

AREZOU BEHFAR

Logan, Utah, USA

abehfar@usu.edu

[Website](#) | [Google Scholar](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Human-Computer Interaction (HCI); Social Computing; Trust, Safety, and Online Risk; Privacy and Usable Security; Youth Digital Well-being; Human-Centered AI

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Computer Science

Aug 2021 - Present

Utah State University | Expected Graduation: December 2026

- Research Areas: Human-Computer Interaction, Trust & Safety, Online Risk
- Dissertation: "*Human-Centered Digital Trust & Safety (ongoing)*".
- Advisor: Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen

Master of Science in Software Engineering,

Jan 2013 - Aug 2016

Azad University (IAU)

- Research Area: Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs).
- Thesis: "*Energy-Efficient Node Deployment Strategies to Mitigate the Energy Hole Problem in Wireless Sensor Networks*".

Bachelor of Science in IT Engineering

Aug 2007 - Dec 2012

K. N. Toosi University of Technology

EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant

Aug 2021 - Present

Utah State University, Logan, UT

- Led and contributed to Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) research investigating trust, online safety, cyberbullying, privacy, and digital well-being, resulting in peer-reviewed publications in leading HCI journals and conferences.
- Led multiple research projects from conception to publication, including research design, protocol development, IRB preparation, participant recruitment, qualitative, mixed-methods, and survey-based research using semi-structured interviews, focus groups, thematic analysis, usability evaluation, iterative design, and large-scale online studies.

- Designed and evaluated human-centered technologies to improve online safety, trust, privacy, and user engagement through user-centered design, iterative prototyping, and empirical evaluation.
- Collaborated with interdisciplinary researchers across computer science, education, psychology, and cybersecurity to investigate technology-mediated societal challenges and translate research findings into practical design recommendations.
- Mentored undergraduate and graduate researchers in study design, qualitative research methods, data analysis, scientific writing, and the preparation of peer-reviewed publications.

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Jan 2022 - Present

Utah State University, Logan, UT

- Served as Instructor, Graduate Teaching Assistant, and course designer for undergraduate and Graduate Computer Science courses.
- Delivered lectures on “Human Factors in Computing” and contributed to course design and instructional materials.
- Supported courses including Computer Science I (Python Programming), Computer Science II (Python Programming), Event-Driven Programming and GUIs Course (JavaScript, CSS, HTML), Computer System Organization and Architecture Course, Operating System Course (Java) and Human Factors in Computing.
- Led the Computer Science Coaching Center during three consecutive summer semesters, mentoring students through office hours and individualized academic support.

Network Administrator

Jan 2016 - May 2021

RASA CO, SONY

- Designed and implemented secure network infrastructure enabling deployment of advanced video surveillance systems and strengthening overall security protocols.
- Performed end-to-end installation and integration of network systems in collaboration with SONY-affiliated teams.
- Conducted staff training on network fundamentals, system utilization, and maintenance to ensure long-term operational reliability.

PUBLICATIONS

CSCW and International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction (IJHCI) are premier HCI venues.

- **Arezou Behfar**, Ankit Shrestha, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "Strength in Connection: Navigating Support and Safety for Teens Facing Cyberbullying." **International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction (IJHCI)** (2025): 1-32.
- Ankit Shrestha, **Arezou Behfar**, Sovantharith Seng, Matthew Wright, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "This one weird trick gets users to stop clicking on clickbait." **International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction (IJHCI)** 41.20 (2025): 12622-12648.
- Ankit Shrestha, **Arezou Behfar**, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "'It is luring you to click on the link with false advertising'-mental models of clickbait and its impact on user's perceptions and behavior towards clickbait warnings." **International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction (IJHCI)** 41.4 (2025): 2352-2370.
- **Arezou Behfar**, Ankit Shrestha, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "A First Look into Fake Profiles on Social Media through the Lens of Victim's Experiences." Companion Publication of the 2024 Conference on **Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)**.2024.
- Montazeri Ghahjavarestani, AmirHossein, Elahe Haghighat-Manesh, Hanieh Atashpanjeh, **Arezou Behfar**, Simin Zeynali, and Zahra Ghahri Lalaklou. "An investigation into the social and behavioral interactions of kids with autism and their perspectives on the topic of sensory training." *Neurology Letters* 3.2 (2024): 5-12.
- Ankit Shrestha, Audrey Flood, Bryson Hackler, **Arezou Behfar**, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "Towards the design and evaluation of clickbait education content: Leveraging user mental models and learning science principles." **INTED2024** proceedings. IATED, 2024.
- **Arezou Behfar**, Hanieh Atashpanjeh, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "Can password meter be more effective towards user attention, engagement, and attachment?: a study of metaphor-based designs." Companion Publication of the 2023 Conference on **Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)**. 2023.
- Prakriti Dumar, Ankit Shrestha, Rizu Paudel, **Arezou Behfar**, Hanieh Atashpanjeh, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "'I have learned that things are different here': Understanding the transitional challenges with technology use after relocating to the USA." **International conference on human-computer interaction(HCII)**. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2023.

- **Arezou Behfar**, Hanieh Atashpanjeh, Cassity Haverkamp, Maryellen McClain Verdoes, and Mahdi Nasrullah Al-Ameen. "Intermediate help with using digital devices and online accounts: understanding the needs, expectations, and vulnerabilities of young adults." **International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction (HCII)**. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022.
 - **Arezou Behfar**, and Hassan Asadollahi. "Calculating optimal number of nodes for last Corona in q-switch method." **International Journal of Computer Science and Information Security** 14.12 (2016): 786.
-

TEACHING

- Fall 2023 - Fall 2026 | **Event-Driven Programming and GUIs (HTML, CSS, Java Script)**
 - Managed course administration through Canvas, including organizing course materials, assignments, and student communications.
 - Developed detailed grading rubrics and evaluated programming assignments, projects, and examinations, providing constructive feedback to support student learning.
 - Mentored students during weekly office hours, providing individualized guidance on event-driven programming, graphical user interface (GUI) development, debugging, and object-oriented programming.
 - Served as the teaching assistant for the course across **four consecutive academic years** (Fall 2023–Fall 2026), reflecting sustained instructional responsibilities and continued faculty confidence.
- Summer 2024 – Summer 2026 | **Computer Science Coaching Center Lead**
 - Led the Computer Science Coaching Center for three consecutive summer semesters, coordinating academic support services for undergraduate Computer Science students.
 - Mentored students across multiple programming courses through individualized tutoring, debugging support, and problem-solving guidance.
 - Collaborated with faculty and teaching assistants to provide an accessible and supportive learning environment that promoted student success.
- Summer 2024- Summer 2025- Summer 2026 | **Computer Science I (Python)**
 - Evaluated programming assignments and examinations, providing detailed feedback to improve students' programming and problem-solving skills.
 - Held regular office hours, mentoring students on Python programming, debugging strategies, and course concepts.

- Summer 2024- Summer 2025- Summer 2026 | **Computer Science II (Python)**
 - Evaluated programming assignments and examinations, providing detailed formative feedback on programming practices and software development concepts.
 - Held regular office hours, supporting students with Python programming, debugging, and object-oriented programming concepts.
- Summer 2023 | **Human Factors in Computing**
 - Co-developed an undergraduate Human Factors in Computing course, contributing to the design of the curriculum, lecture materials, laboratory activities, assignments, projects, grading rubrics, assessments, and course content.
 - Served as the course instructor, delivering lectures on human-centered design, usability, prototyping, iterative design, qualitative and quantitative research methods, user experience (UX) evaluation, and data analysis. Incorporated real-world technologies, including TikTok, Snapchat, and Zoom, as case studies to teach usability evaluation, interface analysis, and human-centered design principles.
 - Evaluated student assignments, projects, and examinations, providing detailed formative feedback to strengthen students' design thinking, research, and analytical skills.
 - Held regular office hours, mentoring students on HCI concepts, project development, research methodologies, and course-related topics.
- Fall 2022 - Spring 2023 | **Computer System Organization and Architecture**
 - Managed course administration through Canvas, including organizing course materials and assessments.
 - Administered the final examination and coordinated assessment logistics.
 - Developed grading rubrics and evaluated student assignments and examinations, providing timely and constructive feedback.
 - Held regular office hours to mentor students and support their understanding of computer organization and architecture.
- Spring 2022 | **Operating Systems (Java)**
 - Conducted weekly office hours to mentor students, answer course-related questions, and provide individualized academic support.
 - Delivered in-class instructional sessions for each programming assignment, explaining assignment requirements, implementation strategies, and debugging techniques.
 - Evaluated programming assignments and provided detailed feedback on correctness, code quality, and software design.

GUEST LECTURES

- Summer 2023 | **Human Factors in Computing**
 - Lectured a couple of two-and-a-half-hour classes in Summer 2023 on the topics of Quantitative Studies and the Future of HCI covering within and between subject studies, statistical analysis and tests including power analysis and significance tests, data-driven design improvement, human-device communication, and HCI methods including backcasting, crowdsourcing, A/B testing, and surveys.
 - Spring 2022 | **Operating Systems**
 - Delivered instructional lectures for each programming assignment, guiding students through assignment objectives, implementation strategies, debugging techniques, and software development best practices.
-

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Peer Review Activities

- ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2026 and 2025
 - ACM Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS 2026)
 - International Journal of Adolescence and Youth (Taylor & Francis, 2026)
-

AWARDS & HONORS

- Takano Co., Ltd. Electrical Engineering Endowment Fund
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Iowa State University (2021)
Awarded upon admission to the Ph.D. program in Computer Engineering in recognition of academic excellence and research potential.
- Ranked 6th among M.S. Software Engineering graduates
Master of Science in Software Engineering, Azad University (2016)