

## Miss Nicole Judith TAVARES

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Students are at the very heart of my teaching. My conviction is that every learner has the potential to excel if individual differences are well respected, attended to and catered for. May I thank all the students I have had the pleasure of meeting for reassuring me of this.

As a teacher educator, I nurture my students by example. Yet teaching is neither about imposing our beliefs on them nor about molding or cloning them to be either the teacher we are or the teacher we wish they would be. I devote myself to exposing teachers(-to-be) to as broad a range of methodologies as possible and guide them in critically reflecting on the relative benefits of each – so they can make the most informed decision given specific contextual demands. I aspire to instil in them the attitude and enhance their confidence, courage, creativity and, most important of all, professionalism to react to challenges in most positive ways. To create opportunities for them to realise the infinite possibilities available to make learning engaging and meaningful, I attempt to bring innovations into my everyday classroom. From my observation, very few learners would find classes with ample routines and recurrent activity types, no matter how well-planned and well-orchestrated they are, stimulating and fun. A mission that I set for myself is to make each lesson a unique learning experience for all with, for instance, a different teaching approach, a series of novel tasks and an interesting grouping strategy. Along with this, I support (prospective) teachers in going beyond their comfort zone to experiment with new pedagogies so as to derive ones most effective in fostering learning. I encourage them to be sensitive and responsive to individual needs in order to bring out the best in every student.

Above all, I am dedicated to actively searching for ways to empower them to become the best teachers they can be and to prepare them to be future / better leaders as they discover more of their talents, consolidate their strengths and transcend their limitations. To me, teacher education is thus more than a demonstration of good practices.



## STUDENTS' WORDS OF APPRECIATION

I often find myself walking into Nicole's pedagogy class with high expectations of what awaits me, and every single time, I relish the joy of leaving with brimming new teaching ideas inspired by Nicole.

Nicole is a passionate and dedicated teacher – more so than any other. She invests a large proportion of her time in preparing for every lesson, with an aim to ensure that we get the most out of it, and also to model for us what it truly means by the word 'teacher'. From her, I have come to understand how learning to teach takes you on a possibly lifelong journey to support students in realising their dreams.

Without Nicole, my experience as a novice teacher would be entirely different. I could never be the same confident person with a strong will to inspire. In my eyes, Nicole is simply more than a teacher – she is forever there to enlighten, support, and bring out the best in her students.

**Yasti CHOI Shu Tung**

*BA&BEd(LangEd), current student*

Nicole demonstrates the highest standard of engagement with us all and our learning. She designs challenging tasks that arouse our interest and encourage us to think, and involves us in meaningful interactive activities specially organised so that we can receive feedback from one another in natural ways in class. All this has inspired us a lot. She enlightens us on what she can do in our own lessons at school to enhance our students' learning.

Through various innovative tasks, she provides us with optimal chances to voice our opinions, stimulate our critical thinking skills and learn from classmates whose bright ideas we seldom hear in other classes. Unexpected thoughts expressed by classmates are accepted with delight and with further questions challenging us to think deeper. She often encourages us to go beyond what is offered in textbooks and references.

Nicole is a dedicated teacher always responding to our needs and inquiries in and out of class in the most welcoming, warm, approachable and supportive manner. She encourages us to do better and provides the right guidance for us, often enabling us to go the extra mile. Her systematic, thorough and stimulating processes of giving us feedback have facilitated our improvement of our own work tremendously, giving us more confidence and guiding us in discovering new ways of approaching complex pedagogical issues and our own teaching.

Nicole is a true role model for us demonstrating not only passion for her students' learning but also excellent professionalism in her teaching.

**Sharon LAI Yue Sum, Connie NG Ying Fa, Freddie SUM Kwan Ho,  
Ken TANG Jian and coursemates**

*MEd, current students*

## OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD

Being knowledgeable, passionate, responsible, patient and caring are some traits a professional teacher should possess. As in-service teachers ourselves, we know this may be the ideal. Yet we are lucky to have been taught by Nicole, who embodies not only all these qualities but also unfailing enthusiasm for education, proving herself to be a perfect role model for us.

Nicole's lessons are meticulously designed and activities creative to keep us engaged. Despite having a long day at school, never did we feel bored in her class, thanks to the interactive and vibrant atmosphere she creates. She shares her own teaching experience and discusses pedagogical issues with us whenever opportunities avail. What we have learnt from her are not abstract theories but practical teaching ideas and skills, which can readily be applied in our own classrooms. The teaching materials she prepares, from presentation slides to paper strips for in-class activities, are impressive.

Being immensely supportive and encouraging, Nicole always sees something good in us and motivates us to learn. She provides valuable advice based on our needs. Endeavouring to inspire her students, she hopes we can do the same. Upon completion of the two-year course, not only have we acquired teaching methods, but, more importantly, we have been inspired by the spirit of teaching excellence Nicole herself has been demonstrating.

**Tommy KO Wai Yip and coursemates**

*PGDE 2015*

After the first task you set I think I knew  
That you will care that you will listen.  
You give us attention like no other –  
Even responding to emails in wee small hours.

I had insecurities and mood swings  
But your unwavering determination dissolved my doubts.  
You only show sunny emotions speak encouraging words  
And lead us to harness the bright potential within us.

You are an inspiring role model.  
You direct us to develop the best practices;  
Your composure never falters;  
Your sensitivity makes us trust.

I thank you for everything you've taught me.  
You have touched my mind and heart deeply.

**Joanna LAU Pui Yung**

*BA&BEEd(LangEd), current student*