






Saharnaz Babaei-Balderlou

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics, AI & Technology in Education and Work, Workforce Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Teaching Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse, WI, USA 8/2024 - Present

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, USA 2018 - 2024
Master of Economics, Urmia University, Urmia, Iran 2011 - 2013
Bachelor of Economics, Urmia University, Urmia, Iran 2007 - 2011

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Fostering Equity: How Employment Anti-Discrimination Policies Shape Teacher Satisfaction and Retention”

This paper explores how employment policies function as quasi-experimental shocks to assess teacher retention and workplace satisfaction. [Under Review — [Link](#)]

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Tran, H., **Babaei-Balderlou, S.**, Vesely, R. (2024). Balancing the Scale: Investigating the Effect of Frontloading and Backloading Salary Structures on Teacher Turnover. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 152, 104809. ([DOI](#))
- Tran, H., **Babaei-Balderlou, S.**, & Smith, D. A. (2024). The promises and pitfalls of government-funded teacher staffing initiatives on teacher employment in hard-to-staff schools: Evidence from South Carolina. *Policy Futures in Education*, 22(1), 43-65. ([DOI](#))
- Heidari, H., **Babaei Balderlou, S.**, & Ebrahimi Torki, M. (2016). Effects of the Import of Consumption, Intermediate and Capital Goods on Transmission of Crude Oil Price Volatility to the Industry and Mining Sector in Iran. *Journal of Energy Planning And Policy Research*, 2(2), 195-234. (Peer-reviewed; In Persian; [Link](#))
- Heidari, H., **Babaei Balderlou, S.**, & Ebrahimi Torki, M. (2016) Energy Intensity of GDP: A Nonlinear Estimation of Determinants in Iran. *International Journal of Economics and Management Studies (IJEMS)*, 1 (2), 1-19. (Peer-reviewed; [Link](#))
- Heidari, H., & **Babaei-Balderlou, S.** (2014). Investigation of the effect of crude oil price uncertainty on the growth of Industry and Mine sector in Iran: An application of Markov-Switching Models. *Quarterly Energy Economics Review*, 10(41), 43-70. (Peer-reviewed; In Persian; [Link](#))
- Heydari, H., & **Babaei, S.** (2013). Crude oil price contagion to the growth of Industry and Mine sector in Iran: An approach to Markov-Switching Models. *Iranian Journal of Energy*, 16(3), 0-0. (Peer-reviewed; In Persian; [Link](#))

Last Updated: October 30, 2025

WORKING PAPERS

- The Invisible Hand of gen-AI: Can AI-Enhanced Study Groups Improve Learning Outcomes?, with Shakya, S. [Under Review]
- JMP: “Fostering Equity: How Employment Anti-Discrimination Policies Shape Teacher Satisfaction and Retention” [Under Review - [Link](#)]
- “Cash Incentives or Token Gestures? Teacher Incentive Bonuses in North Carolina”, with Maloney, S.[Under Review - [Link](#)]

WORK IN PROGRESS

- Integration of Gen-AI into Higher Education
- Wage Analysis in AI-Exposed Occupations, with Brekke, A.
- Policy to Practice Pathways: Policy Strictness and School Climate.
- Unpacking the Mechanisms of Anti-Discrimination Policies on Workforce Stability
- Limitations of Mental Health Services for K-12 Public Schools, with Schultz, B. K.
- Discrimination perception at workplace, with Tran, H.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Dr. Henry Tran

Columbia, SC, USA

Wardlaw College of Education, University of South Carolina

2019 - 2024

- Assistance in conceptualization, design and planning, data curation, empirical analysis, visualization, and dissemination of academic research papers
- Applied econometrics causal inference methods

Research Assistant, Multiple Projects

Columbia, SC, USA

Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina

2018 - 2019

- Assistance in data collection, curation, and cleaning in multiple projects by Dr. Bentley Coffey, Dr. Crystal Zhan, and Dr. Joshua Hess

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Professor Hassan Heidari

Urmia, Iran

School of Economic and Management Sciences, Urmia University

2013-2016

- Data collection and analysis for spatial planning in West Azerbaijan, Iran

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

College of Business Administration, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

La Crosse, WI, USA

Assistant Teaching Professor

2024 - Present

- **Data Analysis for Business Applications** – (4 sections) – *In Person, Fall 2025*
[Link to evaluations](#): Forthcoming
- **Global Macroeconomics** – (4 sections) – *In Person, Spring 2025*
[Link to evaluations](#): 63–86% participation
- **Global Macroeconomics** – (4 sections) – *In Person, Fall 2024*
[Link to evaluations](#): 74–94% participation

Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina

Columbia, SC, USA

Instructor

2021 - 2024

- **Principles of Microeconomics** – *In Person, Spring 2024*
[Link to evaluations](#): 4.2/5.0 (80% participation)
- **Introduction to Economics** – *In Person, Spring 2023*
[Link to evaluations](#): 4.5/5.0 (67% participation)
- **Introduction to Economics** – *In Person, Spring 2022*
[Link to evaluations](#): 3.7/5.0 (70% participation)
- **Introduction to Economics** – *Online, Spring 2021*
[Link to evaluations](#): 4.3/5.0 (61% participation)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND MEDIA RECOGNITION

Media and Public Engagement

- Invited interview on teacher labor markets and compensation policy, *Faculti* (2025). DOI: [10.5321/12345](https://doi.org/10.5321/12345)

Mentorship and Advising

- Faculty Mentor, Eagle Apprenticeship Program, University of Wisconsin – La Crosse 2025 – Present
- Certified Academic Advisor, UWL Master Advisor Program (Certified Summer 2025) 2025 – Present
- Mentor, Undergraduate Honors Student Research Project, University of South Carolina 2022 – 2024

Peer Review and Conference Engagement

- Reviewer, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (EEPA)*
- Reviewer, *Administrative Sciences*
- Reviewer, *Social Sciences*
- Reviewer, Cambridge University Press (Introductory Economics Textbook)
- Program Reviewer, *APPAM Research Conference* Fall 2025
- Conference Roles (Reviewer / Presenter / Discussant):
 - Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) Annual Conference 2023–2025
 - Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Conference 2024
 - National Economics Teaching Association (NETA) 2025
 - Southern Economic Association (SEA) Annual Meeting 2022–2025
 - Eastern Economic Association (EEA), CSWEP Session 2024
 - Western Economic Association International (WEAI) 2023
 - Carolina Region Empirical Economics Day (CREED) 2021, 2023
 - International Energy Conferences, Tehran 2012, 2014

Workshops and Professional Development

- Guest Workshop Leader, *WiSys Innovation On-Ramp Program*, UW-La Crosse Fall 2025
- Certification for Mathematics for Machine Learning and Data Science Specialization by DeepLearning.AI on Coursera. [Link to the Certificate](#) Summer 2025
- Completed the *UW MBA Consortium Online Instructor Certification (iCC)*, UW MBA Summer 2025
- Multimodal Machine Learning Pipeline – AIAI 2025 Competition:
 - Designed and executed a full-scale segment-level classification pipeline for educational videos using BERT and VideoMAE on HPC infrastructure;
 - Implemented automated QC, multimodal feature alignment, and optimized model thresholds.
- Certification of Statistical Learning with Python, StanfordOnline by Stanford University 2024
- Certification of R Programming A-Z: R for Data Science by Udemy 2024
- Certification of the Complete SQL Bootcamp: From Zero to Hero by Udemy 2024
- Workshop Leader, *LaTeX for Economics Ph.D. Students*, University of South Carolina Fall 2023
- Workshop Leader, *Job Market Preparation for Ph.D. Candidates*, U of SC 2023
- Certification of *Preparing Future Faculty*, by the Center for Teaching Excellence, U of SC 2018–2024
- Certification of SHARPGrad (Skills, Habits, and Research Productivity) by U of SC 2021
- Workshop Participant, Preventing Harassment and Discrimination Training by U of SC 2021
- Workshop Participant, *Modern Meta-Analysis Workshop*, NSF, AERA, ICPSR, AIR PEERS Data Hub 2021
- Workshop Participant, *Meta-Analysis and Systematic Reviews*, CARMA Short Course 2021

Other University and Departmental Service

- Scholarship Reviewer, *UWL Alumni and Friends Foundation*, UW-La Crosse Spring 2025
- Representative, *Scholar Day*, UW-La Crosse Spring 2025
- Committee Member, Department of Economics Recruitment Initiative, UW-La Crosse Fall 2024

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

Humane Studies Graduate Fellowship (\$2,000), Institute for Humane Studies (IHS)	2023
SPARC Graduate Research Grant (\$5,000), University of South Carolina	2023
Moore School Research Grant (\$2,545), Darla Moore School of Business, USC	2023
Graduate Research Assistantship, Wardlaw College of Education, USC	2019–2024
Graduate Assistantship, Darla Moore School of Business, USC	2018–2019

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Econometrics:** Causal inference, panel data, cross-sectional and time-series analysis, heteroskedasticity modeling (univariate/multivariate GARCH models), meta-analysis
- **Statistical Tools:** R, Python, STATA
- **Data & Visualization Tools:** Tableau, SQL, ArcGIS
- \LaTeX
- **Languages:** English (Fluent), Persian (Native), Azerbaijani-Turkish (Native)

MEMBERSHIPS

- Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM)
- Population Association of America (PAA)
- American Economic Association (AEA)
- National Economics Teaching Association (NETA)

REFERENCES

Primary Ph.D. Advisors

Yi Crystal Zhan, Ph.D.

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Department of Economics
Darla Moore School of Business
University of South Carolina
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Orgul D. Ozturk, Ph.D.

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Ph.D. Committee Members and Collaborators

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Henry Tran, Ph.D.

Ph.D. Committee Member and Research Supervisor
Educational Leadership and Policies
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Professional References (Current Institution)

Sheida Babakhani Teimouri, Ph.D.

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