

Citation for OEA 2012 - Dr Lo Mun Hou

Dr Lo Mun Hou is an excellent teacher. In spite of his modest and understated demeanour, he is actually a tough educator, who challenges students, and pushes them to find the best of themselves.

Mun Hou teaches writing and critical thinking modules, under the University Scholars' Programme. One day, much as I would have preferred to attend his class incognito, with my greying hairs, this would not quite work. Nevertheless, I did show up at Cinnamon College, unannounced, to sit in one of Mun Hou's writing classes. For two hours, my mind was perpetually being probed, prodded and provoked.

Mun Hou's classes are touted to be rigorous and demanding, but they have had a lasting and profound impact on many students. Students marvel at the mastery of the module design and his witty delivery. They find much intellectual fulfilment in reading his modules, and speak of Dr Lo's classes as a truly memorable educational experience they have had in NUS.

Mun Hou's students have benefitted immensely from his tutelage. But Mun Hou's contributions towards teaching and education, extends beyond his classes.

Mun Hou can be considered to be a pioneer in education. He led the novel and innovative Writing and Critical Thinking Programme, the signature curricular offering of the University Scholars Programme or USP, in its early years. Since then, the acclaimed model and pedagogy has been adapted

and adopted in many other parts of the university. The current University Town Writing Programme, has also taken inspiration from the sound approach founded by Mun Hou.

Mun Hou is also concurrently serving as Director of the USP Writing Centre. Every year, Mun Hou nurtures a small group of students to be able writing mentors to their peers. These mentors practise a form of rigorous Socratic questioning – they help other students to clarify their thinking, to think more logically, critically and deeply, and to strengthen their writing. Writing proficiency and critical analytic thinking are invaluable skills in every vocation. Many NUS students have benefitted from the support and advice from their fellow student writing mentors.

For the curricular programmes Mun Hou has pioneered and developed; for honing the writing competency and critical thinking skills of many NUS students; for the nurturing and intellectual experiences he has imparted to many young minds; this evening, we are delighted to confer Dr Lo Mun Hou, the 2012 Outstanding Educator Award.