



STINT

Stiftelsen för internationalisering av
högre utbildning och forskning

The Swedish Foundation for International
Cooperation in Research and Higher Education

STINT TEACHING SABBATICAL 2022

ASU[®] **W.P. Carey**
School of Business
Arizona State University

- Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage -
Anais Nin

INTRODUCTION

I, Vanajah Siva, an Assistant Professor at the Supply Chain & Operations Management department of Jönköping School of Engineering (JTH) in Sweden was one of the 13 candidates awarded the STINT Teaching Sabbatical scholarship TS22. The scholarship stipulated that I shall be relocated and stationed as a Visiting Scholar at the department of Supply Chain Management of W. P. Carey School of Business of Arizona State University (ASU) located in Tempe, Arizona, for the duration of 4.5 months from August to December 2023.

The final report of the teaching sabbatical is as follows.

PREPARATION & PLANNING

Having received the confirmation dated 21st December 2022 from STINT of being offered a place at ASU for the sabbatical, the preparations and planning began gradually hereon. Not much could be done immediately following the announcement due to the holidays, therefore I waited till after to initiate contacts with the personnel at ASU provided to me.

Following the STINT Seminar held in Stockholm on February 1st, 2023, I had some ideas on the next steps to prepare for the planning trip. Based on the discussion with the previous candidate who spent her sabbatical at ASU in Tempe, it was brought to my attention that finding a fully furnished apartment to rent for the duration of the sabbatical will be a challenge. I began by contacting Karen Engler at ASU for practical matters such as accommodation. Karen was extremely helpful in providing a list of accommodations available for rent in Tempe, where most of the list contained housing for students. This process began in early January, and I, finally, found a suitable solution for accommodation on the 12th of June, a full 5 months of search later.

The process of finding accommodation led me to acquiring a local US phone number online. Registration or even inquiry about an apartment on all websites required a local phone number, without which the registration or inquiry was not possible. Obtaining a local phone number was the first item that I started paying for monthly, until I arrived in Tempe in end of July and managed to purchase a local SIM card. Most of the apartments that I found satisfactory were all unfurnished, and mostly out of the affordable price range. Hence, it became clear that the monthly rent will range between 2000 – 2500 USD. Again, Karen provided me with information on furniture rentals, where the cost came up to a minimum of 600 USD a month for basic furniture set for a living room, bedroom, and kitchen. The lease agreement for all these apartments was set at 1 year minimum, where the best I could find stipulated a 6-month lease. I relentlessly continued my search for a short-term furnished apartment and finally came across one advertised on ForRentUniversity.com website in June. I was contacted by the landlord, Paul Welden, and upon agreement on the duration of the rental, we were able to draw up a contract for the lease.

I initiated contact with the SCM department chair, Thomas Kull, and the Business Manager, Christa Thomson at the W. P. Carey School of Business. I was informed that the teaching schedule for the fall/autumn semester was not available yet in January and was introduced to other personnel who shall assist me with other inquiries that I may have. Upon confirming their availabilities, we collectively agreed that I could visit ASU for the planning trip from 25 February to 3 March 2023. During the week of the trip, I had the opportunity to meet Thomas and Christa in person at the SCM department. Thomas and I sat down for an hour for a casual chat to understand my role at the department during the sabbatical. We discussed teaching and research interests, and I was given some other names of personnel who may align with my interest and role. Christa and I met to discuss the protocols for applying for a J-1 Visa which allows me to reside and work in the USA for a limited duration. She advised that I visit the International Students & Scholars Center (ISSC) to collect necessary information regarding the practical matters of working for ASU and living in Tempe. During my visit to the ISSC, I was provided with the J-1 Scholar Handbook, where all practical information was made available.

In the following days I was invited for a lunch meeting with Reynold Byers, Clinical Professor of SCM, where we discussed sustainability research topics. Reynold informed me about the School of Sustainability and mentioned Kevin Dooley, Distinguished Professor of SCM and Chief Scientist of the Sustainability Consortium. I made a note to get in touch with Kevin to set up a meeting for a later date. The second lunch was with Hitendra Chaturvedi, Professor of Practice, who teaches SCM. The name Kevin Dooley came up in our conversation once again as soon as I started discussing sustainability topics. On my final day, Karen took me out for lunch at the best pizza place in town called Spinato's Pizzeria. Undoubtedly, it was one of the best pizzas I've ever had. After lunch, Karen drove me to Chandler, a city 22 kms from Tempe, to view the apartment complex where the previous STINT candidate has lived with her family during her sabbatical at ASU. Again, the rental was around 2500 USD per month for short term lease and it came unfurnished. Karen continued to provide me with other apartment listings from thereon. The rest of the days in Tempe during that week was spent visiting various apartment complexes around the city, where I had made appointments for viewing. I visited and viewed 4 apartments during the week, and none of them were rented furnished or for a short-term lease without additional fees added to the monthly rent.

I had the opportunity to sit down with Antonios Printezis, Clinical Assistant Professor, for a short meeting to discuss teaching responsibilities during my sabbatical. I was informed by Antonios that I will co-teach two courses on-campus and two online courses with him. I was assured that all the teaching materials and Canvas pages are already available for my use. We agreed that I should set up a meeting with Antonios as soon as I arrive in Tempe for the sabbatical at the end of July or early August, which was not decided at the time.

I left Tempe, Arizona, completing the week-long trip having seen the ASU campus, the SCM office, having met some of my future colleagues, informed of the steps toward applying for a visa, given some information regarding my teaching responsibilities, but without finding an accommodation. The itinerary of the week-long visit as prepared by ASU is shown below as Figure 1.



Vanajah Siva
 Visiting February 25-March 3rd, 2023
 Hotel: [Hotels in Tempe AZ | Hyatt Place Tempe / Phoenix / University](#), 601 E 6th St, Tempe, AZ 85281

Saturday, February 25 - 26th		
	Arrival	Leisure
Monday, February 27th		
8:00 - 9:30am	Breakfast: Chris Lee	Chris will pick-up at hotel, Chris Lee cell: 510-872-1208
9:30 - 10:00 am	Katy Koane	Meet in Business Administration Building BA 431A - 4 th floor Department of Supply Chain Management (Address: 300 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281)
10:00 - 10:30 pm	Christa Thompson – J-1 Visa Meeting	Meet in Business Administration Building BA 445 - 4 th floor Department of Supply Chain Management (Address: 300 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281)
10:30 - 11:00am	Break	
11:00 – 11:30 am	Thomas Kull – Department Chair	Meet in Business Administration Building BA 435 - 4 th floor Department of Supply Chain Management (Address: 300 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281)
11:30 – 12:00pm	Break	
12:00 – 1:30 pm	Lunch: Reynold Byers	Meet in Business Administration Building BA 445 - 4 th floor Department of Supply Chain Management (Address: 300 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281)
2:00 – 2:30 pm	Antonios Printezis	Meet in Business Administration Building BA 418 - 4 th floor Department of Supply Chain Management (Address: 300 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281)
2:30 – Open		
Tuesday, February 28th		
8:00 - 12:00pm	Open	
12:00 - 1:30pm	Hitenra Chaturvedi	Meet in Business Administration Building BA 445 - 4 th floor Department of Supply Chain Management (Address: 300 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281)
1:30 - Open		

Department of Supply Chain Management
 PO Box 614706, Tempe, AZ 85287-4706
 pc: 480.535.6104 | f: 480.535.4628 | email: scm@asu.edu | www.wpcsm.asu.edu

Figure 1: Itinerary of Planning Trip

Upon returning to Sweden, with the help of Christa, we began the long and tedious process of acquiring the necessary documents required for the J-1 visa application. First and foremost, Christa prepared a letter of invitation for a visiting faculty scholar to be signed by all parties. Followed this, Christa initiated the DS-2019 process, where I was required to submit a proof of English language proficiency. Simultaneously, I was in touch with the ISSC where I was required to submit a list of documents to support the visa application process. On April 3rd I was informed by Christa that the DS-2019 was approved, and to be couriered to me. Upon approval, I was required to submit the I-901 application and pay a fee of 220 USD. After, I submitted my J-1 visa application to the US embassy in Stockholm along with all the necessary documents and fee. Finally, the J-1 visa arrived on April 21st.

TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES

This chapter begins with the accounts from the first day of the sabbatical at ASU. An internal conference was organized for the SCM department, where the management team of the School of Business were in attendance. Most of the SCM staff were present in the room and the rest joined the session online. It was then that I learnt that the department chair is no longer Thomas Kull, but the role was taken up by Professor Adegoke Oke aka Goke. All aspects of the departmental functions were discussed, including teaching, research, and management. I was introduced to everyone as the Visiting Scholar from Sweden, who shall co-teach the SCM 432 course, titled Control Systems – Supply Chain Management, with Professor Antonios Printezis. It was a good forum to meet the SCM staff and be presented with the opportunity to get involved and express my opinions and ideas on the topics discussed. On a later date, Goke and I went out for lunch, and we spoke in length of our academic careers and backgrounds, professional and personal. Goke was extremely kind and welcoming; it has been a pleasure knowing him. The photos below were from the Department Retreat on the first day of the semester.



Antonios and I met a couple of times to discuss the schedule and content of SCM 432. Based on the discussion, it became clear that the course has been run successfully in the past years, and no additional changes were required. I was also informed that Antonios and his wife, Iryna, who’s also a faculty member at the department, were expecting their second child, who was due anytime in the coming weeks. Antonios was approved to be away on parental leave for a duration of 7 weeks as soon as the baby arrived, and I was responsible for all his courses in his absence. The first lecture began on 17th August. SCM 432 was scheduled for two different classes of students in the fall semester, each with 45 students. The classes were identified as #76815 and #87229. Table 1 below shows the scheduling of SCM 432 accordingly.

Table 1: SCM 432 Schedule

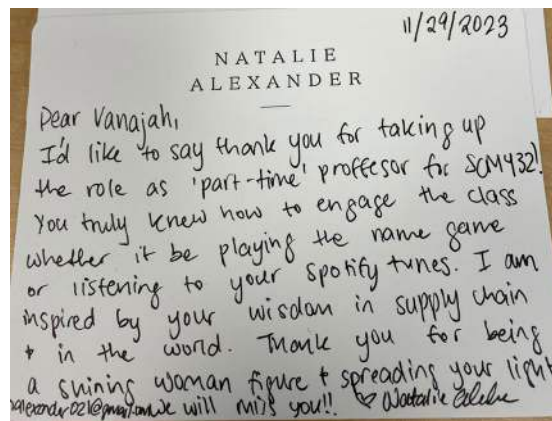
Class #	Course	Title	Enrolled	Instructors	Days	Times	Dates	Location
76815	SCM 432	Control Sys - SCM	45/45	Printezis, Siva	M & W	1.30-2.45 PM	8/17/23-12/1/23	Tempe BA 286
87229			45/45		Tu & Th	10.30-11.45 AM	8/17/23-12/1/23	Tempe BA 296

In the first two weeks of the semester, I shadowed Antonios. I was introduced to the students as the visiting scholar from Sweden and as co-teacher. In the middle of the third week, Antonios and Iryna had their baby, and I took over the classes. Upon sitting in all the classes and observing, I learnt that the classes run for a duration of 1 hour and 15 minutes without break. I made the teaching preparation by going through the available lecture slides, followed by watching videos of the lectures given online during 2020 and 2021. Then, I read the corresponding chapters in the course book titled Operations and Supply Chain Management, 14th edition, by F. R. Jacobs and R. B. Chase. Every lecture consisted of operations and supply chain concepts requiring calculations with formulas. This was a new way of teaching OM and SCM personally

for me. Therefore, I spent extra time in going through every problem and examples discussed in the lectures beforehand by applying the formulas to find solutions. This helped me in demonstrating the problems and examples in the classroom to the students during lectures.

I had the role of examination invigilator and examiner for one out of the three paper examinations within the course. Shwan Busby, the administrative staff and receptionist of SCM, helped me with the tasks of printing and making copies of exam questions and the answer sheets called Scantron. The exam questions were given to me by Antonios, consisting of 38 multiple choice questions, where students record their answers on Scantron. The completed Scantrons were then sent to the Testing and Scanning Services of ASU where the Scantrons were machine-corrected, and a comprehensive report and analysis of the exam results were provided to the teachers. There were students who required additional help for examinations. In that case, the examination was uploaded on the ASU website at the Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services, where the students could take the exam.

One of the students from SCM 432 wrote me a note that I would like to share here. It must be said that nothing is more rewarding to me as a teacher than to know that I have made a difference, even if it is to one student.



ACTIVITIES

There were several industry guest lectures scheduled on the course. I had the opportunity to coordinate and engage in all 4 guest lectures from industry representatives. Table 2 below shows the list of the guest lectures.

Table 2: List of Guest Lectures

Date	Company	Contact person	Format
6 & 7 Sept	PepsiCo	Kim Klocek & Andrea Scott	Online
13 & 14 Sept	Microsoft	John Martin, August Elton, Jarod, Briones, Monet Tam	On-campus
19 Sept	WL Gore	Tori Becher, Caitlin Dishon, Anissa Voron	Online
20 & 21 Sept	E. & J. Gallo Winery	David Tibbs, Jeffrey Miyasaka, Paul Najera	On-campus

The guest lectures contained information regarding the companies, its’ operations, and how their supply chains are managed. All the guest lecturers were ASU alumni, where most of them have studied in the same program. During the Q & A session at the end

of every guest lecture, the students were mainly focused on career opportunities at these companies for themselves, and more importantly about student to work-life transition. There was never a question specific to the operations or SCM of the companies. The photos below were from the guest lectures that were held in the classroom by Microsoft and E. & J. Gallo Winery.



I had the pleasure of sharing my office space with two other visiting scholars at SCM. The first one was Professor Prakash Singh from University of Melbourne, Australia. The second was Professor Chris Ellegaard from Aarhus University in Denmark. They were both collaborating with fellow professors at SCM on various research projects. It was great to have an office mate and be able to create new networks around the world.



During December, we had a Christmas lunch at the SCM department at one of the labs in the building. The administrative staff decorated the room and ordered the food and drinks for all members of the department. The department chair, Goke, gave a speech and went around the room to learn everyone's holiday plans. The photos below were from the SCM Christmas lunch, the first one was with Shawn Busby, the most helpful and friendly receptionist at SCM, and the second is with Goke, the department chair.



The final event that I attended was the W. P. Carey Employee Holiday Party, held on December 14th at Social Hall. There were door gifts, staff performances, lucky draws, and food and drinks. It was a terrific event held outdoors with open fireplaces and one free alcoholic drinks served with the food. It was a beautiful Arizona winter evening with temperatures around 15 degree Celcius.



LESSONS

The length of each lecture was 1 hour and 15 minutes, which is different from the 45-minute lecture slots that I am familiar with in Sweden. I found it difficult to maintain the attention and focus of students in the classroom for the duration of 1 hour and 15 minutes. This gave me the opportunity to move away from a monotonous lecturing style and to include breaks in the lecture for discussion and exercises in the classroom. My teaching experience include subjects such as Supply Chain Management and Quality Management in our programs in Sweden, but the contents were not the same. All the topics covered in SCM 432 included quantitative methods, such as formulas and calculations. The same applies to the examinations, where there were no essay questions, only multiple-choice questions requiring formulas and calculations. Therefore, the students were each allowed to bring a 'cheat-sheet' to the exam containing formulas required to answer the questions. The examinations were stated as closed-book exams. I also had the opportunity to invigilate the examinations in the classroom, requiring coordination and organization of the exams.

I had a couple of meetings with faculty staff concerning research areas of sustainability and supply chain management. This activity was not part of the teaching responsibilities. I took the opportunity to discuss the research done in sustainability with a professor at the School of Sustainability, Kevin Dooley, where we discussed implementation of sustainability initiatives in companies such as Walmart. Further discussing SCM and sustainability, I sat down with Professor Craig Carter who runs the research center called Supply Chain Management Behavioral Lab. The center is responsible for studies

of behavioral phenomena that have real-world, supply chain applications. The mission of the lab is to advance research with a direct impact for supply chain managers and their organizations.

Regarding education, I came across new systems such as Yellowdig and Honorlock, where entire courses are run solely online. Said course, SCM/SOS 385 titled Business and Sustainability, were also under the purview of Antonios. The courses are called iCourses, managed through the Yellowdig platform equipped with individual log-in access, interactive videos lectures with quizzes, discussion forum, assignment and examinations, and communication channels. These courses were run with the help of Online Academic Services, where the Instructional Designer called Ashleigh Pankratz was responsible for the administration and maintenance of the platform.

ASU students are given the opportunity to obtain honors credit by requesting to pursue extra credit through extra assignments within the courses. Honors enrichment contracts are available in many departmental courses, allowing honors students to contract with the instructors of designated non-honors courses to earn honors credit by pursuing enrichment activities, which include supplemental sessions with the instructor. Honors enrichment contracts are filed during the first weeks of the session and are to be completed during the semester in which the course is offered. In the SCM 432, I received several applications for honors credit from students. These students are required to initiate on their MYASU page, where the application forms shall be approved by the instructors. In the SCM department, there were two designated Honors Faculty advisors who handled these applications.

I learnt that it is impossible to live in the USA without a car, unless living in big cities such as New York, Boston, or Chicago. During the first month in Tempe, I rented a car for a total cost of 2270 USD, which converted to 23 092 SEK. I quickly realized that the scholarship does not afford me car rental every month for the rest of my stay. I was fortunate in the sense that my landlord had included a bicycle for my use in the apartment I was renting. Despite the excessive heat of the Arizona summer, I started cycling to work everyday from 1st September till the end of my sabbatical. While I had the car, the costs of parking and gas were also a costly addition to the monthly budget. Car parking at the surrounding areas of ASU campus costs USD 4 per hour, with a maximum charge of 18 USD for all day-parking. In order to save money, I worked from the office only 3 hours per day, which included my teaching hours, and came home to do the rest of my work. Cycling to work allowed me to work from the office all day.

COMPARISON

Based on my experience of teaching at WP Carey, I would like to highlight these differences or similarities in between Sweden and USA.

In terms to pedagogy, I find that here in Sweden, more importance is stressed upon it. This may be related to the course and its contents, where theoretical concepts and reflections were not a major part of the course I taught at ASU. The lectures were all focused on formulas and calculations, whereas in the SCM courses at JTH, Jönköping, we focused more on principles, practices, and applications of qualitative tools. Although I was teaching the same subject, SCM, the curriculum differed to a certain

extent. This could be because I went from the School of Engineering in Sweden to the School of Business in USA. The topic of SCM is regarded as a large tent which covers both fields, engineering, and business. There are significant overlaps between the two within the area of SCM, despite the differences in the way the contents are delivered and received by students.

With regards to the teaching, I personally prefer to the shorter and rather effective 45-minute slots per lectures as it is practiced in Sweden. It is less tiresome for both teachers and students, in addition to being a somewhat acceptable length of time to hold the attention of the students. Gen-Zs are famously known for their short attention spans and lack of interest in long texts as they are more attuned to abbreviations and emojis. Therefore, longer academic lectures are not favorable in current times.

The use of technology and/or IT is both superior and inferior in comparison, depending on the subject. For example, I had never invigilated/administered an examination for students in Sweden, where all examinations are handled or conducted separate from teachers. But, at ASU, I experienced administering paper examinations in the classrooms, despite the possibility of Canvas exams. An online based examination is far more complicated to be administered at ASU due to the absence of a group or entity assigned to student examinations. There are also no facilities available for students such as exam halls. Regular classrooms are used for examination slots. Students are also examined through activities such as Homework Assignments and Quizzes. The questions consist of problems to be solved with mathematical formulas, and therefore, all submissions contain the same answers. It is unlike the seminar-based assignments completed by my students here, where each response is unique to the student or student group.

Based on the subject matter and the contents of the courses that I taught at ASU, there was no significant connection between research and education. For example, the lecture on break-even analysis contained various business scenarios where students are required to calculate the break-even points based on prices per unit and variable costs. Process analysis and flowcharting were taught with regards to the calculations of throughput time, inventory units, cycle time, and productivity measurements. These contents are not connected to research in the field of SCM in any way. Whereas, in Sweden, I use recent and relevant journal articles on the topics within the course in the seminars, for example. The student groups are required to discuss and reflect upon the research findings and the contents of the lectures in the form of assignments to be graded. I believe that the educational program at ASU conforms to the labor market to a very large extent. Students are largely more concerned about their future and the careers they may qualify for in relation to the courses that they sign up for. Therefore, the courses are designed to cater to the labor market needs, where the industry guest lectures played a large role. Half of the presentations included employment opportunities and internship availability. All the presenters were ASU alumni, and the industry lectures were treated as unofficial recruitment events.

In terms of competence development and career opportunities for teachers, there were various channels available at ASU as there are at JU. As the education system differs between the two countries with regards to education being cost-free in Sweden and not in USA in general, I was informed that I will be charged course fees if I were to enroll

in any courses at ASU. Due to the size of ASU being much larger than JU in terms of square foot and number of students and faculty staff, there were far too many events and activities available to those employed by ASU. For example, art exhibitions, innovation summits, STEM initiatives, sports events and facilities, restaurants, fast food chains, cafes, Starbucks on campus, wheel-free or walk-only zones, plays and shows.

RECOMMENDATION

Here are my recommendations to future Stintonians assigned to ASU, Tempe campus:

- Make plans and budget for expenses as per the conversion rate of the Swedish kronor.
- Do not make assumptions that walking is a form of transportation as we do in Sweden.
- Cycling on the roads of Tempe isn't entirely safe because the bicycle lane is an extension of the busy streets.
- Be extremely ready and open for small talk anywhere you go.
- There is no free coffee or tea in the offices. Become accustomed to 5 USD coffees from Starbucks.
- Communicate with the contact persons at ASU continuously after the planning trip in the spring because the teaching schedule for the fall semester is not available in March or April.
- Explore the state of Arizona, it is one of the most beautiful states in the US, especially for road trips.

I have one single recommendation to Stint, which is to increase the amount of the scholarship according to the currency conversion and inflation based on salaries of faculty staff in USA, and not Sweden.

ACTION PLAN

Based on the network I have built with the faculty members of SCM department at the School of Business and the School of Sustainability, I would like to initiate a research collaboration in the topics of sustainability and circular economy. I would like to adopt a part of the SCM 432 course contents to be integrated into the courses that I teach at JTH, specifically the economy and financial aspects of SCM and Operations Management.

I have requested permissions from the industry representatives that I have met during the industry guest lecture sessions to invite them for online lectures to students in our bachelor and master programs here at JTH. Our students will benefit from direct contact with those running the operations and supply chains at companies such as Microsoft, PepsiCo, WL Gore, and E. & J. Gallo Winery.

In our educational programs at JTH, we emphasize exchange semesters with international campuses whom we collaborate with through student exchanges. There is an opportunity here to cultivate an educational collaboration with ASU. This action requires further discussion and comprehensive planning on our side. ASU is one of the best-known schools in the US, specifically the W. P. Carey School of Business, and it will be to our utmost benefit to cultivate the network into a successful educational collaboration.

ARIZONA

Finally, I'd be remiss if I did not share and include the wonders of Arizona in this report. They are in the order of the photos displayed:

- Devil's Bridge Sedona
- Grand Canyon
- Monument Valley
- Horseshoe Bend
- Forrest Gump Hill
- Antelope Canyon



Reported by: Vanajah Siva, February 1st, 2024.