HCC)	Lincoln, NE September 2023
	<b>Grant Proposal Writing: Seminar</b> University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Lincoln, NE March 2023
	<b>Planning and writing successful NIH grant proposals</b> University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Lincoln, NE September 2022
	<b>Machine Learning and Deep Learning</b> Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM)	Washington D.C. August 2022
	<b>Introduction to Business Data Analysis in Python</b> Holland Computing Center (HCC)	Lincoln, NE January 2020
	<b>Introduction to Python, Intermediate Python, and Data Manipulation with Pandas courses</b> DataCamp	Summer 2022

## Service and Leadership

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UNL	Sri Lankan Student Association (UNL-SLSA), <b>Chief Organizer</b>	2024 – 2025
Community Service	"Data Driven: A Stats & Data Field Day", 4-H Statistics, NE, <b>Volunteer Judge</b> Statistics Education / History booth, <b>Volunteer</b>	March 2024 JSM 2022