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Teacher of the Year

2020

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| FinalistsThis has been a most challenging year for everyone. We invited postgrads to nominate the most outstanding coursework teachers for the award of SUPRA Teacher of the Year 2020.Our student judging panel chose 13 finalists. Irene Baghoomians (Law)Every class throughout the semester that I studied Human Rights showed that Irene has significant knowledge of the subject matter as well as a very deep passion for it. She not only would be able to answer our questions without hesitation but would also probe our understanding throughout the semester. She provided us with all of the tools we needed to understand this (in my mind) most important of subjects. There was literally no point at all during the semester where I did not understand the instructions or what the objective was due to Irene being clear and concise as well as encouraging the thought paths I was on. Giuseppe Carabetta (Business)There was a time when several students started arguing about the outcome of a case and the act that would apply. So, we went to Giuseppe for help. He told us the different conditions that applied to those statutes we were arguing for and explained the differences clearly. This was an excellent experience because we learnt how to study and apply smartly. Giuseppe always remember our names. Meanwhile, he will also create different games to encourage us thinking and participate in the class. I could still remember most of us were exhausted right after mid semester exam, and Giuseppe brought small quizzes to the class and cheered us up. Also, all the email we sent to him would be replied in time with the solution of all the problems.Emily Crawford (Law)Emily made every class so interesting and drew on great examples and scenarios to really engage us in the topic. Emily made a huge effort to learn our names as well as collecting and keeping our name plates to give out in each class. I was extremely impressed with Emily's approach to engaging her students. One specific example would be the way she ensured all of us could have access to ask questions. She added that she knew some people could suffer from anxiety or be uncomfortable asking a question in front of the class, so she provided a question box that would be accessible to us at all times, and she would check after every break if anything needed to be answered. This ensured everyone in the room felt comfortable and that their input was valued.Caren Han (Engineering)When the class moved completely online on Twitch.tv the chat was enabled for questions to be asked and the TAs were there to answer the questions in written form while Caren could give spoken answers to selected questions. In the twitch lectures the opening music and happy gifs created a positive environment. When we first read a paper on generative adversarial gan, Caren did not just let us do the presentation but ask in-depth questions to encourage us to think and to ask more questions critically. She answers all of our questions in a timely manner and share with us the most edge-cutting literature to help us think and learn. Every question on edstem is answered quickly. The marking criteria is clear and each deduction was explained in the feedback.Agata Mrva-Montoya (Arts and Social Sciences)Dr. Agata Mrva-Montoya takes exceptional initiative when it comes to teaching with innovation. She not only has an in-depth knowledge of the systems, software, and the theoretical aspects of her unit, but she also leads by example. She would first demonstrate every practical aspect of the software she is teaching her class, and during COVID took the effort to record a fresh session on her own time only to make concepts clearer for us as students. She allowed a free communication between her students, is readily available on emails and communicates with her students not only at an academic level but also personal level. The pandemic had made it extremely difficult for international students to cope, but Dr. Mrva-Montoya made sure all of her students got enough support from her to sail through their studies. She honestly, is one of those teachers who make learning feel almost sacred.Mohammad Rafat (Science)Dr Rafat is always well prepared and very knowledgeable. His classes are consistently well attended by students because they are always interesting, and he is always professional. He encourages all students to participate in class discussions and creates a positive learning atmosphere. Dr Rafat uses very clear communication and answers our questions in class and also online.Rosmawati (Arts and Social Sciences)She taught me a lot about bilingual education in EDPJ5025. She is very professional and familiar with a lot of knowledge in this field. Dr. Rosmawati encourages students to participate in group discussion and she is always willing to hear opinions and ideas from diverse cultural perspectives. She smiles and says: Try and answer the question, I will not blame you if you are wrong. Before Assignment 1 was submitted, we made a presentation about Assignment 1. After the presentation, Dr. Rosmawati gave me very useful feedback and suggestions. In addition, she is very enthusiastic and patient, always emailing, making her students feel very kind, and her classroom atmosphere is very active. The assignment feedback she gave was very meticulous and professional, which allowed me to realize many of the strengths and weaknesses of my own writing. It also me improve my writing skills. |
| Jan Slapeta (Science)Jan continues to change/adjust the materials and forums used for lectures and practical classes to uphold engagement of students. Zoom sessions are a really great place for discussion and involves coming together with many parasitologists to ensure there is many ways in which theory/practical knowledge can be explained. There are many online modules of 'cases' that Jan has designed, which allow for the students to learn practical resources by going through a virtual case, this really improves the learning and interaction. Further, at the end of each module or after trying new forums, Jan will create surveys to receive feedback from the students, and then tailors his ongoing teaching to this feedback. An example of this is students believed they learnt better doing quizzes after practicals, rather than submitting the practical handbooks, so Jan has now ensured that quizzes are the only way in which each practical is submitted and so creates a new quick for each practical, which is then kept available for revision later in the semester.Barney Tan (Business School)He has structured the class as reading seminar, which will push us to read, summarize and criticize different previous papers before the lessons. We were asked to debate on different topics in qualitative research and to take an argument position either in favour or against the research article discussed. This approach provided new insights and learning from each other. With his detailed and patient teaching, I am now more capable of doing qualitative research. Barney is very reachable and gentle. When he is in school, his door is always open so that we can raise questions to him after class. He gives a very short-yet-clear answer so that our queries can be addressed quickly. When he is evaluating our submissions, he will precisely tell you the gaps that he is not satisfied and why you do not deserve that grade so that you can improve. At the beginning of the course, he has already shown us all detailed marking sheets and communicated to us regarding his expectations.Eduardo Urquillas (Science)When we asked for a walk through on a topic he ended up giving us a 45 minute lecture. This is just one example of his deep knowledge. He is extremely generous with his time. He once told us you know we are very friendly, so feel free to ask any questions, there are no stupid questions. He would go through what went well and not well after a procedure |

Khimji Vaghjiani (Engineering)Dr Khimji always designs classes that provide useful and practical experience with deep knowledge. They create a positive classroom atmosphere and encourage us to all participate with questions. Dr. Khimji teaches us how to understand the knowledge like no other teacher is able to do. Every minute of his course is filled with amazing and useful knowledge for me.Bianca Waud (Science)Dr Waud has gone to significant effort to develop online learning opportunities to teach the science of histology in an engaging and very interesting manner. Previously, the histology practical classes have been taught in the classroom, but due to COVID, online learning became the new 'norm' and Dr Waud rose to the occasion to create comprehensive and interactive histology sessions that were very effective at keeping students interested despite the lack of in-person teaching. While histology can be a dry and theoretical topic to study, Dr Waud's clear passion for and deep understanding of the content comes out in her teaching with humour, clever metaphors, and an all-round positive classroom atmosphere. Her famous use of slicing fruits to demonstrate methods of specimen preparation is very memorable and a fantastic way to reinforce learning. I have found Dr Waud's teaching to have been so helpful and turned a fear of the subject into a genuine interest!Sanaa Zaki (Science)Sanaa has always been a champion for student learning. She always goes above and beyond to ensure that myself and my fellow classmates not only understand the information that she is teaching, but she also works hard to help us understand the importance of what is being taught. Sanaa’s expert mentorship is particularly noteworthy in her work with students in the “Veterinary Professional” unit of study. Sanaa’s teaching style creates an atmosphere of collaboration and discussion rather than strictly didactic learning. As I recall, even those students that are usually silent participators in class often take part in class discussion when Sanaa is teaching.  |
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SUPRA congratulates all our winners and finalists in the Teacher of the Year 2020. Thank you!

## Special thanks to:

Shuyun Zhu

Ziyao Ding

Shiyu Ma

Xuning Feng

Francine Seeto