

Citation for OEA 2013 – Associate Professor Johan Geertsema

NUS has long recognised the quality of Assoc Prof Johan Geertsema's teaching. He has won four Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards, and four NUS Teaching Excellence Awards. Since 2011, Johan has been on the Annual Teaching Excellence Awards honor roll.

What is distinctive about Johan is the special nature of his teaching - Johan sees himself as "*a facilitator of learning*." Far from being a distant sage on the stage, Johan places his students right at the centre of his teaching. It is not easy to make such a model work. The teacher must resist lecturing, devise ways to equip and empower students to ask questions and to seek appropriate ways of answering them. Johan helps students not just to 'un-cover' but to 'dis-cover' knowledge. The distinction is Johan's own.

Johan has been harnessing technology in novel and innovative ways to bring learning to new heights. He is a leading experimenter with the iPad. Every student in the class has one on loan. With the iPad, Johan does not deliver a didactic lecture, but expects students to read in advance. The class in turn focuses on deep discussions on what has been read.

The iPad, along with the Apple TV, allows students in the classroom to share their iPad screens and their work seamlessly. Students are then able to engage in thoughtful, constructive and dynamic peer review and learning.

Johan's facilitation of learning goes beyond the students in his classes. He has for years been an influential voice in developing and formalising the methodology of the University Scholars' Programme's highly acclaimed Writing and Critical Thinking programme, and has led the Programme since 2011.

More prominently, Johan is a tremendously energetic and active member of the NUS Teaching Academy. He chaired the committee that proposed the Academy in 2009, and became an elected Fellow in 2010. Since 2012, he has been Vice Chair of its Council and has contributed significantly to the reviews of peer review and IT, and to the *Journal of the NUS Teaching Academy*.

Like all outstanding educators, Associate Professor Johan Geertsema has both touched the lives of individual students, and has influenced the course of education at his institution. We are proud to honour his

contributions, and are pleased to present him this evening, the 2013
NUS Outstanding Educator Award.