Benjamin Grant
Teaching Statement

In addition to my love of research, I am passionate about teaching. I truly enjoy the classroom setting and strive to be the best teacher I can be. I find the classroom to be an energetic space where transferring knowledge and ideas to students is as rewarding as engaging them in meaningful discussions and navigating interesting questions. I have experience in many aspects of teaching including: support and grading as a Teaching Assistant, course design and modification in collaboration with my advisor Jan A. Van Mieghem, and running and teaching my own course as the sole instructor and grader at Northeastern Illinois University (an additional role I took during my PhD at Kellogg).

I have been fortunate to receive unsolicited and positive feedback in every quarter I have been a TA. I was awarded the Distinguished Teaching Assistant designation in all quarters I was a TA for an MBA course in Managerial Economics at University of Cincinnati. I further received outstanding evaluations for teaching Business Statistics at Northeastern Illinois University. Every student who responded to the survey (32/42 students in the class) recommend me as a professor to other students, I received an overall teacher rating of 4.82/5, and I beat all averages for every question when compared with department and university averages.

Although the feedback I’ve received thus far has been exceedingly positive, I am early in my teaching career and as an Operations Management researcher. I strive for continuous improvement in my role as researcher, teacher, mentor and beyond. I have learned a great deal from the faculty at Kellogg, my own teaching experience, and particularly from my advisor, Jan A. Van Mieghem. He mentored me throughout my PhD studies and made it a point to include me in his teaching process, adapting courses over time based on feedback from students, and ensuring classes were relevant to future business leaders. We have spent many hours analyzing responses to cases, problem sets, mid-term and end-of-term evaluations, and student comments. The insights we gained allowed us to adapt prompts, course content, and external resources. The goal has always been to drive creative thinking and interesting solutions to classroom and real-world problems.

I believe an effective teacher is one who communicates clearly, grounds material in relevance to the students, and can read the room to adapt accordingly. Communication is key for a teacher and using a variety of tools (presentation slides, board work, in-class work, homework and readings, etc.) is an effective strategy to reach different types of learners. Adapting the material to current events and relevant topics is crucial to teaching at a business school. Engaging the classroom through questions, interactive discussions, and mid-term surveys are tools I have used to turn a sleepy subject into an energetic environment.

I am eager to continue and build my teaching career and truly believe it is additive, and in some cases informative, to good research. I have a broad interest in teaching areas including: Operations Management, Data Science and Business Analytics (predictive modeling, programming, decision tools, etc.), and Operations Strategy. I am also comfortable teaching related courses, such as Optimization, Statistics, and Health Care Operations/Analytics. I will leave Kellogg with all teaching materials necessary to instruct the core class in Operations Management and electives for Operations Strategy/Strategic Decisions in Operations. Although research is my main drive for my future academic career, teaching is a close second. Direct instruction provides immediate feedback and fulfillment to students and teachers alike, energizing even more motivation to push the boundaries of, and disseminate, knowledge.