

Parran Vanniasegaram's Student Comments (compiled in September of 2010)

Statistics

1. ".....I was Parran's student in Spring 2008 for Math 10.....I was a Santa Clara University graduate prior to attending his class and I have to commend the exceptional job he did with teaching his students. I was very surprised and pleased at how this course at De Anza College stimulated my learning and critical thinking skills. Parran was not an easy teacher to say the least, but his devotion and dedication to his students made it worthwhile. He was available during his open office hours and always helped us with any homework questions we had. He worked through the problems and explained every detail to the class so students would not fall behind. I often sent emails with problems I had questions on and Parran always responded in a timely manner with complete explanations. He was fully committed to his students because he even answered emails late at night when he knew student were stressed out about upcoming exams....."

2. ".....I took his Math 10 class last summer and til this day, I still believe that he is one of the best knowledgeable professors at the De Anza campus. Every student at De Anza should be able to take at least one of his math classes to understand how fascinating of a teaching style he has. When I took Introduction to Statistics with him, he was absolutely patient with the students, as some students learn quicker than others. He took his time explaining what was difficult to comprehend even if it would throw off that day's plan, but would still manage to keep his lessons on schedule with plenty of review time as the quarter came to an end. Because I took his six-week summer course composing of two hour classes four days a week, I felt really overwhelmed at the beginning. I entered the math class unsure whether or not I would be able to keep myself on track with the lectures. Mr. Vanniasegaram made this process much easier for me. Everyday, he assigned homework comprising of medium and difficult problems, and the very next day, he would quiz us on the homework from the night before....He made sure that all his students were on track with each chapter, as he was constantly eager when he saw that everyone was solving problems on the board and getting them correct. He stayed after class for as long as the students needed.....It would be extravagant if I saw more professors like him on campus, as Mr. Vanniseagaram's in class experience is a whole package....."

3. ".....I am an international student who came from China. I attended De Anza because of its good academic reputation and high transfer rate to UC system. One vital component that makes De Anza so successful is its dedicated instructors, and Parran is definitely one of them that impressed me the most.

I took Statistics class with him, a session that ends about 11:15pm. but I was always eager to go to his class because he is an amazing teacher. He not only knows his material well, but also cares about his students. He makes sure every student in his class is taken good care of and no one is left behind. I learned a lot in his class, not only about statistics, but also the right attitude towards life....."

4. ".....Parran's classes were very engaging and fun. He related to the students very well and kept a light atmosphere in the classroom. This, in turn led to students actually listening to him and trying to learn the material being presented. Parran has a refreshing attitude towards teaching and made statistics relevant to everyday life. His examples centered around how statistics are used on a day-to-day basis and why we should care about what we were learning. The class responded very well to it. Our class was from 9 to 11:15pm, but you wouldn't find anybody dosing off in Parran's class because he was able to keep everyone engaged and interested.

Compared to other classes I have taken at De Anza, Parran's classes were a lot more fun and engaging. Many instructors at De Anza have communication issues..... This was a huge issue in a different Math class I took at De Anza. The communication issue, dull lectures, and teachers that students could not relate to all led to disinterested students who didn't learn much....

Lastly, on top of Parran being an effective instructor, he has a very impressive academic background with an undergraduate degree from UC Berkeley and a graduate degree from Stanford....."

5. “.....Parran was my statistics instructor for Spring 2010, and he is that rare teacher who sets high standards for students and who makes math relevant by connecting the materials to real life.

Parran sets high standards for his students, and this helped me to succeed in his class. Parran’s class was challenging because he assigned homework for every lesson and gave a quiz at almost every class meetings; he expected us to think about problems and to try to solve them ourselves before asking for help. Unlike other teachers, he gave us no hints about what the midterms and finals will cover. Parran’s policies pushed me to study hard for every class meeting and tests; I spent an average of 10-12 hours each week studying for his class, and this paid off ... Parran’s policies gave students an incentive to be disciplined and to build good study habits and time management skills. I already had a Bachelor’s degree when I took Parran’s course, and my experience at a four-year university showed that students must have good study habits in order to succeed at the university level. Therefore, I think that Parran will really benefit students who plan to transfer to a four-year institution by pushing them to work hard and to be responsible for learning.

I also enjoyed Parran’s class because he made mathematics relevant, and I’m sure other students will feel the same. One of our assignments was to see how the media used statistics. We researched newspaper articles for examples of questionable use of statistics and found many examples of problematic sample size, survey methods and interpretation. The assignment helped me to understand the class materials better and helped me to be a better critical thinker in general when it comes to analyzing data in real life.

Lastly, Parran is an organized teacher who helped us to learn a lot of materials in a short amount of time. His class lecture notes were very useful and comprehensive.....I still have the notes and plan to use them as I take more statistics classes in the future.

My time in Parran’s class was well spent, and I learned much about statistics that will help me as I pursue a Master’s degree in economics.....”

Precalculus

6. “.....I am a former student of Professor Vanniasagaram as well as an active participant in the Math Club he hosts.

During my Math 49B class two years ago, Professor Vanniasagaram was enthusiastic in getting us students to learn. He was confident in his ability and successfully accommodated diverse student needs by facilitating all styles of learners, offering individualized and extracurricular support, and integrating effective materials in his lectures. The class atmosphere was highly interactive and inquisitive because Professor Vanniasagaram encouraged class discussions, and incorporated open-ended questions and cooperative learning.

He also frequently posed questions on his current lecture and wrote problems on the board at the beginning of class to keep us students up-to-date on our section at hand. We all felt that he was very engaged in the subject matter, as opposed to just lecturing and expecting results. Even after class, he devoted at least half an hour outside of his office hours to assist students with concepts they didn’t understand. All the while, he kept up an optimistic tone and face with us, constantly pushing us to strive higher and do better....”

7. “.....I am approaching my third year at De Anza College and have taken a series of math courses with different professors for each course.

As an older, re-entry student I take my education very serious and expect all of my professors to approach the subject in the same manner when teaching.

Spring quarter of 2010 I had the privilege to take Parran Vanniasagaram for Pre-Calculus (Math 49A).....

During the course of preparing for Calculus, Parran contributed so much to my growth and improvement in mathematics. Not like any other professor I have experienced at De Anza, Parran

helped me identify my weaknesses in math and provided extra help through online resources such as math tutoring and videos to improve the skills I would need to be a strong candidate for Calculus.

By utilizing time beyond office and classroom hours, Parran guided me through many necessary concepts that helped sharpened my critical and logical thinking skills.

After enduring a grueling six weeks of summer school in Math 49B, I am extremely grateful and appreciative of the extra time and effort Parran invested in me to change and shape my skills. These skills became extremely useful during the past six weeks of my life at De Anza College.

During the twelve weeks as Parran's student, I humbly gained more knowledge and skills than my past year in mathematics combined. I can only gracefully say this knowing he is different from my other professors, the difference being is that he genuinely cares. Parran not only changed my math skills for the better, but he changed me as a student.

I left the central valley to pursue my education at De Anza College due to its stellar reputation as being the best community college in California. Parran has by far met those standards and provided so much more to his students. I would expect nothing less from De Anza and its faculty considering its reputation....."

8. ".....Parran was my instructor for a Pre-Calculus course at West Valley College in the fall of 2009. At that time, I was a concurrent student in my junior year of high school and this class was my first college experience. I am pleased to say that it was a very positive one due to Parran's approachability, patience, flexibility, and expertise in mathematics. Parran always made sure that he was available during his posted office hours and he was easily conversed with whenever I had questions. During class, Parran was patient and flexible enough to spend adequate time on concepts or ideas that were more difficult for us to grasp. His expertise in mathematics showed as he explained the intricacies and implications of what we were learning, without hesitation or any sense of uncertainty. In addition to all of these traits, Parran was able to engage his students and make his lessons enjoyable....."

9. ".....Professor Vanniasagaram is a young, passionate teacher. I took trigonometry with professor Vanniasagaram a few quarters back. The class was challenging. It was professor Vanniasagaram's thoughtful instruction, sheer brilliance and understanding though, of not just trigonometry but mathematics as a whole that helped me see the bigger things in math and its purpose....Professor Vanniasagaram pushed our entire class to the very limits of the trigonometry curriculum....He understands his students as students and unlike most math instructors at De Anza, refuses to exhaust his role as merely a teacher. Professor Vanniasagaram goes out of his way for his students and it is his unique attributes that make him an essential part of DeAnza's superior academic atmosphere....."

Math Club

10. ".....I have had the pleasure of getting to know Mr. Vanniasagaram in the De Anza Math Club. He has been instrumental in getting the club organized and keeping the meetings interesting enough to keep a large body of students coming back every week.

From what I have seen, he is extremely clear in his presentation and does an excellent job at getting the students working towards a solution without telling them how to do it. One of the problems I have seen in teaching mathematics is that when most teachers are asked a question, they tend to do the problem for the student, which in my opinion is not that helpful. On several occasions I have seen Mr. Vanniasagaram respond with a question instead of just providing the solution, thus encouraging the students to figure out where to start.

I have had the pleasure of experiencing many of the excellent teachers in the Mathematics department at De Anza, and I would rank Mr. Vanniasagaram among the very best...."