

Getting To Know Our Professors

A/P Chen Wenli



A/P Chen Wenli
is currently an Associate
Professor with the Learning
Sciences and Technology
(LST) Academic Group.

We understand that you were a journalist with the Xinhua News Agency in China and won several “Best Story” Awards prior to joining NIE as a professor. What prompted you to change your profession?

The transition from newsroom to classroom was not an easy decision for me. As a journalist, I enjoyed the rewarding feeling of connecting with people and touching their lives by my writing and analytical skills. Over the years, I realised that no matter what profession I am in, something never changes; my passion for reading, writing and interacting with people. There is no big difference between writing a news article and writing an academic paper. It is all about keeping the audience in mind, counting the evidences and finding the best way to explain things. Changing from a journalist to a professor is a rewarding change as I have the opportunity to pass on my knowledge, skills and some hard-won wisdom to the next generation.

Why do you enjoy teaching and mentoring higher degree students?

A Professor’s success largely depends on students’ success. At NIE, we inspire higher degree students to discover the sheer joy of learning and to achieve personal growth.

What research area(s) are you working on now? How does it impact your work at NIE?

I have been working on computer supported collaborative learning, learning analytics and mobile learning. Tapping on my research experiences, I design interactive and collaborative learning environments that encourage different voices and perspectives and thereby promotes higher order thinking.

Why is NIE a good place for you to do your work?

In NIE, everyone sets high expectations for everyone else, and this encourages everyone to always work at their best level!

What does NIE offer to higher degree students that is unique?

As said by Gloria Steinem, *“The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.”* NIE helps students make connections between seemingly disparate concepts and social phenomena, thus, creating a good balance between theory and practice.

How would you describe NIE higher degree students?

Passionate, enthusiastic and innovative.

What have you learnt from your students?

Many NIE higher degree students were able to contextualise what they have learnt at NIE to their working practices. They shared their views and perspectives on various issues related to learning and education, many of which helped broaden my knowledge and inspire my future research.