

JORGE A. ACUÑA

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Personal Website

RESEARCH INTEREST

Apply Operations Research and Analytics to Increase Efficiency and Equity in Health Systems: Defining, formulating, and solving models representing human-system interactions in health systems through Game Theory, Multi-Objective Optimization, Stochastic Programming, and Data Science methods. I am the director and founder of the Health Systems Engineering Research Lab at UAI, which promotes end-to-end science, from idea conception to implementation.

EDUCATION

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| Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Santiago, Chile. Diploma in Higher Education. | <i>August 2023 - July 2024</i> |
| University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, USA. Ph.D., Industrial Engineering. Advisor: Dr. Jose L. Zayas-Castro. Department of Industrial and Management Systems Engineering. | <i>August 2016 - July 2021</i> GPA: 3.84 |
| University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, USA. M.Sc., Industrial Engineering. Advisor: Dr. Jose L. Zayas-Castro. Department of Industrial and Management Systems Engineering. | <i>August 2016 - May 2018</i> GPA: 3.73 |
| Alpen-Adria-Universität, Klagenfurt, Austria Engineering in Applied Informatics (Scholarship to study abroad). | <i>August 2013 - March 2014</i> Total Credits: 28 |
| Universidad de La Frontera, Temuco, Chile B.S. & Professional Degree, Civil Industrial Engineering with a Minor in Mechanics. | <i>March 2010 - August 2015</i> Grade: 6.4 out of 7.0 |

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

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| • Faculty of Engineering and Sciences, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez Assistant Professor in Operations Research - HSE Lab Director | Viña del Mar, Chile <i>August 2023 - Present</i> |
| • College of Engineering, IMSE, University of South Florida Professor of Courtesy | Tampa, FL <i>December 2023 - Present</i> |
| • College of Engineering, IMSE, University of South Florida Postdoctoral Scholar | Tampa, FL <i>August 2021 - August 2023</i> |
| • College of Engineering, IMSE, University of South Florida Adjunct Faculty | Tampa, FL <i>May 2022 - August 2023</i> |
| • College of Engineering, IMSE, University of South Florida Instructor | Tampa, FL <i>May 2021 - August 2021</i> |
| • College of Engineering, IMSE, University of South Florida Research Assistant | Tampa, FL <i>August 2016 - July 2021</i> |

PUBLICATIONS

- Maryam Jafaripakzad, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Keith Dombrowski, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2026). A Sequential Machine Learning Framework for ICU and Hospital Length of Stay Prediction from Admission-Time Data. *Digital Health* (**Accepted**).
- Kevin Palomino, Carmen Berdugo, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2026). Bi-objective location-allocation model of interventions in high drug consumption areas incorporating X topic modeling. *Health Care Management Science* (**Accepted**).
- Daniela Cantarino, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Monica Stevens, Mckenzi Heide, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2026). Balancing Equity and Efficiency in Kidney Allocation: An Online Adaptive Stochastic Bi-objective Approach. *Expert Systems with Applications*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2026.131148>
- Mariana Arriz-Jorquiera, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2025). Minimizing food waste and costs in hospital environments through a chance-constrained stochastic programming model. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2025.108720>
- Josefa Bravo-Parra, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Sebastián Moreno, Nicolás Villablanca (2025). Machine Learning Models for Predicting Surgical Case Times in Breast Cancer Procedures. 15th IEEE International Conference on Pattern Recognition Systems (ICPRS). <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICPRS66293.2025.11302862>
- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Daniela Cantarino, Rodrigo Martinez, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2024). A Two-Stage Stochastic Game Model for Elective Surgical Capacity Planning and Investment. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2023.101786>
- Mariana Arriz-Jorquiera, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Marian Rodriguez-Carbo, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2024). Hospital Food Management: A Multi-objective Approach to Reduce Waste and Costs. *Waste Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2023.12.010>
- Nancy Diaz-Elsayed, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Wainella Isaacs, Bernard Batson, Tramaine Polk, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2023). Building Inclusive Excellence in STEM: A 15-year Analysis and Lessons Learned of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Minority Ph.D. Program at the University of South Florida. *Frontiers in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2023.1192853>
- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Felipe A. Feijoo, Jose L. Zayas-Castro (2022). A Bilevel-Nash-in-Nash Model for Hospital Mergers: A Key to Affordable Care. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2022.101334>
- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro, Felipe A. Feijoo, Sriram Sankaranarayanan, Rodrigo Martinez, Diego A. Martinez (2022). The Waiting Game: How Cooperation between Public and Private Hospitals Can Help Reduce Waiting Lists. *Health Care Management Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10729-021-09577-x>
- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro, Hadi Charkhgard (2020). Ambulance Allocation Optimization Model for the Overcrowding Problem in US Emergency Departments: A Case Study in Florida. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2019.100747>

In Preparation

- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Daniela Cantarino, Michael Lozano Jr., Jose L. Zayas-Castro. A Multi-Stage Stochastic Progressive Hedging Approach for Ambulance Allocation to on and off Campus Emergency Departments. (Working title). Target Journal: *Omega*. (*to be submitted on August 2026*)
- Daniela Cantarino, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. A Two-Stage Stochastic Deceased-Donor Organ Allocation Model for Kidney Transplants. (Working title). Target Journal: *Omega*. (*to be submitted on August 2026*)

- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Hung Nguyen, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. Design and Optimization of Admission Policies with Dynamic Capacity to Avoid Hospital Congestion (Working title). Target Journal: European Journal of Operational Research.
- Maryam Jafaripakzad, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Ankit Shah, Joel Fernandez, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. A Two-Step Framework to Improve Monitoring Process of Heart Failure Patients Using Artificial Intelligence Algorithms. (Working title). Target Journal: Artificial Intelligence in Medicine.

Conference Presentations

- **Jorge A. Acuna**, Sofía Zúñiga. "A Bi-Objective Robust Optimization Model for Equitable Allocation of Field Hospitals in Surgical Backlog Reduction ." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, 2025.
- Josefa Bravo-Parra, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Sebastián Moreno, Nicolás Villablanca. "Machine Learning Models for Predicting Surgical Case Times in Breast Cancer Procedures." 15th IEEE International Conference on Pattern Recognition Systems (ICPRS), Viña del Mar, Chile, 2025.
- **Jorge A. Acuna**. "Optimizing Ambulance Allocation to On-Campus and Free-Standing Emergency Departments Using a Multistage Stochastic Programming Approach." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2024.
- Daniela Cantarino, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "Optimizing Kidney Transplant Allocation in the US: A Two-Stage Stochastic Approach." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2024.
- Mariana Arriz-Jorquiera, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "A Two-Stage Stochastic Optimization Framework for Efficient Food Management in Hospitals." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2024.
- Maryam Jafaripakzad, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "Survival Analysis for Risk Stratification of Clinical Events in Heart Failure Patients Using Longitudinal EHR Data." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2024.
- **Jorge A. Acuna**. "A Multi-Stage Stochastic Programming Model for Ambulance Allocation to Emergency Departments." In IFORS conference, Santiago, Chile, 2023.
- Daniela Cantarino, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "A Two-Stage Stochastic Deceased-Donor Organ Allocation Model for Kidney Transplants." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ, 2023.
- Mariana Arriz-Jorquiera, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "A Stochastic Approach for Minimizing Food Waste and Cost in Hospitals." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ, 2023.
- Maryam Jafaripakzad, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "Admission Classification and Length of Stay Forecasting: Methodological Exploration and Feature Engineering in Healthcare Analytics." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ, 2023.
- Mariana Arriz-Jorquiera, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "Hospital Food Waste and Nutritional Intake: A Bi-objective Model to Minimize Waste and Cost." In IFORS conference, Santiago, Chile, 2023.
- **Jorge A. Acuna**. "A Multi-stage Stochastic Game Investment Model for the Waiting List Crisis in Health Systems: A Chilean Case Study." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN, 2022.
- Daniela Cantarino, **Jorge A. Acuna**, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "A Stochastic Model for the Organ Shortage Crisis in Kidney Patients: a National Framework." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN, 2022.
- **Jorge A. Acuna**. "EHR-Based Data Registries: From Data to Public Health Action." In Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Virtual, 2022.
- **Jorge A. Acuna**. "Analysis and Modeling of Strategic Interactions in Health Systems to Improve Patient Care Access." In Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile, 2021.
- **Jorge A. Acuna**. "Prediction Of Inpatient Disaggregate Length Of Stay For Heterogeneous Demand Using Machine Learning Algorithms And Survival Analysis." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Anaheim, CA, 2021.

- **Jorge A. Acuna.** "Mergers and Competition in Healthcare Markets: A Key to Affordable Care." In INFORMS Healthcare, Virtual, 2021.
- **Jorge A. Acuna.** "The Health Systems Waiting Problem – Strategic Modeling To Improve Patient Access." Universidad Autónoma del Caribe, Barranquilla, Colombia, 2021.
- **Jorge A. Acuna,** Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "A Strategic Gaming Model for Health Price Negotiations Markets: Policies to Encourage Competition." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Virtual, 2020.
- **Jorge A. Acuna,** Jose L. Zayas-Castro, Felipe A. Feijoo, Sriram Sankaranarayanan, Diego A. Martinez. "The Waiting Game - How Public And Private Hospitals Should Work Together To Reduce Waiting Lists." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2019.
- **Jorge A. Acuna,** Hung Nguyen, Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "Optimization of Admission Policies with Dynamic Capacity in Inpatient Ward Units." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2019.
- **Jorge A. Acuna,** Jose L. Zayas-Castro, Felipe A. Feijoo, Sriram Sankaranarayanan, Diego A. Martinez. "The Public Healthcare, the Private Healthcare, and the Waiting Game: Evidence from Strategic Gaming Models of Two-tier Health Systems." In INFORMS Healthcare at MIT, Cambridge, MA, 2019.
- **Jorge A. Acuna,** Jose L. Zayas-Castro. "A Strategic Modeling for the Allocation of Ambulance Request to Emergency Departments in the United States System." In INFORMS Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ, 2018.
- **Jorge A. Acuna,** Martha Ramirez Valdivia. "Study of the relationship between Quality Management and Data Envelopment Analysis." In XI Chilean conference of operational research OPTIMA, Antofagasta, Chile, 2015.

GRANTS AND FUNDING

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| • Agencia Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo ANID Principal Investigator: FONDECYT de Iniciación N°11260506 | <i>April 2026</i> \$110,000 USD |
| • Faculty of Engineering and Sciences UAI Principal Investigator: Thesis Support Program for Technology Maturation | <i>November 2024</i> \$2,500 USD |
| • Faculty of Engineering and Sciences UAI Ambassadors Program | <i>October 2024</i> \$1,000 USD. |
| • Faculty of Engineering and Sciences UAI Principal Investigator: Thesis Support Program for Technology Maturation | <i>June 2024</i> \$2,500 USD |
| • Faculty of Engineering and Sciences UAI Principal Investigator: Start Up Package | <i>August 2023</i> \$4.5M CLP - \$5,000 USD |
| • College of Engineering USF Principal Investigator: PostDoctoral Fellowship IMSE Department | <i>Fall 2021 - Summer 2023</i> \$140,000 USD |
| • Office of Graduate Studies USF Principal Investigator: "Analysis and Modeling of Strategic Interactions in Health Systems to Improve Patient Care Access" | <i>Summer 2021</i> \$8,000 USD + Tuition + Fees + Health Insurance |
| • Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Assistant: "University Center of Exemplary Mentoring (UCEM)" | <i>Summer 2020 - Summer 2023</i> \$630,000 USD |
| • Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office Research Assistant: "Office Process Improvement" | <i>Spring 2018 - Spring 2019</i> \$25,772 USD |
| • Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Assistant: "University Center of Exemplary Mentoring (UCEM)" | <i>Summer 2017 - Summer 2020</i> \$630,000 USD |

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez (UAI), Viña del Mar, Valparaíso, Chile.

Fall 2024 - Present

Director/Founder - Health Systems Engineering Laboratory.

- Lead research on optimization and machine learning for healthcare operations, developing decision-support models for surgical scheduling, emergency department management, and resource allocation.
- Supervise graduate students and research staff; secure competitive research funding; and produce peer-reviewed publications.
- Coordinate multidisciplinary collaborations with academic peers, clinicians, and institutional partners, leading joint research projects and translating analytical models into real-world healthcare applications.

University of South Florida (USF), Tampa, FL, USA.

Fall 2021 - Summer 2023

Postdoctoral Scholar - College of Engineering.

- Generate decision-making systems based on optimization techniques and neural networks to establish the first comprehensive cancer center at Tampa General Hospital.
- Mentor three doctoral students in industrial engineering, work in peer-reviewed publications, submit proposals to national agencies, and lead multidisciplinary teams in different research projects.

University Center of Exemplary Mentoring, Tampa, FL, USA.

Summer 2017 - Summer 2021

Research Assistant - USF collaboration Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

- Assist in writing grant proposals and reports on projects that support increased participation of under-represented students in STEM.
- Coordinate recruitment, retention, and professional development activities for students (graduate and undergraduate) and faculty.

Hillsborough County Tax Collector, Brandon, FL, USA.

Spring 2018 - Spring 2019

Research Assistant - USF.

- Forecast services demand per hour, day, and month using ARIMA and machine learning algorithms.
- Implement agent based simulation using ARENA to optimize scheduling and staffing.

University of South Florida (USF), Tampa, FL, USA.

Spring 2017

Research Assistant - College of Engineering.

- Design the methodology and define the steps to build the best distance education source for producing highly effective college of engineering graduates.

Universidad de La Frontera, Temuco, Araucania, Chile

Spring - Summer 2013

Undergraduate Research Assistant - Department of Mechanical Engineering.

- Optimize the combustion chamber's design of boilers to reduce pollution in the Araucania region.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

Viña del Mar, Chile

Assistant Professor - Optimizacion (First Semester 2024 - Present).
- Process and Service Design (First Semester 2024).
- Capstone Project (Second Semester 2023).

University of South Florida

Tampa, FL, USA

Adjunct Faculty - Probability & Statistics for Engineers (Summer 2022 & 2023).
- Healthcare Systems Management and Modeling (IS) (Spring 2022).
- Linear Programming and Optimization in Healthcare (Fall 2021 - Fall 2023).
Instructor - Introduction to Linear Systems (Summer 2020).
Teaching Assistant - Senior Design Project II (Spring 2017).

Universidad de La Frontera

Temuco, Chile

Online Visiting Professor - Data Analytics - Graduate level (Fall 2021).
Teaching Assistant - Department of Mechanical Engineering (Fall 2012 - Summer 2013).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of South Florida (USF), Tampa, FL, USA.

Fall 2016 - Spring 2021

Research Assistant - College of Engineering.

Universidad de La Frontera, Temuco, Chile.

August 2015 - August 2016

Project Engineer - Vice-Rector's Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Universidad de La Frontera, Temuco, Chile

March 2015 - August 2015

Project Engineer - National and International Mobility Office.

Intergas, Los Angeles, Chile

January 2015 - March 2015

Project Engineer Intern - Natural gas company.

AWARDS AND HONORS

2021 - College of Engineering, USF, PostDoctoral Fellowship.
2021 - University of South Florida, Dissertation Completion Fellowship.
2019 - Finalist, poster competition, INFORMS annual meeting 2019 (Seattle).
2015 - Universidad de La Frontera Award, the student with the best grades and performance within academia.
2014 - First Place, Class Ranking Bachelor's Program.
2013 - Scholarship Alpen Adria Universitat Klagenfurt, Austria.

STUDENT MENTORSHIP

- Maximiliano Ponce, Master in Engineering Sciences (MCI). UAI, Spring 2026 - Present
- Magdalena Sepulveda, Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS). UAI, Spring 2026 - Present
- Scarlett Lever, Ph.D. in Operations Research (DIIIIO). UAI, Spring 2025 - Present
- Josefa Bravo, Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS). UAI, Spring 2025 - Present
- Agostino Ansaldo, Master in Engineering Sciences (MCI). UAI, Spring 2025 - Present
- Tomás Garnham, Master in Engineering Sciences (MCI). UAI, Spring 2025 - Present

- Daniela Cantarino, Ph.D. Student in Industrial Engineering. USF, Fall 2021 - Present
- Mariana Arriz, Ph.D. Student in Industrial Engineering. USF, Fall 2021 - Present
- Maryam Jafaripakzad, Ph.D. Student in Industrial Engineering. USF, Spring 2021 - Present

Graduated

- Bárbara Guichaquelen Levinanco, Master in Engineering Sciences (MCI). UAI, Fall 2024 - December 2025
- Sofia Zúñiga Ayala, Master in Engineering Sciences (MCI). UAI, Spring 2024 - December 2025
- Enzo Escuti Moreno, Master in Operations Research (MIIO). UAI, Fall 2023 - January 2026
- Álvaro Palma, Master in Engineering Sciences (MCI). UAI, Spring 2024 - December 2025

JOURNAL REFEREEING

- Expert Systems with Applications.
- Health Care Management Science.
- Socio-Economic Planning Sciences.
- Kybernetes.
- Computers and Industrial Engineering.
- Operations Research for Health Care.
- IISE Transactions on Healthcare Systems Engineering.
- Transportation Research Record.

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Optimization: Linear Programming & Network Optimization (Fall 2016), Integer Programming (Fall 2017), Multi-Objective Optimization (Spring 2018), Nonlinear optimization & Game Theory (Spring 2018), Revenue Management & Pricing (Spring 2019), Markov Decision Processes (Spring 2019).

Analytics: Statistics Methods I (Fall 2016), Advanced Analytics I (Spring 2017), Design of Experiments (Fall 2017), Deep Learning (Spring 2018), Reliability Data Analysis (Fall 2018), Engineering Analytics (Fall 2018), Bayesian Data Analysis (Fall 2019).

COMPUTER AND OTHER SKILLS

Methodology: Multi-objective optimization, Game Theory, Bi-level optimization, Sequential optimization, Stochastic dynamic programming, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Mixed-integer programming, Revenue management.

Programming and Software: JULIA (Advanced, 9 years. Libraries: Gurobi, CPLEX, SCIP), R (Advanced, 9 years. Libraries: dplyr, ggplot2, caret, ROCR, glm, gbm, survival, neuralnet), SAS (Intermediate, 3 years), Python (Intermediate, 5 years. Libraries: Keras, Tensorflow, Gurobipy, Cplex docplex), LaTeX (Advanced, 9 years), ArcGIS (Basic, 1 year).

Communication: Experienced in writing analytical reports and research publications, presenting to interdisciplinary audiences, teaching graduate/undergraduate courses, fluent in English, Spanish, and Italian.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

- **Vice-President**, INFORMS USF Student Chapter: The chapter was recognized for its activities and mission on a Summa-cum Laude level at INFORMS Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California. (2020-2021).

- **Member**, Health Application Society (HAS), (2018-Present).
- **Member**, The Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS), (2018-Present).
- **Public relationship & Webmaster**, INFORMS USF Student Chapter: The chapter was recognized for its activities and mission on a Magna-cum Laude level at INFORMS Annual Meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. (2017-2018)
- **Expositor**, Engineering Expo at USF (2016-2021).
- **Instructor R programming/Volunteer**, Boot Camp INFORMS Student Chapter at USF (2016-Present).
- **Director**, Workshop “Una mirada hacia el futuro” Ruta Industrial, Universidad de La Frontera (2014).
- **Vice-President/Founding member**, Ruta Industrial, Universidad de La Frontera (2012-2013).
- **President**, Electoral Court of Industrial Engineering Students, Universidad de La Frontera (2010).