

## Dr Shahla ALI

Department of Law 法律學系

As I understand the goal of education, it is to unlock the latent potentiality of individuals to contribute to the betterment of society at all levels – local, regional and global. In particular, given the intensification of search for an appropriate reconciliation of local and universal loyalties, this objective has implications not only for classroom learning, but global understanding and coordination. Such objectives are relevant in the dispute resolution and research methodology courses I teach where universal participation, respect for diversity and a consultative environment reinforce and mirror the substantive learning objectives of these courses. Such objectives echo recent scientific findings on the functioning of effective teams which identify factors such as ‘social sensitivity’ and ‘conversational turn taking’ as critical elements for effective collaboration. These principles have also informed my services working with our local and exchange students at the departmental and faculty level in the context of developing systems for peer mentorship and support.

### Universal Participation

My understanding of the interrelation between justice and capacity building in the learning context is based on the notion that “justice is dependent upon universal participation and action among all members and agencies of society...” (Bahá’í International Community [1995]. *The Prosperity of Humankind*. London, Bahá’í Publishing Trust.). This perspective motivates me to ensure that each participant in the class has an opportunity for active engagement with the materials through small group discussions, peer feedback, engaged learning through role plays, site visits and opportunities for reflection such that individuals and groups learn together, share insights and advance.

### Ongoing Action and Reflection

As a teacher and researcher involved in my own learning, ongoing action and reflection will uncover new insights that will assist me to improve on my teaching quality. I look forward to continuing to work with students and colleagues to develop opportunities for addressing the increasingly complex issues in the years to come.



## STUDENTS' WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Dr Ali demonstrated impressive and exemplary pedagogical / teaching competencies that actively engage learners with different characteristics from various academic backgrounds. In particular, I was her student in the Research Ethics class, a mandatory course offered by the Graduate School. Even though I had been hearing from other students that the content of this course was extremely boring, I had an entirely different story to tell about my learning experience. I find this course very engaging because Dr Ali managed to efficiently teach this course with elevated levels of vigour, enthusiasm and expertise. Instead of relying on traditional teaching strategies (e.g. delivering lectures or presentations), she adopted learner-centred pedagogical strategies such as case studies, interactive group discussions, online exercises, and individual reflections to promote the course learning outcomes. She also discussed a number of academic news about dealing with ethical dilemmas. She was very proficient at helping us reconcile our fundamental differences in the way we had been solving ethical issues. Furthermore, she was exceptional at offering encouraging feedback on our responses to different ethical cases. Even in cases wherein some students had been struggling to articulate their perspectives on how to deal with ethical issues, she never failed to help these students clearly express their viewpoints through scaffolding techniques. More than gaining insights on how to uphold the highest ethical standards in the conduct of academic research, I have learned how to: a) use critical thinking in solving different forms of ethical dilemma; b) reflect on efficient ways to do collaborative research practices; and c) enhance my confidence in leading as well as facilitating students with different academic backgrounds or disciplines to solve complicated ethical problems. In other words, my experiences pointed to how Dr Ali has been translating the University's overarching mission, educational aims, and course learning outcomes to meaningful educational practices. I had a very fulfilling experience in taking this course because she is a very clever, passionate, kind-hearted, hardworking, optimistic, and inspiring educator. As I am about to start with my first academic appointment as an Assistant Professor in the next few months, I am certain that I will find concrete ways to apply the research ethical and even pedagogical skills that I have acquired from Dr Ali.

**Dr Jesus Alfonso Daep DATU**  
PhD 2017

Thank you very much, and I hope you can continue to make a great positive impact to other students' lives as you have certainly made to mine.

**John KWOK**  
LLB Guided Research 2011