

Special Report on Excellent Teachers of the 2021 Academic Year

Hsieh Ming-Yeh, Department of Architecture: The secret to success is maintaining wildness in your favored domain

Professor Hsieh talks with us about the architecture, “I remember that during the application process for an enrollment interview in a national university a few years back, students had hung a huge banner on the department building that just said ‘run away!’, which raised quite a stir in the field, as well as once again witnessing the tragedy of the architecture industry.” Professor Hsieh explains that in the five years of students’ time in the Department of Architecture, they are always competing with time: they are required to think of innovative designs, sketch drawings, and present complete 3D models. On top of this, they must also clearly describe their design principles to judges, and maintain great posture on the stage during drawing review day. Therefore, in addition to helping the students build a solid foundation of professional skills, professors must be attuned to their mental status, as well.

Keep a dynamically balanced distance with the students

Be a support for the students in the school

Professor Hsieh believes that it is necessary to keep a relationship that is neither too close nor too distant with students born after the year 2000 in order to allow them to moderate the distance between themselves and their teacher. The teacher will assist in helping students find a solution when they come to the instructor of their own volition. Furthermore, the teacher observes student classwork, attendance and absence, class attitude, and their circle of friends to understand how to help them; they will provide reminders without pressuring when students are unable to open up about their learning and lives.

Some students end up studying in a completely unfamiliar domain as a result of their scores on the university examination. The high-stress environment in the Department of Architecture can stimulate students’ imaginations, but a minority of students are rather lost in the mist. Professor Hsieh makes suggestions based on students’ statuses, whether that is about transferring faculties or schools, or about their future plans.

Professor Hsieh was very impressed by a particular student who graduated from Wu-Ling Senior High School. This student performed quite well as a freshman, but vanished from most of their classes sophomore year. After learning about the student’s

background and with the help of the department instructor, Professor Hsieh finally found in the house they were renting. After a deep conversation, he discovered that this student was afraid that there was a large gap between his skills and what was expected of him, and he chose to run away when this gap grew large enough, alongside a deepening of professionalism in the discipline. With long-term one-on-one counseling, the student finally regained his passion for learning and found a path suitable for his development. Professor Hsieh even accompanied him in preparing for his transfer. The student did not let Professor Hsieh down—he attained an excellent grade, achieving the third highest score in his class on the examinations after transferring to the Department of Chemical Engineering. A student’s time in a university is not long, but it is the final nurturing place for a majority of students; Professor Hsieh is glad to be able to help these students in overcoming obstacles so that they can envision their future directions!

Develop diversified industrial aspects

Find a corner that belongs to yourself

In addition to establishing a Facebook group so that students can contact him any time, Professor Hsieh organizes gatherings and chats with students to maintain good relationships with them, and invites seniors to share experiences in their career fields. Although there are myriad challenges, Professor Hsieh encourages students to observe all aspects of architectural design, and to consider adjacent fields related to their interests—there are more possibilities than becoming an architect, so why not try a detour on country roads on which fewer people walk? Eventually, if you walk on it long enough, the road will become wider.

Professor Hsieh uses “green building” as an example. The government provides different levels of subsidies to promote advancement toward green buildings with the current popular trend of environmental protection. Complicated application forms and detail-heavy regulations led to the development of green building agent companies. Professor Hsieh notes that many architects dream about taking on projects from business enterprises, because government projects feature lower budgets, more rules, and lower profits. However, young architects new to the industry might start with smaller projects for the government (such as a fire department) to accumulate experience and reputation with an extraordinary design style, which may then lead to receiving job opportunities one after the other to eventually become a new architect with fame.

Professor Hsieh concludes, “I often hear young people nowadays saying that this is

Buddha-like management! I hope everyone can find a domain in which they are interested and can develop their passion while they are in university, whether they are my students, students from the Department of Architecture, or students from other departments. Let the wild side of you become the power to guide you in moving upward!”