Teaching Statement

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“Teaching is about helping, not imposing”

Throughout my academic career, teaching has been a deeply fulfilling aspect of my work. I have had the privilege of teaching several cybersecurity courses at Deakin University and VinUniveristy, where I have demonstrated a commitment to delivering an engaging, dynamic, and student-centred learning experience. My teaching philosophy is centred on addressing students' specific needs. For undergraduates, I emphasize practical skills to help them build expertise and motivation for their future careers. At the postgraduate level, I focus on deeper understanding and problem-solving. Rather than practical implementation, we explore how systems work and how to optimize them.

In essence, my approach is student focused. Instead of focusing on what I want to teach, I prioritize helping students achieve what they need to succeed. “Teaching is about helping, not imposing”.

Teaching Philosophy and Approach

My teaching philosophy is tailored to who the students are and what they seek. We don't teach students based on what we want to convey; we aim to help them achieve what they need.

This means that at different levels of learning, we must focus on different goals to support them effectively. To clarify, for undergraduate students, their primary interests are acquiring new skills, developing passion, and gaining motivation for future careers. In my teaching, I design subjects that emphasize practical skills, such as hands-on implementation. For instance, if students are aspiring network engineers, I would guide them through setting up a network for 10 users. They need to learn the core networking knowledge to accomplish this, which helps them understand how to acquire new skills and provides clarity about their future roles. From there, we can discuss issues like whether to use wired or wireless connections. This approach allows students to learn essential skills, cultivate passion, and stay motivated for their careers. For postgraduate students, their needs differ. They don't necessarily require hands-on experience with implementation or troubleshooting. Instead, they focus on understanding how systems work, identifying problems, and solving those problems. At this level, we discuss network optimization and deeper concepts rather than practical tasks like setting up or troubleshooting networks.

In the courses I have taught—Cyber Security Management, Cyber Security Analytics, and Advanced Network Security—I focus on meeting the specific needs of students at different learning levels. My teaching philosophy emphasizes guiding students toward what they need to succeed, rather than simply presenting content. For undergraduate students, who are primarily focused on developing new skills and finding motivation for future careers, I integrate practical, hands-on experiences. For example, in Advanced Network Security, I guide students through tasks like setting up networks, helping them apply foundational knowledge to real-world scenarios. This practical approach helps them gain clarity about their future roles while fostering skills and passion.

For postgraduate students, the focus is different. They are more concerned with understanding how systems work, solving problems, and optimizing processes. In these courses, such as Cyber Security Analytics, I guide students through advanced topics, including emerging technologies like Software Defined Networks (SDN), the Internet of Things (IoT), and AI-driven networks. By combining theoretical discussions with real-world cybersecurity challenges, I help students build analytical skills and technical knowledge that are crucial for their careers. At all levels, I strive to bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring students are equipped not just with knowledge but with the tools and adaptability to thrive in the rapidly evolving field of cybersecurity.

Commitment to Student Success and Feedback

A key aspect of my teaching practice is my focus on student-centred learning, where students' feedback plays a vital role in shaping the course delivery. I have consistently received outstanding feedback from my students, achieving 100% satisfaction rates in Cyber Security Management and Cyber Security Analytics. These results reflect my dedication to creating a positive learning environment where students are encouraged to actively participate and engage with the material.

To foster student success, I maintain open lines of communication both inside and outside the classroom. I make myself available for one-on-one consultations to address any academic or personal challenges that students may face. By creating an environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and seeking guidance, I am able to address individual learning needs more effectively.

In addition, I incorporate real-time feedback into my teaching process, using student suggestions to improve course content and delivery. For instance, during Cyber Security Management, I adapted my teaching style to offer more practical examples and interactive case studies, responding to students' requests for more applied learning. This not only increased engagement but also allowed students to gain a deeper understanding of the cybersecurity management strategies relevant to contemporary business environments.

Diverse Teaching Settings and Methods

Over the course of my teaching experience, I have honed my ability to adapt to various teaching settings, including traditional classrooms, online platforms, and practical labs. The transition between these different formats has allowed me to refine my teaching strategies to meet the needs of diverse student groups. In my experience with online teaching, I have employed a variety of multimedia tools to engage students, from video lectures and interactive quizzes to group discussions in virtual breakout rooms. This flexibility ensures that students, regardless of their learning style, can engage with the course material effectively.

For instance, in Cyber Security Analytics, I combined traditional lectures with coding workshops where students used Python to develop data analysis scripts. This hands-on experience was critical in helping students develop the practical skills necessary to analyse security issues in a professional context. My ability to navigate various teaching platforms ensures that students can thrive whether they are learning in person or remotely.

Mentorship

Mentoring and supervising higher-degree research students has been an integral and rewarding aspect of my academic career. At VCyber Lab, I have mentored four master's students and four bachelor's students, guiding them through various stages of their academic journeys. My focus is on helping them navigate research challenges, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and gain hands-on experience in cutting-edge cybersecurity research.

One of my notable achievements in mentorship includes guiding a master’s student in successfully publishing a book chapter, which was accepted by Elsevier. I have also collaborated with PhD students on research projects that have led to joint publications. By offering guidance on research methodologies, refining research questions, and providing constructive feedback, I aim to help students achieve their academic and professional goals. These mentoring experiences have strengthened my ability to supervise and inspire the next generation of researchers.