

Dr YAN Xiaojun

閻小駿博士

Department of Politics and Public Administration 政治與公共行政學系

Teaching is never merely a professional responsibility for me. Instead, it is an exhilarating journey, a self-enriching experience and an inalienable part of my intellectual life as an explorer and producer of knowledge on the ever-changing human world.

I arrived at the University of Hong Kong as an Assistant Professor in 2009. As a freshly minted intellectual about to start a career in education, I saw – and still see – teaching as the central crux of my intellectual life and one of the privileges of a university career. For academics working in higher education, teaching ought to be the most important commitment, as it is the intellectual expression of our shared belief in and commitment to the continuing development and betterment of the intelligentsia and society at large. In my view, teaching is a transformative and conversational process, which affords an opportunity to inspire and empower and to learn, both for ourselves and our students.

University teaching in the 21st century is a challenging yet rewarding enterprise. Witnessing the epic changes in the higher education sector, successful university teaching must be student-based and student-centred and must aim to provide students with the perspective, vision, motivation and critical-thinking skills necessary to remain at the frontier of human knowledge. University teachers need to be innovative in creating a learning environment that encourages the explorative, critical and experiential pursuit of knowledge. With the aid of advanced visualisation and communication information technologies, university teaching in the 21st century is also meant to be a journey of discovery in which students are guided in productive self-learning, peer-learning and problem-based learning.

Teaching is never a solo performance. In my five years of teaching at HKU, I have received an enormous amount of help from University management, Faculty and departmental colleagues, tutors, administrative staff, the Common Core Curriculum Office, the Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, and most importantly, my students. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to each and all of them.

