Teaching Story

Distinguished Teaching Awards in the Academic Year 2020

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INSPIRING AND NURTURING - THE KEY WORDS IN MY TEACHING WORLD

Originally, I am from Serbia, where I obtained my PhD degree in Industrial Engineering and Management at the University of Novi Sad. I come from a family of teachers, as my parents used to be teachers too. Teaching is my passion, mission, vocation and profession. I joined I-Shou University (ISU) in August 2015, Department of International Business Administration, where I teach Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, Technology and Innovation Management, Innovation, Creativity and Change, Knowledge Management, Strategic Management (capstone), Management, Human Resource Management, at the undergraduate level. In the IMBA Program, I teach International Strategic Management, International Marketing, and Knowledge Management. I have also been engaged as a visiting professor at the undergraduate and postgraduate (including PhD) programs in Serbia, Italy and Macedonia.

Having students from around the world and being a passionate learner, I enjoy the challenge of learning to teach in new ways to be responsive to students' needs and establish a flexible learning environment that supports diverse learning strategies. My students appreciate this responsive approach. Based on student surveys at I-Shou University in Taiwan, my synthetic teaching scores (Lesson plan and content, Pedagogical skills, Assessment, Classroom management, and Teaching attitude) for all courses for 2015 - 2020 have all been within the 90th percentile.

In order to improve student learning journey, I

- implement dynamic and technology-supported learning activities
- create attractive teaching materials and useful handouts
- encourage active learning from hands-on experience of guest lecturers
- update teaching skills by participation in different professional development workshops.

I focus my teaching on building top skills in the future, for example **c**ollaboration, **c**ommunication, **c**ritical thinking, and **c**reativity (**4Cs**) and at the same time I try to affect students' **m**indset, their **m**otivation and provide them **m**ethods to improve overall studying and learning abilities (**3Ms**).

My courses have been specifically designed to improve problem solving skills, and creative and critical thinking, and to supplement the traditional focus of students getting high marks on tests and assignments (which is often the primary focus of Asian students), with an openness to a trial and failure and to instill the students with a love of knowledge, exploration, and innovation. Students take an active role in

learning through class exercises, class discussions, and creative and innovative projects. Projects fit very well with the requirements from case-based reasoning, the design process involves investigation, planning, and design, providing rich learning experiences with construction failures as opportunities to revise and correct ideas. Regular presentations and discussions follow each construction cycle and focus on what has been tried, what has been learned, and how to apply what has been learned.

In the classroom, I have the following teaching principles:

1. Creation of knowledge-friendly environment (productive and supportive learning environment);

2. Encouragement of critical inquiry-based and creative thinking;

3. Integration of theory and professional practical knowledge in problem solving;

4. Provision of multicultural learning experience that culminates in socially and ethically responsible global citizens;

5. Recognition of individual and cultural diversity through the inclusive context of support and mutual respect.

My classroom is a 'student-centered' classroom that requires me to become a 'guide on the side' rather than a 'sage on the stage'. ***The main aim is to guide the students' discovery process towards the upper bounds of their zone of development.*** In my classes, I try to create a dynamic learning environment which is characterized by change, activity, and progress. It is intentionally designed to meet the needs of all students while challenging them to enhance existing skills, interests, and understandings, as well as meaningfully building new ones. Dynamic teaching implies that students are not just waiting, and not just listening the lecture. On the contrary, they must actively participate in different ways, through group/class discussions, summarizing video teaching materials, answering questions during these videos by using digital gadgets (e.g. Polleverywhere), answering short quizzes, practice exercises, group brainstorming, etc. In most of these activities, students use their digital gadgets for learning purpose as it increases their learning abilities in the digital era. Classroom dynamics keep students busy with productive activities and projects and there is no time for boredom. Sometimes, I use the approach of 'flipped classroom', which increase student engagement by having students to complete readings (for example very long business case study) at their home and work on problem-solving (case analysis) during class time.

I have been dedicated to the creation of attractive teaching materials that include handouts, trailers, online and offline quizzes, online simulations, etc. My handouts provide an outline, summary of main points, key terms and definitions, conclusions, frequently asked questions by students and answers (FAQs) and links to other lectures. In most of my courses I use a broader list of reading materials that include materials that should improve students' knowledge related to the course topics, but then I recommend books and additional reading materials that might improve student's general understanding of business, and improve their reading and studying abilities, their focus, concentration, or motivation.

Additional training in computer-assisted educational processes, creative pedagogy, active learning, and academic skills helped me to better understand and adjust to the shift in teaching. I have been improving my teaching skills participating in over 40 professional development workshops in the last 2 years that included 'Technology Integration in Teaching and Learning' (Zoom, Padlet, Google Meets, Microsoft Teams, Bloom's Digital Taxonomy, Cognitive Theory of Multimedia, ADDIE Model, Flipped Classroom, Blended Learning), 'LTR Tech: Learning, Teaching and Reflecting on Tech Integration', 'Digital Transformation & Universities', AI+X, AI + Big Data, Design Thinking, Gen Z learners & their interests, Maker Education, EMI (English-Medium Instruction. Attending relevant educational training held on-campus and off-campus, I have learned how to use different technology tools to support teaching and learning process. Together with students, in different courses, we have tried tools for synchronous online learning (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet) and asynchronous online learning (Moodle, Power point with voice recorded). After applying these tools, we shared our experience especially about the advantages and disadvantages of the tools, trying to further improve the quality of technology-based teaching and learning.

In AY 2020, I have been a conveyer of the Teacher Professional Growth Community 'Digital Transformation & Universities: Does Technology Solve everything?' moderating 8 sessions, in total. This teacher professional growth community aspires to provide and share basic information about digital transformation at universities, three-dimensional shifts including people, processes/culture, and technology, that are necessary for complete and sustainable digital transformation, explain broader technology trends (Cloud Computing, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data) and their relationship to large-scale challenges and opportunities in teaching and learning. Through different forms of knowledge sharing (speeches, discussions, examples, brainstorming), members of the group explore and identify the relevance of these technology trends to us, teachers at the university, and how we can contribute to the digital transformation of ISU or/and our colleges.

Finally, I try to enhance interactive learning from hands-on work experience by using practitioners as guest lecturers in almost all my courses. In AY 2020 we have organized guest lectures in Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, International Marketing Management, and Knowledge Management.

Outside of teaching, another passion of mine is to bring students from different cultures together. By using my strong relationships with universities in Serbia and Europe, I have been proactively engaged in building collaboration between ISU and universities in my home country, through student exchange, Erasmus+ projects and international summers schools in Serbia. Since July 2016, I have been taking an active role in developing international summer school programs (organized by Serbian universities) and promoting these programs to students at ISU, and other universities in Taiwan and Hong Kong. I am particularly proud that 2018's International Summer School attracted 30 students from four Asian universities (I-Shou University in Kaohsiung, City University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong

Polytechnic University, National Chengchi University in Taipei). I believe that in this way I contribute to the academic partnership between universities in Taiwan (in the first place ISU) and European universities.