

Special Report on Excellent Teachers of the 2021 Academic Year

Chen Shih-Lun, Department of Electronic Engineering: Keeping students' interests at heart, "making the right choices" is more important than striving hard!

Professor Chen was honored with the "Excellent Teacher Award" and the "Award of Excellence for Teaching" in 2017 and 2018 respectively. After receiving the School's Excellent Teachers Award again this year, he reflects, "Receiving an award is a type of acknowledgment, but a teacher will still care and devote themselves to their students even without an award." In his 11 years of teaching, Professor Chen tells us that there were times when he did not know how to look for support due to his lack of experience when faced with student emergencies, relationship issues, and so on. However, he gradually found ways to handle these challenges with the accumulation of time and experience.

From an individual to the entire class, from being passive to taking active efforts at prevention

Professor Chen gradually realized that "preventive measures" are important to respond to a variety of student issues. During his first teacher's time session every term, he tells his students, "I don't know how you will become better in the four years of university life, but I know what things will make you worse: poor health, being unable to complete your studies due to car accidents, and so on." Professor Chen hopes to persuade student about the serious impact of dangerous incidents in order to prevent them from occurring. He believes that taking action to prevent incidents from happening is the obligation and meaning of a teacher, rather than passively solving problems.

Professor Chen also acts as a bridge for communication between students, parents, and their other lecturers, when necessary. He shares about a student who failed their first year: after several counseling sessions, Professor Chen realized that the student was not very interested in electronics-related subjects, but was afraid of letting their parents know. After communicating with their parents, the student successfully transferred to study in a more suitable department, and began performing much better. "A teacher is a job working with people, and professional help must become involved when you encounter situations that you are unable to handle."

Speaking of changes that he has seen in recent years, Professor Chen talks about shifting his emphasis from individual care to the entire class, and from solving emergencies to

preventing things from happening. He remembers advice from his teacher in junior high school: “Students who perform brilliantly or badly in a class are often easily noticed by the teacher, yet students who perform moderately are the most easily neglected.” Professor Chen takes this advice to heart and concentrates on all students to help solve issues that relate to the entire class. Listening to each student and establishing mutual trust is also the way to go.

Gives students positive values to live freely with discipline

The school’s counseling center helps arrange teachers’ time via speeches, events, or forums. Professor Chen bases his application on topics elected by students according to their needs every semester, such as time management, gender relations, stress management, and positive feedback to assist the students in facing stress and relationships, as well as understanding their advantageous abilities. He emphasizes that students will look for acknowledgment from peers, creating a healthy and active class atmosphere which will help students with positive thinking energy to enrich their time in university and in life.

Many individual cases leave a lasting impression on Professor Chen, among them a student with a challenging background who needed to work part-time to pay for school fees and living expenses. Professor Chen helped this student apply for the department and the school’s underprivileged student scholarships, and helped in writing recommendation letters as well as looking for part-time job opportunities in the school. The student was awarded several scholarships and continued their studies in graduate school. “A caring gesture can often change the future of students.” Professor Chen guides students to learn happily, attain knowledge, and become useful members of society; the job of a teacher is never to give up on a student.

Professor Chen says to students who waste time playing games inside the dormitory, “Never let the best times in life be empty in your memory.” University life should be colorful—you can arrange your lectures freely, participate in school clubs, experience love, and live life as you wish. “However, discipline must also exist for the free university life!” Professor Chen believes that being responsible for oneself is an extremely important topic in university. He keeps student interests in his heart to do things that are beneficial for them. He further encourages students to make friends with people from different countries and with different perspectives, to respect and tolerate each other in order to embrace a broader field of vision for the future.