

8 March 2012

NEWSLETTER FROM DQAC

Dear Colleagues

In this issue, the Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (DQAC) invited Dr Chris Chan and Dr Frank Leung to shed some light on their good teaching and learning practices. After listening to their sharing, we believed that their experience could be shared with our colleagues and so we are sending this newsletter to you.

Frank taught “ENG236 Computer Programming” in 2011/12 Semester 1. The subject was practical in nature and it required students to spend time on learning the programming skills. Software was provided to students such that they could practise both at laboratory and at home. He had 3 tutors and 2 research students assisting him in the laboratory sessions and they were able to give guidance to students on their practical work.

Frank thought that it was important to keep the students, especially those non-EIE/IMT students, motivated since these students might not find the subject directly related to their own disciplines. In order to do so, he explained to these students the practical use of the subject matter in their professional areas, and trimmed the syllabus and the number of assessments to make the subject more manageable by all the students. Before quizzes/tests, he would provide the past papers and solutions to help students do revision. The quizzes/tests, especially the first one, were also designed to be not too difficult to avoid creating frustration to students. In addition, Frank believed that it was crucial for a subject lecturer to have close interaction with students. He did so by setting up his own online discussion forum and promptly responding to students’ questions raised at the forum. He also thought that teachers should have high “EQ” so he stayed calm and remained positive when being confronted by students.



Chris taught “EIE261 Logic Design” and “EIE311 Computer System Fundamentals” in 2011/12 Semester 1. He told us that before quizzes/tests, he would provide students with past papers and solutions to help them do revision. Apart from delivering the lectures, he would also run the tutorials himself, leaving only those tutorials which covered relatively easier topics to the tutors/research students. Moreover, since he had been teaching the two subjects consecutively for a few years, he became familiar with how the classes should be conducted and therefore the classes had been run smoothly.

From Frank’s and Chris’ experience, we found that the following might have contributed to the positive feedback from students:

- (i) quizzes/tests, especially the first one, should not be too difficult to avoid creating frustration to students;
- (ii) provide past papers and solutions where appropriate;
- (iii) keep the students motivated by letting them realize the usefulness of the things they learnt and did in the subject;
- (iv) have close interaction with students and stay connected with students by various means such as discussion forum;
- (v) stay calm and remain positive when being confronted by students; and
- (vi) be familiar with the subject matter and the way the classes should be run. This can be achieved by teaching the subject consecutively for a few years.

The DQAC will continue to identify good learning and teaching practices for sharing. If you have any teaching practices and experience that you want to share with colleagues, you are welcome to send us your views anytime.

Departmental Quality Assurance Committee
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