



Varun Rijhwani

Assistant Professor at IIM, Indore

A CELTA-certified educator and communication scholar with a strong foundation in teaching, research, and curriculum development. Brings a dynamic, student-focused approach to the classroom, encouraging dialogue, reflection, and real-world application. Research spans business communication, human-machine interaction, and emerging technologies. Combines academic depth with innovative pedagogy to enhance learning in management education.

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Visiting Assistant Professor of Communication Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indore

06/2025 - Present

Achievements/Tasks

- Appointed as full-time faculty in the Communication area to contribute to teaching, research, and academic service.
- Preparing to deliver core and elective courses in Business Communication and related areas.
- Developing a research agenda aligned with institutional priorities in communication, technology, and management.
- Engaging with academic committees and onboarding activities as part of institutional integration.

Assistant Professor of Communication S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai

04/2024

Subjects taught: Business Communication, Communication Skills, Written Analysis and Communication (WAC)

Achievements/Tasks

- Designed and delivered curriculum content for the flagship PGDM program's business communication course, enhancing student engagement and comprehension through innovative teaching methodologies.
- Actively participated in departmental meetings, contributing perspectives on interdisciplinary communication topics and engaging in constructive dialogue with colleagues.
- Supervised students involved in Abhyudaya, a mentorship initiative where they coach underprivileged children from low-income neighborhoods in Mumbai's Andheri and surrounding areas.

Assistant Professor of Communication School of Business Management, NMIMS, Mumbai

03/2022 - 03/2024

Subjects taught: Managerial Communication I and II, Written Analysis and Communication (WAC)

Achievements/Tasks

- Designed and developed communication and related course content, ensuring alignment with the institute's objectives.
- Conducted engaging lectures, seminars, and MDPs on communication topics, employing innovative teaching methods.
- Advised students on academic and career paths, offering guidance on course selection and internship opportunities.
- Mentored *We Care*, a civic engagement initiative, and supervised summer internship programs, guiding students toward impactful community engagement and practical industry experience.
- Spearheaded *Mantavya*, the quizzing and literary cell, in organizing engaging events, nurturing intellectual curiosity, and enhancing the literary and quizzing culture on campus.

Faculty Member Communication and Social Robotics Labs, Western Michigan University, MI, USA

01/2020 - Present

The research labs examine human-robot interaction and the roles that perception plays in these interactions. We are rooted in the theory base of communication studies and related fields of study.

Contact : <https://www.combotlabs.org/about.html>

WORK EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Scholar MICA, Ahmedabad

06/2018 - 02/2022

Achievements/Tasks

- Assisted faculty members in PGDM teaching for communication and marketing subjects like Strategic Communication, Semiotics, Marketing Strategies, CRM, etc.
- Graded class participation, quizzes, examination, and assignments.
- Assisted faculty members in research work.

Faculty Member of Communication Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore

07/2016 - 05/2018

Subjects taught: Business Communication, Public Relations and Corporate Communications, English Language and Literature, Personality Development and Soft Skills.

Achievements/Tasks

- Developed and delivered engaging lectures to management students.
- Designed course materials such as syllabi, assignments and handouts.
- Coached students on public speaking and presentation skills.
- Fostered students' commitment to lifelong learning by connecting course materials to broader themes and current events.

Academic Associate Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indore

01/2015 - 05/2015

Achievements/Tasks

- Assisted the faculty members in preparing course outline, identified and collected reading material, and developed teaching notes.
- Graded class participation, quizzes, examination, and assignments, performed invigilation duties, etc.
- Coordinated with programme heads for arranging for exams/quizzes, distribution of course materials and performed other academic activities.

Visiting Faculty Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore

01/2014 - 12/2014

Subjects taught: Communication skills and English

Achievements/Tasks

- Facilitated an understanding of basic concepts, theories, and techniques in the field of communication in the changing global scenario.
- Planned, evaluated, and revised course content and course materials.
- Facilitated skilled based learning to enhance the ability to communicate clearly and confidently both in formal and informal situations.

EDUCATION

Fellow Programme in Management - Communications (FPM - C) MICA, Ahmedabad

06/2018 - 12/2023

Doctoral Thesis:

- *Subject:* Human - Machine Communication
- *Title:* Voice of Innovation: Investigating the user adoption of digital voice assistants

Master of Arts (MA) in English Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

07/2015 - 12/2017

Master of Business Administration (MBA) Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore

07/2011 - 05/2013

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore

07/2008 - 05/2011

ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS AND SCHOLARSHIP

Visiting Research Scholar at School of Communication, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, USA
(01/2020 - 04/2020)

Developed thesis proposal, audited courses on Communication Research Methods, Human-Machine Communication, Computer-Mediated Communication; Member of the Communication and Social Robotics (COMBOT) Labs.

PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES

Journal Article

Credibility and altered communication styles of AI graders in the classroom

Author(s)

Bryan Abendschein, Xialing Lin, Chad Edwards, Autumn Edwards, Varun Rijhwani

04/04/2024

Journal of Computer Assisted Learning

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12979>

Journal Article

'Hey Siri, You're Dumb!': Investigating Blurting Instances of Voice-Based Assistants

Author(s)

Varun Rijhwani and Chad Edwards

05/10/2023

Interacting with Computers

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/iwc/iwad047>

Journal Article

When in doubt, lay it out: Over vs. under-accommodation in human-robot interaction

Author(s)

Chad Edwards, Autumn Edwards and Varun Rijhwani

13/07/2023

Language Sciences

Vol. 99 | DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2023.101561>

Journal Article

Human-Robot Teaming Configurations: A Study of Interpersonal Communication Perceptions and Affective Learning in Higher Education

Author(s)

Bryan Abendschein, Chad Edwards, Autumn Edwards, Varun Rijhwani and Jasmine Stahl

2021

Journal of Communication Pedagogy

Vol.4, 123 - 132 | DOI:10.31446/JCP.2021.1.12

Conference Poster Presentation

When in Doubt, Lay it Out: Over Vs. Under Communication Accommodation in Human-Robot Interaction

Author(s)

Chad Edwards, Autumn Edwards and Varun Rijhwani

September 6, 2023

MediaPsychology 2023

Track: Research reports - oral presentations

Conference Presentation

AI Machine Graders: The Potential Benefits of Perceived Authenticity

Author(s)

Bryan Abendschein, Xialing Lin, Chad Edwards, Autumn Edwards, Varun Rijhwani,

May 25, 2023

ICA HMC: Authenticity in Communicating with Machine

PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES

Conference Proceedings

Rate My Robot: The effect of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) on perceptions of a social robot's teaching performance

Author(s)

Chad Edwards, Autumn Edwards and Varun Rijhwani

2020

29th IEEE International Conference on Robot and Human Interactive Communication (RO-MAN), (pp. 1063-1068). IEEE.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

State Bank of India

Conducted sessions on Negotiation Skills and Storytelling

12/2024 - 02/2025

GSK Lakshya 3.0

Conducted sessions on Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback; Prioritisation: Time - Management, Ability to work under pressure

08/2023 - 08/2023

Veritas Technology

Conducted sessions on Self - Understanding, Johari Window, and Personal Improvement Plan

09/2022 - 09/2022

CIPLA Post Graduate Diploma in Pharmaceutical Management Program

Facilitated a course on Business Communication

04/2022 - 06/2022

CERTIFICATES AND COURSES

CELTA – Certificate in Teaching English To Speakers of Other Languages, University of Cambridge (2017)

The Cambridge CELTA is an internationally recognised teaching qualification that covers the principles of effective teaching and gives a range of teaching techniques and practical experience.

INTERESTS

Sketching

Dancing

Watching and analysing OTT content