

Zahra Ameli Renani-CV

Columbia, MD 21044 || zahra.amelirenani@wmich.edu || [LinkedIn](#)

Profile Summary

Creative career coach with a holistic approach to individual growth journeys, bringing over **9** years of expertise in student success and career development with a strong emphasis on diversity initiatives. Recognized twice with the *Make a Difference Award* for significant contributions to the underrepresented international student community. Recognized as *Instructor of the Year* among **44** instructors during the challenging post-COVID transition to in-person teaching. Skilled in integrating creative arts into teaching, advising, and coaching to enhance student connection and expression. Developed innovative career exploration assignments and led self-discovery seminars, positively impacting over **300** diverse students. Committed to fostering educational excellence and personal growth through a strengths-based, collaborative, and humanistic approach.

Education

Western Michigan University

Ph.D. Counselor Education & Supervision

Received Outstanding Research Award in 2024 & Instructor of the Year Award in 2020

Kalamazoo, MI

Expected: August 2025

M.A. Counselor Education

Received Outstanding Master's Student Award in 2019 & Make a Difference Awards in 2016 and 2017

April 2019

University of Tehran

B.S. Social Sciences-Research

Tehran, Iran

July 2012

Advising & Counseling Experience

Career Coach

Blueprint for Maryland's Future, Baltimore City Mayor's Office for Employment Development

April 2024-Present

Baltimore, MD

- Develop lesson plans and workshops independently and collaboratively for middle and high school students in Baltimore City Public Schools, aiming to prepare students for career and college readiness under the Kirwan Blueprint Career Coach initiative (Pillar 3.4.1).
- Create innovative workshops incorporating artwork to foster student self-expression and help students identify and articulate their interests, strengths, values, personality types, and career preferences.
- Conduct one-on-one coaching sessions with students to provide personalized guidance on self-discovery and career planning.
- Served on the interview search committee to recruit a new cohort of career coaches, interviewing six candidates and contributing to the selection process.

Graduate Exploratory Advisor

Exploratory Advising Office, Western Michigan University

August 2020-April 2024

Kalamazoo, MI

- Delivered comprehensive advising to **120+** Exploratory students in individual sessions, focusing on major exploration and strategic class registration.
- Provided mentorship to students facing academic and personal challenges, offering support and guidance to help them overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.
- Developed and executed communication strategies to maintain regular contact with students, keeping them informed about resources, opportunities, and important academic deadlines.
- Actively participated in diversity and inclusion initiatives, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for students of all backgrounds.

Zahra Ameli Renani-CV

Columbia, MD 21044 || zahra.amelirenani@wmich.edu || [LinkedIn](#)

Counseling Intern

August 2020-April 2021

Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Provided **40** hours of online counseling to Western Michigan University students facing depression, anxiety, and career challenges, utilizing the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy approach to maintain high counseling standards.
- Participated in both individual and group supervision sessions with counseling faculty, gaining valuable insights into personal strengths and areas for growth in the counseling practice.
- Diligently documented client information each session, adhering to strict confidentiality and ethical standards, ensuring the highest level of professional conduct.
- Developed and implemented tailored treatment plans for clients, focusing on their well-being and progress throughout the counseling process.

Internship Adviser

August 2019-May 2020

Division of Continuing Education, University of California Irvine

Irvine, CA

- Advised **100+** international students in the *Internship* program, providing tailored guidance on career-related topics and strategies for professional success in the U.S. context.
- Co-facilitated workshops for **100+** international students, focusing on key aspects of professional development and multicultural workplace ethics in the U.S., enhancing their employability and cultural adaptability.
- Actively assisted students in connecting with potential employers in Southern California, facilitating effective collaborations and internship opportunities that aligned with their career aspirations.
- Enhanced students' multicultural competencies, preparing them for diverse work environments and contributing to their overall personal and professional growth.

Graduate Career Adviser

July 2018-April 2019

Career and Student Employment Services (CSES), Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Advised **250+** international and domestic students, both individually and in large groups (up to **70**), on career-related topics using career assessments like FOCUS 2.0, Clifton Strengths, and MBTI.
- Assisted in planning and organizing job fairs and professional development events, enhancing the career readiness of students.
- Collaborated with a doctoral assistant to recruit, train, and supervise **15** peer coaches and advisors.
- Actively promoted CSES at orientations and resource fairs, significantly increasing international student participation in professional development activities by **30%** by April 2019.

Teaching & Supervision Experience

Instructor

August 2020-December 2023

Office of Student Transitions, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Facilitated the First-Year Experience seminar for up to **65** *Exploratory* (undeclared) freshmen, employing a mix of engaging activities and creative arts.
- Achieved the "*Instructor of The Year*" Award in 2020, standing out among **44** instructors and **22** nominees.
- Completed Clifton Strengths coaching training and provided insightful coaching to students, educating them on their top five strengths and their application in personal and professional growth.
- Conceptualized and implemented innovative assignments aimed at self-discovery and career exploration.
- Collaborated with faculty and staff across various departments to organize and lead professional development workshops for *Exploratory* students, focusing on skills essential for academic and career success.

Zahra Ameli Renani-CV

Columbia, MD 21044 || zahra.amelirenani@wmich.edu || [LinkedIn](#)

Co-Instructor and Supervisor

January 2023-August 2023

Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Co-taught 'Counseling Techniques' and 'Counseling Practicum' to **40** master-level students, blending online and in-person methods with a humanistic teaching approach.
- Supervised and ensured the development of core counseling skills and ethical adherence in students' practical sessions.
- Conducted evaluations of students' performance based on CACREP standards, collaborating with faculty to determine course qualifications.
- Guided students in career planning and resource utilization, enhancing their case conceptualization.

Leadership Experience

Vice-President

June 2017-June 2018

Graduate Student Association, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Actively represented graduate students in shared governance meetings, collaborating with the Faculty Senate President and undergraduate representatives to plan campus-wide activities and address broad university issues.
- Organized public recognition sessions for underrepresented graduate students, celebrating their academic and non-academic achievements.
- Partnered with University Career Services to facilitate a talent discovery workshop for **50** graduate students, offering professional training on leveraging their top five talents identified by the Clifton Strengths assessment.
- Provided comprehensive reports to the university president and Board of Trustees on both academic and non-academic student concerns, aimed at improving the overall educational experience at WMU.

Chief Financial Officer

June 2017-June 2018

Graduate Student Association, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Managed a **\$250,000** budget, ensuring prudent fiscal oversight and allocation to meet the academic and non-academic needs of both international and domestic graduate students.
- Recruited and trained eight graduate students for the Graduate Financial Allocation Committee, enhancing financial decision-making processes.
- Supervised the review and approval of event funding and grant applications from graduate students and student organizations, successfully distributing **\$40,000** in funds in the 2017-2018 period.
- Directed the planning and execution of the 6th WMU Graduate Student Make a Difference Award event with **~350** attendees, managing a budget of **\$30,000** for this significant university occasion.

Director and Editor of *The Hilltop Review Journal*

September 2016-April 2017

Graduate Student Association, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Recruited **10** editorial board members, including a copyeditor and a designer; delegated and oversaw their tasks of reviewing, editing, proofreading, designing, and ranking the journal's submissions.
- Oversaw the [digital publication](#) of six research papers in the fall 2016 issue and nine in the spring 2017 issue through the [ScholarWorks](#) platform.
- Redesigned the layout of the journal and published graduate students' research papers and artworks in the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 issues. This included a new logo and revamped the visual and organizational structure of content.

International Student Orientation and Registration Program Coordinator

May 2015-June 2017

Haenicke Institute for Global Education, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

Zahra Ameli Renani-CV

Columbia, MD 21044 || zahra.amelirenani@wmich.edu || [LinkedIn](#)

- Recruited, trained, and supervised **20** orientation leaders in collaboration with four other coordinators to ensure the leaders' readiness to assist **700** new international students during the fall, spring, and summer orientation and registration programs.
- Established formal and informal channels of communications to initiate partnerships with new international students, easing their process of settling into their new cultural and academic environment.

International Student Activities Outreach Intern

May 2015-June 2017

Haenicke Institute for Global Education, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Founded and led the Ladies' Sport Club in Kalamazoo, providing a welcoming space for women of diverse backgrounds to engage in various sports, fostering community ties and inclusivity.
- Collaboratively designed and implemented new recreational programs for Kalamazoo's refugee community with Bethany Christian Services, aiming to support their well-being and social integration.
- Orchestrated and promoted cross-cultural volunteer initiatives for international students, including food services for people experiencing homelessness, storytelling sessions in local schools, and hosting events for seniors, enriching their understanding and experience of American cultural life.

University Service & Community Involvement

Group Facilitator and Translator

September 2020-Present April 2022

Taaly Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Tehran, Iran

An NGO based in Iran. Provides personal and professional development opportunities to Iranians around the globe.

- Coordinated virtual events for **100+** Iranians in numerous countries to promote their holistic wellbeing.
- Facilitated virtual psychoeducational classes for **20+** young Iranian girls from underprivileged families.
- Translated motivational and psychoeducational contents from Farsi to English for Taaly's website.

Executive Board Member

July 2015-July 2017 & August 2020-April 2021

Persian Student Organization, Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Arranged social and cultural events for **40+** Iranian students and their families to encourage their involvement in extracurricular activities.
- Maintained active communication with new Iranian students to integrate them into the university academic and cultural life.

VP for Development and Alumni Relations Search Advisory Committee Member

August-December 2018

Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI

- Personally appointed by the President of the University to serve WMU on behalf of the graduate student population and represent their voices, interests, and concerns during the selection process for the new vice-president.
- Attended discussion meetings and got trained on a non-biased and nondiscriminatory review process while collaborating with executive-level leaders.
- Collaborated with **14** other members of the Search Committee to review the submitted applications and interview with selected candidates to provide the University President with the list of top three candidates.

Counseling Intern

July-September 2018

Kalamazoo Gospel Mission

Kalamazoo, MI

- Co-led a support group of **6 to 15** females experiencing homelessness in the Kalamazoo community and educated them about basic coping skills.

Zahra Ameli Renani-CV

Columbia, MD 21044 || zahra.amelirenani@wmich.edu || [LinkedIn](#)

Client Care Volunteer

Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan

July-September 2017

Kalamazoo, MI

- Provided homecare and companionship for clients dealing with terminal illness as well as respite for their caregivers to be able to leave the house for personal or professional commitments.

Master of Ceremony

International Student Activities Office, Western Michigan University

April 2016 & April 2017

Kalamazoo, MI

- Hosted **200+** guests in the performance section of the 26th and 27th WMU International Festival.
- Managed music, dance, and fashion performances of **17** countries by sharing their cultural backgrounds with the audience and ensuring a smooth transition between each performance within a time constraint.

English Circle Conversation Leader

Center for English Language and Culture for International Students, Western Michigan University

June-July 2015

Kalamazoo, MI

- Led weekly English conversation circle through designing and implementing engaging educational activities for international female students seeking English language proficiency.

Conferences and Presentations

- Ameli Renani, Z. *Bridging Perception and Reality: The Value of U.S. Higher Education to International Students*. Interview by Bowman, K. *International Educator*, November/December 2018: pp. 19&20.
- Ameli Renani, Z. (2018, June) *In appreciation of WMU administration: WMU International students' sense of "Somebodiness"*. Board of Trustees Meeting. Western Michigan University. Kalamazoo, MI.
- Ameli Renani, Z. (2017, December) *Help your fellow team members to develop a sense of "Somebodiness"*. The 31st National Conference of the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students. Syracuse, NY.
- Ameli Renani, Z. (2016, September) *International Graduate Students Panel Discussion*. International Student Orientation and Registration Program, Western Michigan University. Kalamazoo, MI.
- Ameli Renani, Z. (2016 and 2017, August) *Graduate Students Panel Discussion*. Orientation Program for New Faculty Members, Western Michigan University. Kalamazoo, MI.

Professional Development

- Women of Color Collaborative Luncheon, ACE Women's Network Michigan, Big Rapids, MI, November 2018.
- National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) Leadership Summit, Fayetteville, AR, August 2016.
- Leadership and Involvement Conference, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, August 2016.
- NAGPS Advocacy Summit and Legislative Action Days, Washington D.C., March 2016

Awards and Certifications

- **Outstanding Research Award**, Mu Beta Chapter, Chi Sigma Iota, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, April 2024.
- **Instructor of the Year Award**, Office of Student Transitions, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, December 2020.
- **Long Service Award**, Graduate Student Association, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, April 2018.
- **Graduate Student Make a Difference Award**, Graduate Student Association, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, April 2016 & 2017.

Zahra Ameli Renani-CV

Columbia, MD 21044 || zahra.amelirenani@wmich.edu || [LinkedIn](#)

- **Gottman Method Couples Therapy Level I**, Mu Beta Chapter, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2016.