



# FUELing

Teachers, Students, and the FU Community.

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# How We Learn

To learn is to create magic within yourself. It's a fireworks show silent to our ears and invisible to the world around us, and yet inside the mind, there are colorful explosions of light that occur the more enlightened we become. Learning can be easy but it can also be difficult; it can strike us at times we don't expect; but it proves to be one of the most useful endeavors of our lives over and over again. Without learning, there is no growth. So how exactly do we learn? It's a question neuroscientists are still working on but we have come a long way these past few decades with both observational and quantifiable data. MRI scans, surveys, social experiments – they're all part of the equation that helps us to see the big picture. It has been agreed upon by psychologists that there are four types of learners as well as three types of information absorption by behaviorists.

There are four types of learning that make up the theory behind the VARK Model: visual, aural, reading/writing, and kinesthetic. Knowing how you learn best can help you to become a more efficient learner but it's important to remember learning through different methods can help too.

Visual learners are people that rely heavily on graphics and symbols full of meaning to discern information. They get the most involved with charts, diagrams, and other modes of conveying data pictorially; however, this does not mean visual learners absorb content through videos and photos best. Ultimately, visual learners tend to be holistic in nature as they prefer to see the big idea when learning. Summaries are a great way for visual learners to learn rather than obtaining information bit by bit.

Auditory learners, on the other hand, understand new material quickly by listening, whether it's to a lecturer or a group discussion. In fact, auditory learners are often so engrossed in processing the information they hear that taking notes would jar their method. If you're an auditory learner, an excellent technique to use for learning is to simply read a text aloud.

Students who are reading/writing learners tend to excel in school because the current education system around the world indulges in this style (although many institutions, such as FU, are incorporating student-centered learning approaches more and more).

These types of learners prefer the written word to anything else; they love handouts in class, printed PowerPoint presentations with bullet points to read, and assignments that require connecting information with lots and lots of words. The more rich a source is in information, the more confident a reading/writing learner will feel while learning. You can spot one of these learners when they have a dozen tabs open during their research time. Learning through this method is most successfully achieved by taking a lot of notes, unlike auditory learners.



The last group consists of kinesthetic learners, which simply means they prefer to involve their senses equally. They tend to struggle the most in academic settings because most curriculums do not cater to kinesthetic learners unless it's quite a hands-on program. Kinesthetic learners thrive in lab courses and skills-based activities in which they can learn as they move. It is highly recommended to create flashcards and other interactive material if you're a kinesthetic learner so you can be more involved with dense, text-heavy subject matter.

At the end of the day, you are capable of learning through any of these mediums, and 50-70% of people are multimodal learners, meaning they are at least two of these types of learners. It has been posited that human behavior is a byproduct of learning – we do something because we either learned it somewhere or we're in the middle of learning it now. Learning something new does not necessarily mean it will change our behavior though, such as a smoker learning how smoking negatively impacts their body. It takes a lot of effort to change an engrained behavior, but a drastic event can also induce great change in one foul swoop. Behaviorists in biology state there are three types of learning for human beings: classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational conditioning.



Classical conditioning is most commonly associated with the example of Pavlov and his dog (i.e. if you ring a bell enough times when feeding a dog, it will begin to salivate to the sound of the bell over time without the food stimulus). In this case, people develop a natural response to a neural stimulus they have formed an association with. We all know the sound of a bell on the beach means ice cream is nearby, and maybe that gets your mouthwatering too.

Unlike classical conditioning, operant conditioning is a behavior that you can increase or decreased based on the punishment/reward system. Parents will often use operant conditioning to instill certain behaviors in their children, and instructors may use attendance in this fashion to give more of an incentive to go to class (or else!). While operant conditioning can be a very effective way to teach something, a learner may struggle with the material if there isn't an associated punishment or reward; it's important to emphasize the point of learning something in the first place rather than cause the punishment or reward to become the purpose behind learning. If you want to take advantage of operant conditioning on yourself, try imagining the reward behind learning something new every time. How will it benefit you in the long run? Why might you need this in your life? What can it do for you? Hopefully this incentive will be large enough to change your behavior and attitude for the better.

Observational conditioning is how we learn first and we carry it throughout our lives: it's learning through observations and imitation of others. Maybe you saw something in a Tik Tok video you want to try or a cool street performer pulled a stunt you want to learn. We observe and imitate incessantly; it's in our nature. The Social Learning Theory claims four things are required for truly learning through observations and imitation: focused attention in the moment, retention in your memory, reproduction of the action, and motivation to keep at it. To reap the benefits of observational conditioning, observe the best of the best. Watch and study the pioneers and master presenters of whatever it is you want to learn. Scrutinize their every move and then work at it yourself.

So what actually happens in your brain when you learn something? What we know now is that there are two types of matter in the brain responsible for acquiring new information, whether it's a memory or a skill. Gray matter is where your nerve cells process material, send signals, and respond to sensory stimuli, whereas white matter is made up of fatty tissue and nerve fibers. There are billions of neurons in your 2.5 pound brain that undergo trillions of connections to produce the thoughts you think and actions you do. When mastering a physical skill, from learning how to take notes to throwing a basketball, your gray matter sends signals down your spinal

cord through a chain of nerve fibers, which your muscles then follow. Now neurons have long tails called axons and these axons are wrapped in a crucial matter known as myelin. Myelin is where the magic takes place. It's a sheath around the axons that thickens the more you practice something. The thicker it is, the more neural energy is preserved in your axons; this translates to better movement, improved memory recall, or higher imaginative levels. Musicians who underwent MRI scans showed greatly developed myelin covers in the parts of their brain responsible for aural input. This is why practice makes perfect. Muscle memory doesn't exist – it's getting your



Photo by J Kelly Brito on Unsplash.com

myelin “muscles” in your brain Arnold Schwarzenegger ripped that counts. The best part is that even if you simply imagine performing the action, you will have nearly the same results as practicing in real life; imagination is that powerful. Mastery of anything does not mean quantity of practice though, it's all in the quality. Beginning slowly with precise technique will guarantee the results you want as you pick up speed. The best learners master intense concentration and consistency as well as locking on to areas of weakness for improvement.

Unfortunately, studies have shown that most students can only hold their focus for about 6 minutes these days due to distractions, such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc. Former Google designer, Tristan Harris, stated, “If I'm Facebook,

or I'm Netflix, or I'm Snapchat, I have literally a thousand engineers whose job it is to get more attention from you. I'm very good at this, and I don't want you to ever stop. And you know, the CEO of Netflix recently said, ‘Our biggest competitors are Facebook, Youtube, and sleep.’ There's a million places to spend your attention but there's a war going on to get it.” Giving your myelin the space it deserves to work its magic for simply 30-50 minutes a day on what you're learning will grant you a beautifully charmed skillset.

Take the time to learn. There's nothing like an empowering education to set you up for a brighter future full of success, one that has strong foundations you can always rely on no matter the circumstances. Keep at it!

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# THE ART OF TEACHING

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To teach is to impart knowledge unto another, whether it is information, a skill, or a lesson learned from an experience. Confucius once said, "By three methods we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest." Since we are surrounded by teachers in childhood, we quickly grow accustomed to the idea that we are students. Children learn from grade school teachers, from their parents, from siblings and cousins, from merely observing what is around them. And a shift happens: we become teachers. We steadily learn how to teach ourselves things as well as unto others; it can be a dance to a friend or even simply a new slang word. The role of student versus teacher becomes quite fluid in our lives. Many of our instructors in the academic world become students once more when they learn something new in discussion, and it's a beautiful process. The sphere of knowledge grows and grows as we do, intertwining like a double helix as we interact with others. Perhaps this is why our DNA took the shape that it did.



The nature of teaching in academic institutions has become more student-centered and multimodal with universities across the globe challenging traditional pedagogy, FU included. While we all love good results, it has become rather an obsession in this day and age due to technological advances. We can observe and record data unlike ever before to improve our efficiency, but with it has come the emphasis on pristine perfection. The more teaching has advanced, the more students are expected to have exceptional scores; the more the global population booms, the scarier the job market competition seems. And as we continue to propel ourselves into the fourth industrial revolution (i.e. the integration of smart technology in society, the implementation of the Internet, and the automation of several systems), the more uncertainties we are faced with. It should come as no surprise that uncertainty often causes unhappiness because it conjures up feelings of fear and instability, but the truth is, if you know how to be a student, a teacher, and a lover of learning, then you will be ready for whatever comes your way. It is the holy trinity of growth.

Now unless you're in the field of education, you may be unaware of what goes on behind the scenes of teaching, so let's take a look. There are three types of broad teaching styles with various instructor roles for teachers to slip into. Effective teachers understand how to interchange these styles and roles to best suit a topic for students to grasp. The three styles include delegating, discussing, and directing. Delegating styles demand the most task completion by students whereas directing involves the least amount of hands-on work.

When teachers take on the directing style, there are two types of models they can assume: authority or demonstrator. The authority model is probably the one we're most familiar with as it is the most traditional form. The instructor provides a lot of information in the form of a lecture while students are expected to take notes or listen carefully; however, this approach falls short for younger age groups and kinesthetic learners. Because it is highly teacher-centered with minimal activity or interaction from the students, it can cause boredom, confusion, or a sense of being overwhelmed due to all of the subject matter. Lectures are excellent for older audiences that are learning content that requires memorization, such as history. The demonstrator model is quite similar to the authority model but incorporates multimedia, such as PowerPoint presentations, visual aids, etc. It's a fantastic approach to keep content interesting but it can be difficult to accommodate with large numbers. Additionally, it's still centered heavily on the teacher rather than the student. An instructor that relies on these two models most should always start with the big picture, be clear with instructions and what's expected for evaluations, gauge how much information to provide, and never sugar-coat the material. Directing requires being direct.

Discussing style teaching places the instructor in a facilitator role. This is where learning becomes much more student-centered as students are able to be curious and participate during interaction. Effective facilitators know how to promote critical thinking, ask challenging questions, or encourage creativity during brainstorming. Preparing questions in advance as well as requiring students to formulate their own are excellent tactics to keep discussions flowing. A lively discussion with a logical conclusion on the topic at hand is a sign of a great facilitator, one in which everybody becomes involved in. Discussions are also effective at eliciting self-actualization and confidence in students as they learn how to communicate their ideas. Since this method focuses on discovery over memory, it can be hard for teachers to evaluate and test how much a student has truly learned, which is why it's necessary to incorporate other teaching styles.

When an instructor uses the delegating style for promoting new subject matter, they take on the delegator role and act as an observer rather than an authority figure. There's no question they are still the expert in the field but students are the ones exploring the workload. Lab activities, debate, and feedback during creative writing sessions are examples in which teachers use the delegating style. Essentially, it is to induce learning through independence and empowerment of the student. They can complete a multitude of projects, from capstone to research, these types of activities prepare students for real world scenarios.

The last common teaching method is the hybrid model in which an instructor blends the different roles and styles together to cater to students' learning preferences and interests. It's both teacher and student-centered as well as completely inclusive. By constantly changing it up, a teacher increases the chances of a student grasping the material; however, they must also know where to draw the line. Trying too many different things can cause confusion or overextend an instructor. Balance is always key.

Teaching, like anything else worth mastering, requires practice and patience. Whether you're teaching yourself or a class of students, it's important to not only bear in mind what you're teaching but how you're delivering the subject matter. It just goes to show that when Benjamin Franklin said, "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn," he was right. Keeping the at the heart of everything is indispensable. Recent findings at the University of London revealed that teachers further develop a region known as the anterior cingulate cortex. Through MRI scans of their brains, scientists determined this area to immediately notice when a student makes a mistake, and it also monitors students' predictions. Over time, a teacher can advance this part of their brain to learn how to significantly help their students comprehend material better. The teacher that takes their students' learning to heart is the one that observes where they most need guidance. It's the process as much as the results when it comes to learning something new that makes it worth our while.

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# Tips for Learning Efficiently

In our previous article “How We Learn”, we covered the multiple ways in which our brains absorb and retain information but what good is that information if you don’t know how to harness it? We are taught many things during our academic education, from kindergarten to university, and yet there isn’t a course in any curriculum around the world on simply how to learn well.

The fact of the matter is that no one learns the same way, and we shouldn’t learn things in the same way either. The only constant in this universe is change; it follows suit that if you want to learn something properly, then you too must change it up. Listed below are scientifically proven methods of improving information absorption for the long haul – true learning. As Einstein once said, “If you can’t explain it to a six-year-old, you don’t understand it yourself.” And if you can explain it to a six-year-old, then you most certainly can apply it to different facets of your life.

Tips for Learning Efficiently

# DO's

## ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

Can you hear the TV in the background? Or someone playing on an app? Or even better (or worse), a special someone keeps texting you, each notification causing a resonating vibration? Make a pact with yourself to eliminate the excess noise, jarring notices, and anything else that might seize your attention. Remove yourself to a quieter space if possible and utilize the Do Not Disturb feature on your devices. Learning anything demands your concentration. You'll thank yourself later for taking the time to eliminate anything distracting.



## SHORT AND SWEET BURSTS OF STUDYING

Studies have shown that your brain can only handle so much studying and reviewing in one go, which is approximately 30-50 minutes. That's right – you don't even have to study for a full hour! Your mind needs 5-10 minutes of breaktime to rest, recover, and revive itself for more information. Get yourself a stopwatch, whether it's a real one or an app, and maximize your time. Don't check it as you're studying, and certainly don't ignore it when your break is over or else you may see an hour or two roll by. You can use your break to respond to messages, check social media, or watch a funny video. If you want to truly boost this time, then try doing some breath control exercises, meditate, or hold a few yoga poses.

## REVIEW REVIEW REVIEW

This may just be one of the most useful study habits you can take up: review your material frequently. By going over your lessons within 24 hours of learning the subject matter, you will retain approximately 80% of what you covered. If you consistently review the content every day, you will know it through and through within a week and your study time will only take 5 minutes.





## BE THE TEACHER

A true test as to whether or not you sincerely understand your stuff is to try being the teacher. If you don't have a six-year-old around to explain something as Einstein suggested, then try a family member or a friend. Sit them down and see if you can teach them the gist. Better yet, practice with someone in the course, swap, and see where both of your weaker areas are as you check for accuracy. Come up with practice questions for each other too! If you don't have anyone to role play being a student, then you can try the Feynman Method, which involves getting a fresh notebook. Label it "Things I Don't Know", fill it up with every piece of new information, and keep rewriting what you don't know until you genuinely know it.

## EXERCISE & SLEEP

Exercise and sleep may be some of the hardest activities for students to cram into their hectic schedules but they are some of the most crucial elements in successfully learning something complex. Studies have shown that if you exercise before you begin studying, you will learn more efficiently. Why? Because you can ride a wave of endorphins and your body has been flushed of toxins. Sleep, on the other hand, guarantees better memory recall when you get at least 7 hours. Getting between 7-9 hours of sound sleep is the amount of time required for your brain to clean itself. A clean brain means thorough information gain! Another great tactic to integrate is the study nap. You are far more likely to remember what you've analyzed for well over several months if you take a power nap shortly after.





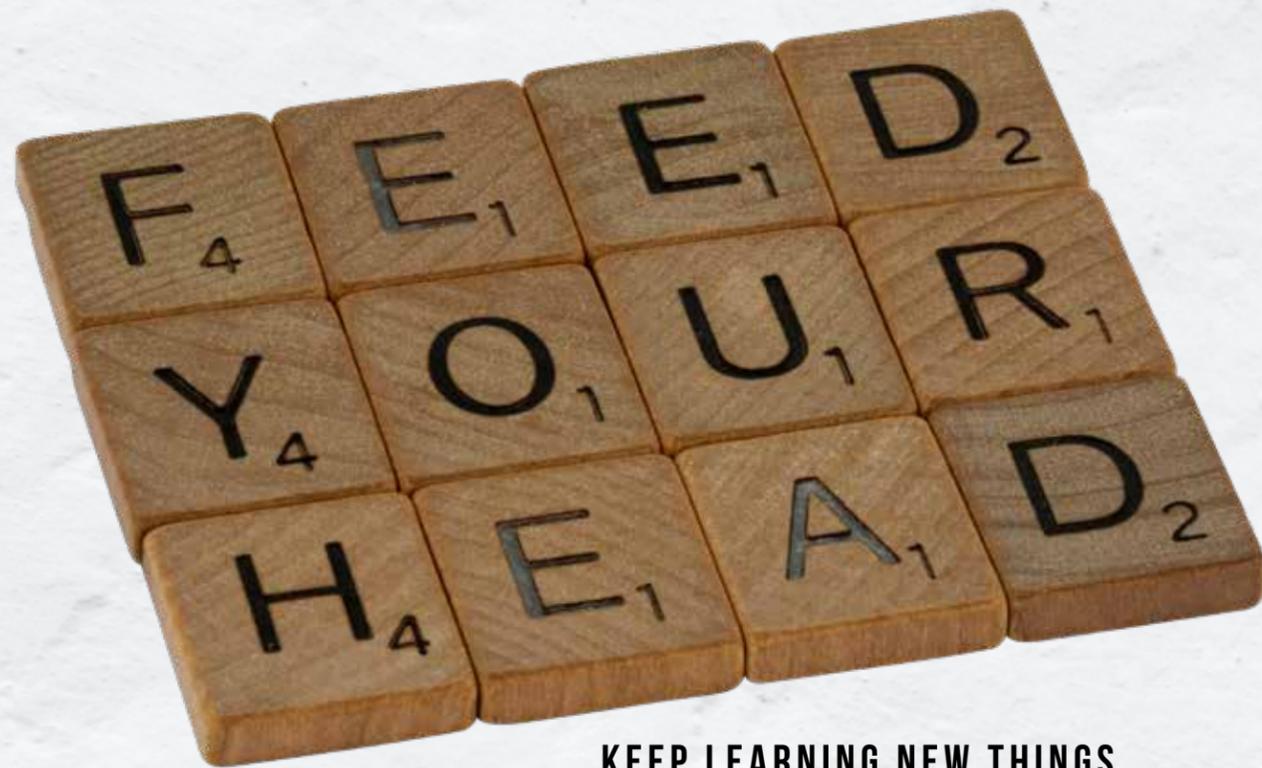
## PRACTICE MEMORY TECHNIQUES

Due to the fact that your mind sets up information in clusters, it would serve you best to take advantage of this structure. Create maps, charts, etc. to organize what you learn and provide a framework to study with. Visualize as much as you can. See how much you can elaborate on one idea or topic on your own. Incorporate mnemonic devices, such as acronyms or phrases, to spell out complex concepts; the funnier you make it, the easier it will be to remember it. Read out loud and above all, be generous: give yourself enough time for the most difficult subject matter to learn.

## USE PREVIOUS LEARNING

When you're learning something new, remember that you are not an empty slate. You are already jam-packed with a lot of information from previous classes and personal experiences. This is actually the trick between a "slow learner" and a "quick learner" – drawing connections. Rather than tediously memorize, try to create as many comparisons to what you do know. You might just surprise yourself with what you have filed away already.





### KEEP LEARNING NEW THINGS

A fantastic scientific publication in Nature elucidated how learning anything new will actually create gray matter in your brain. This was observed with participants learning to juggle. The drawback was that if they stopped practicing what they learned, the newly developed gray matter vanished. The takeaway here is just how vital it is to keep reviewing what you learn while also incorporating in new things – keep your brain growing! If your mind is used to the habit of learning, learning anything will become easier in itself.



### EAT SMART SNACKS

While drinking coffee and eating a candy bar will give you a boost, it's only temporary. The sugar will cause a crash, which leads to a sluggish state that no one wants to study in. Fruits and smoothies are always great ways to go! You can even dip apples into peanut butter if you want something more substantial. Some other wonderful, healthy options to reach for are edamame, nuts, or eggs. These will keep you energized while feeling fuller while studying so you can stave off any distractions of hunger.

## CHANGE UP YOUR ENVIRONMENT

We all like a little change in our lives, the kind that makes us feel special or excited. Recreate this feeling while studying because it will boost your concentration. Study in a different part of your room or a different place altogether. If you typically study by reading subject matter, try listening to it instead (i.e. read aloud). Play some soothing study music (light or dark academia playlists on YouTube are exceptional but you can't go wrong with any form of classical music) that you've never listened to before.



## LOOK UP ANSWERS

Whatever you do, don't waste your time desperately trying to recall an answer while quizzing yourself. You will fall victim to the "error state" on your exam and suffer the same memory loss if you reinforce this behavior while studying. The moment you realize you don't know an answer, simply check to see what it is and move on. Keep reviewing it every day until you know it off the top of your head.

Tips for Learning Efficiently

# DON'Ts

## DON'T CRAM

Your brain can only handle absorbing new information for a short amount of time. Bombarding yourself with facts and then trying to force yourself to remember more than you can will only stress you out before a test. Avoid cramming, even if it's the thing most students do, and get into the habit of reviewing your material for a few minutes here and there every day until exam time. The best part is that you're far more likely to recollect everything you covered in your education rather than experience the "mind dump" a lot of students suffer from after exams. What good is that crammed information in a real world situation if you can't access it anymore? Don't lose what you learn!



## DON'T STUDY ONE SUBJECT FOR TOO LONG



Do you go to the gym and only do pushups for an hour straight? No. Your body would hate you and you'd know it. The same goes for your mind. Don't go over the same subject again and again, especially in the same way. Vary it as much as you can, such as reading the text and then watching videos (visual), listening to podcasts (aural), or writing notes (kinesthetic); if possible, dive into an entirely different subject after a spans of time if you must keep studying throughout the day.

## DON'T MULTITASK

This tip cannot be stressed enough. You might even be multitasking right now while reading this article. Stop it! Multitasking became popular at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because it was seen to be more efficient; however, the latest studies have shown it can be unequivocally detrimental to your productivity levels because it destroys true focus. Don't respond to messages and juggle studying at the same time. Don't catch up on a show while reviewing. Don't do two things at the same time. You won't ever see Manny Pacquiao texting while training, so how about applying the same mentality to your studies?



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# Instructor Pieces

### Brando Piñero

Professor Piñero is a professor who *believes* that he can provide a better learning experience for his students and he *delivers*. As soon as the FUEL Program initiated classroom flipping online, he launched a *YouTube* channel for his students so they could view all of his lectures on topics regarding physics and mathematics. He then supplies various activities and assignments for his students to actively process new ideas rather than simply watch videos and attempt to passively absorb information; it's important to check their understanding. Due to the gamut of interconnectivity issues for some students, Professor Piñero employed several student-centered styles to keep students connected, such as grouping learners together to explore certain subject matter. They then decide what aspects are most important or relevant to their own interests. His students learn how to apply what they learn in physics and mathematics to any given situation, including a multitude of science experiments that they performed at home. For instance, Professor Piñero's students analyzed acceleration loss by manipulating forces. Luckily for mechanics, most experiments can be conducted easily and safely at home (i.e. observing objects falling at given speeds or logical motion such as a simple pendulum).



Before the pandemic hit, Professor Piñero would begin his face-to-face classes with a prayer and attendance, followed by reminders on important requirements and deadlines. When classes went online, Professor Piñero realized the necessity of going beyond what's required in a typical classroom for a virtual one. "You must always open your line to the students, even if it's out of your class schedule," he commented, "It's important for me that students know that we do care for them at FU. I provide guidance and mentorship in my area of expertise, discussing problems and concerns around courseware. But I'll also discuss other challenges that students are facing. Distance learning can strengthen social coping connectors." For any student that struggles, Professor Piñero is there with constant follow-ups. Even if it's midnight, he'll stay up to text you – *how is your project going? Is everything ok?* Humor is one of Professor Piñero's greatest strengths. He knows how to turn a serious atmosphere into a light one, which promotes a safe space, one in which students feel comfortable enough to freely learn in. He urges students to partake in research to expand their knowledge and understanding of their chosen field, thus evolving their critical thinking and analytical skills past theory level alone.





“I always listen to them and strive to understand my students’ challenges with all this suffering from the pandemic. I believe opening up to them will make them feel how important they are to us and the future of society. I am indirectly making a responsible individual, and it’s fulfilling,” said Professor Piñero. He reminds his students to remain curious about things they encounter every day, especially with the New Normal. They should be able to see problems from different angles and formulate their own solutions, regardless of what career path they are taking. Either way though, Professor Piñero firmly believes a career in science or mathematics is a highly rewarding one that his students will cherish.

### Sweet Louielyn Baylon

When Professor Baylon was a student earning a BA in English, she originally thought becoming a teacher meant merely to give instructions to students and that was it. But now, she strongly believes that a good teacher is not measured by how intelligent a teacher is or how much they know, it’s how well their students learn the material, which boils down to a teacher’s patience, compassion, an dedication. Professor Baylon loves to see the wonder in her students’ eyes that’s only brought about by explaining something new to them – true learning. She deems it *priceless*.



Professor Baylon is meticulous with scheduling for her FUEL courses. She begins the week by supplying material on what they will be covering as well as when her lectures will be. Then discussions are conducted every Tuesday and Wednesday. With this balance, students can focus on their given activities, learn the subject matter at a steady pace, and not feel remotely stressed out. They complete their tasks in a timely fashion and receive a weekly evaluation on Friday as to how their progress is going. Professor Baylon instructs courses in English major subjects, such as grammar and purposive communication. “I like urging my students to talk because it is a communication class, after all. One of the struggles that teachers are facing right now is how students are turning off their video during online classes, so we don’t get to see their reactions on whether they have understood a lesson or not. What I do is I would ask students to recite something, read text, or simply have an interactive communication with them. And then when I ask them certain questions, I can see they’re hesitant at first to share but eventually, they get comfortable and easily express themselves,” stated Professor Baylon. One of the beauties of online classes is that students who were once quiet and introverted feel comfortable discussing content individually with their teachers; Professor Baylon gets to see how wide their knowledge extends and it’s incredible to witness the difference, some of them turned out to be quite talkative!

Professor Baylon stresses the importance of intercultural communication because of today's technological globalization; it's easier to communicate with people from all over the world, and it's also easier to make a cultural faux pas when traversing different cultures. Because many of Professor Baylon's students intend to take up online positions, some of which will likely be in other countries, it's indispensable for students to establish effective communication. Even in her classes, students come from all corners of Negros Oriental, some with better English than others; what they find entertaining is comparing and contrasting what they know as well as how to pronounce words in a certain way. They often role play situations, dissecting questions such as: *How would you deal with this particular situation? Is it applicable in the real world or only in theory? Why did you handle things in the way that you did?* One real world scenario that Professor Baylon prepares her students for is the infamous interview, an event in our lives that often makes us both nervous and uncomfortable. She tests to see how they manage as well as time to cultivate possible solutions for their state of mind. Follow up questions, constructive feedback, emotional preparation, Professor Baylon knows how to get her students ready for the moment they prove to an employer they're worthy of the job. Even when it comes to social media, Professor Baylon emphasizes taking notice of the little things, whether it's grammar or spelling, people can see what you're posting, and that says a lot about you. Make it worthwhile and make it right – it's what we want in any given form of communication.



### Aaron Navarro

It was a happy accident that Professor Navarro became an instructor and how lucky FU was to get him! Professor Navarro began as a marketing officer and then went on to work in the Bureau of Customs as well as in trading. He incorporates his vast experience into his lessons to share with his students, offering valuable insider information that they will find useful in the field. He discovered a love for public speaking, interacting with others, and providing guidance where he could during his time in the industry. In fact, Professor Navarro describes teaching as a fulfilling passion that no amount of money could ever replace. For the FUEL Program, Professor Navarro's courses (i.e. environment and entrepreneurship, MTG e-commerce, etc.) were taken by students in several departments, not only those in business administration; the diversity of students led to exciting discussions and interactions in which everybody learned a great deal. It was truly remarkable to see how business ideas were born from specific problems in the community, such as addressing the shortage of nurses. Students created a system for traveling nurses, consequently earning them 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the FUBIDA competition at FU. Professor Navarro observed how one of the advantages of going online with the FUEL Program is that there is more time for students to conduct research, which means more extensive and in-depth discussions for learning. Not only can students dive deeper into the topics that they cover, they also layer various topics by relating subject matter together. One major subject students covered were the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that were created by the United Nations; Professor Navarro's aim was to emphasize the importance of thinking about the community as a whole. It's crucial to foster intrinsic motivation to become *part* of the solution for community issues. More often than not, Professor Navarro approached his courses as a facilitator because business usually demands independence, self-discovery, and gumption. By giving students the room to grow of their own accord, they can flourish.



Professor Navarro frequently puts himself in his students' shoes, wondering what they would like to learn and how they would like to receive the information. He experiments with multiple platforms to further expand their knowledge, discarding traditional lecture styles that usually become tedious with time. Progressivism is what Professor Navarro is all about! "It's actually more about experiencing and exposing my students to hands-on training and real life situations, especially in the industry. My students visit companies, ask questions, make observations, and view what's really happening in the world. They are very capable of drawing upon their imagination. I don't limit my classes to teacher-based learning. I want my students to *export* what they know," Professor Navarro shared. While implementing collaborative learning as students brainstorm over certain topics, he will randomly sign in to their online discussions to see how they're doing. He asks the right questions to point them in the right direction, provides feedback in the moment, and enhances their critical thinking skills. At the end of a course, Professor Navarro has his students undergo a final defense in which industry practitioners are invited to observe or participate. From a bank loan officer to a financial analyst in San Miguel Corporation, students can interact with a wide range of entrepreneurs and businesspeople, demonstrating their capability and craft. "I give them all the materials they need: websites, videos, business models, software applications. I let them know how to navigate acquired information. I expose them to examples in industry and how they process, organize, and monitor business. I make the effort to have my students explore IT too because it's necessary in many different companies," stated Professor Navarro. No matter what a student specializes in for business, it is a field overflowing in opportunities that extend past the world of business itself. What students learn in the College of Business Administration can be applied to just about anything and these days, versatility is everything.

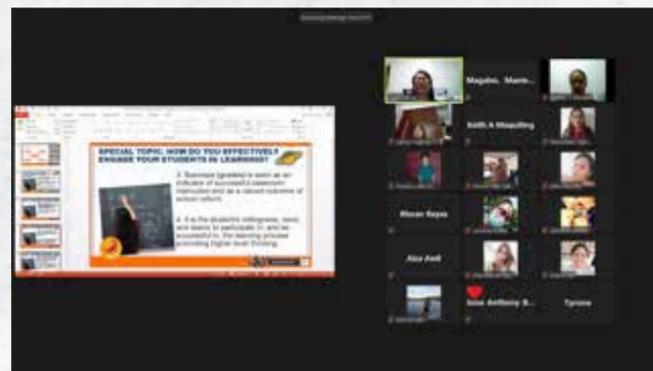
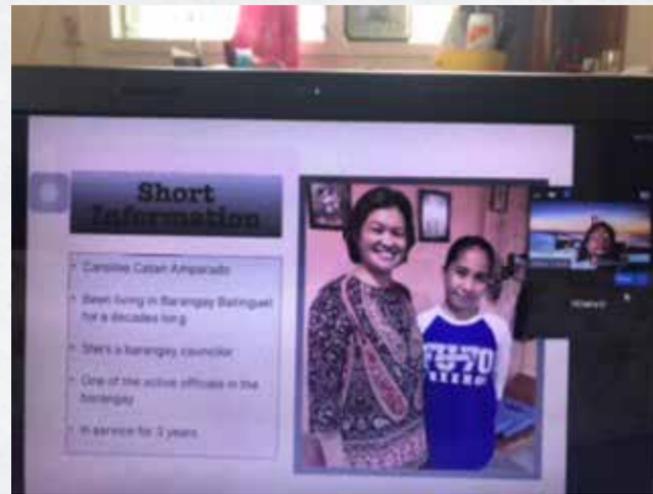


**Joyce Cavan**

Students who take courses with Dr. Cavan reap the benefits of learning from an instructor who has over 40 years of teaching experience, both

in the Philippines and the United States. Needless to say, she loves what she does because it's a wonderful journey, a calling, a fulfilling passion. "That's what I tell my students – if you don't feel it, if you don't feel the passion – you will not have classes, you will only have jobs," exclaimed Dr. Cavan. Her teaching philosophy consists of something so pure and simple: reach for them. She reminds her students again and again that as teachers, they must be animated and you must be able to go to them, not vice versa. Students are often shy in their most malleable, vulnerable forms of learning so it is important for a teacher to get through to them, to see past the fact that they are learners but individual human beings with personalities, personal problems, and specific interests too. It relates great deal back to balance, knowing how to juggle an authoritative position while remaining approachable and friendly for each student. The golden rule for Dr. Cavan is to never compare students because every has their own strengths and aptitudes; it's up to the teacher to adapt.

Dr. Cavan teaches courses that revolve around professional education, including basic administration, and when the FUEL Program launched, she was one of the instructors unequivocally excited to be a part of online classrooms. “You could see me jumping up and down!” she joked, “It’s fantastic. I saw my students become really interactive.” Because Dr. Cavan is well versed with technology, it was a smooth transition that allowed for creativity to flow when applying assessments and assignments. It was also a great way for Dr. Cavan to witness which students handled responsibility well and which ones needed to learn time management and self-discipline (Dr. Cavan addressed the issue of punctuality by advising students to enter ten minutes early for a class or meeting). Throughout her time with the FUEL Program, Dr. Cavan remained considerate of students’ issues, whether it was a connectivity concern or something else altogether, and she perpetually motivated her students to keep learning through animated enthusiasm. Dr. Cavan exudes passion in her field; she stresses knowing your own skills and what workability you can perform. In essence, what you offer, after all, life is all about giving. Her courses rev students into a readied state for the job interviews that come their way upon graduation, especially through the nature of practicing.



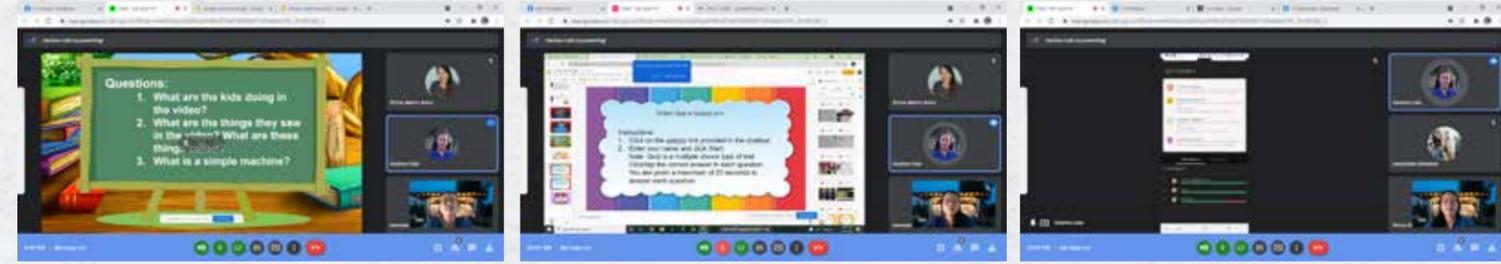
One unit that Dr. Cavan focuses on is the four pillars of education, but it also lays the groundwork for how one should lead their life. At the heart of it is the idea that an education is behind both personal and community growth, which is sentiment FU adheres to as well. Reaching one’s fullest potential benefits not only the self but the lives of every individual they touch. The four pillars consist of learning how to learn, how to do (i.e. apply one’s skills), how to live together harmoniously, and how to simply be (i.e. satisfied with one’s life). When we can master these four perspectives, we not only became great people but great teachers. Teaching does not revolve solely around a classroom and a school; it’s in every facet of our lives because as social creatures, we learn through observation, imitation, and stimulation – our three greatest teachers in life.





## Antonia Gueyndoline Despojo

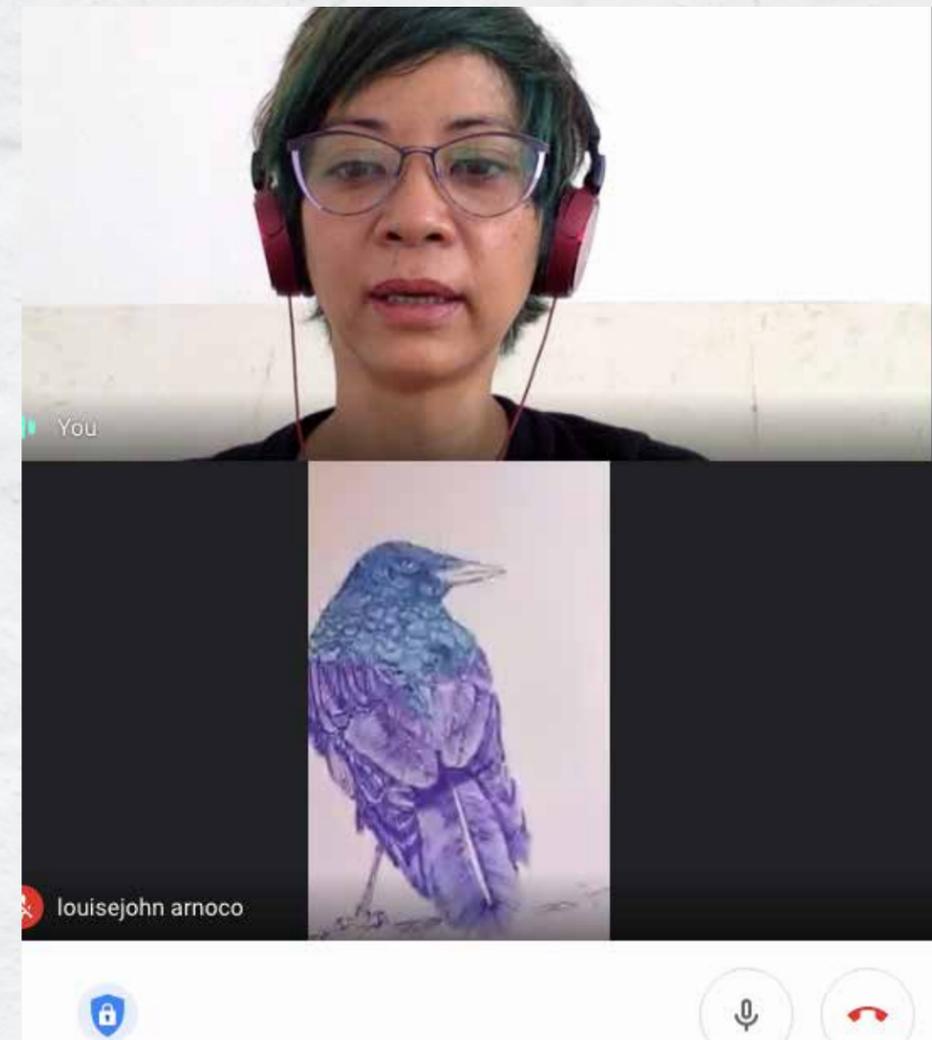
My teaching philosophy is grounded in experimentalism and progressivism. I believe that the minds of students are not simply empty vessels waiting to be filled; they are part of the classroom and therefore, intellectual faculties. When a learning environment is conducive and productive, individuals should be ready to face the challenges of the so-called knowledge economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” Professor Despojo declared with passion. She is a woman who lives and breathes teaching, frequently engaging with students as a facilitator to actively encourage the discovery of their own learning. By providing them with authentic experiences in which students can collaborate, utilize technology, and gain hands on experience, Professor Despojo’s students can quench the thirst of their curiosity in the most pragmatic of ways. Professor Despojo is highly aware of today’s different teaching methodologies, especially student-centered tactics, and implements them based on which approach would be most effective for a particular topic. Every individual has their own set of needs when it comes to learning, which she addresses by balancing facilitator and activity-centered styles to promote self-learning. When students become independent learners, intrinsically motivated to develop their own critical thinking skills and retain knowledge, they manifest the drive to master their own skills.



Professor Despojo likes to begin each class by introducing the objectives for the day, and then guides them on what is to be achieved. Due to the calamities of the pandemic that may cause emotional and psychological instability, she checks in on her students’ well-being by texting them or sending voice greetings prior to class. This type of support isn’t something you can find just anywhere, it’s the kind that takes you places. She’s even had students located in the United States and Singapore sign up for her professional education FUEL courses this year. “I would say that Foundation University has an edge,” Professor Despojo said, “It’s already technologically adept, enabling us to adjust smoothly. Everything is done primarily with the aid of modern technology to continue the quest for quality learning. Students become ready to face the competitive world brought about by the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Now, students have doubled, even tripled, the amount of units they usually take because they can manage their time better and the program is very flexible.” Despite the continuing advances of technology, Professor Despojo still concentrates on the heart of teaching: shaping the role models, influencers, and type of educators her students will one day become as they put on the shoes of a teacher. Several of her former students from the College of Education were the first to courageously take up positions in public schools amidst the pandemic knowing the great risk. Professor Despojo has seen her students render more than 400 hours doing online teaching, checking models, participating in webinars, creating summative exams and other teacher-related routines. In addition, the College of Education maintains its collaboration with Filipino Kenya Education Network where students and teachers get the opportunity to view current trends and updates in education. This last term, Professor Despojo noticed an inquisitive attitude from her students as to how to become productive members of society while handling the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She stressed equipping students’ skills, including technological competencies, with the four C’s: communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovative critical thinking. An incredible project Professor Despojo’s students tackled dealt with mangrove deforestation. They observed the deforested areas and assessed what should be done. Thanks to technology, they created videos on how to organize people into cleaning the affected area as well as how to monitor its progress. And that’s what teaching is all about in the end: progress.

### Sandra Quan

Professor Quan teaches theoretical courses in the fine arts department. She loves the opportunity of being in touch with the next generation since they are to become part of the workforce. Humility is a value she applies while teaching because the artworld is incessantly changing and it is important to incorporate the knowledge that students bring to the table. The ability to work hard and remain disciplined are also key. Staying organized, being punctual, and managing one's time are all part of the package despite what the public in general might think about being in the arts. Professor Quan also likes to stress practicality with her course material – she makes sure that what she teaches can be applied to the real world. “I address students individually and I fit the syllabus to their interests. I don't rush them. I respect their differences and always ask them what they expect to take away from the course. I find that a lot of students don't really have expectations. They are like sponges – they wait for me to make sense of information that is readily available on the net.” She incidentally hosts individual consultations to accommodate each pupil.



In her Art Seminar courses, students are exposed to current challenges, allowing them to immerse themselves in both research and production. Ranging from economic to social to psychological themes, students can tap into the structure of the artworld. This unique opportunity offers not only a chance to hone useful skills but to also gain confidence when directing a creative project. A third year student successfully conducted a study on the art gallery at Dakong Balay in Dumaguete City under the Foundation University Enhanced Learning (FUEL) program. She determined how exhibitions were profitable as community quarantine measures loosened up and how partnerships between artists and private and public entities can contribute in reviving Dumaguete's once vibrant art scene. She successfully presented her paper during the 14<sup>th</sup> De La Salle University Arts Congress Conference in March 2021.

What survives in these trying times are those willing to experiment and progress, which is exactly what happens at FU. Professor Quan's students thrive with the freedom she's allowed in her instruction, unhampered by orthodox teaching methods. She consistently brings different approaches while highlighting the relationship between nature, ecology, and creativity at FU. Recently, Professor Quan has implemented more project-based assignments that can be completed at home for the FUEL Program. It's pivotal that students understand how to manage artistic concerns in relation to societal pressure so Professor Quan shares relevant webinars and has pupils listen to professionals throughout the field. They attend virtual art fairs, visit galleries, and exhibitions online to experience real world scenarios. One student remarked in class that she attended an open studio online that cut out within seven minutes due to a brown out; these things happen. It's a grounding tactic for students to remember that obstacles exist in even the most glamorous positions.



Today, the biggest challenge for art students is how to reach an audience, especially in the midst of a pandemic. It's one thing to know how to navigate the online world, but it's a whole other ball game to cultivate meaningful and authentic exchanges with their own viewers. Is it possible to connect with one or two people beyond mere interfacing and convince them enough to support what you do? In Professor Quan's courses, the answer is yes. She gives students access to a multitude of experiences that connect them with collectors, collaborators, and even possible employers as they embark on their journey into the artworld. The time and attention given through tailored instructions arms her students with the confidence to take on whatever comes their way.



### Camille Therese Florendo

"I like being a catalyst between the field of architecture and my students. I love to share whatever information I already know while seeing young, hopeful students learn. Honestly, I still have to constantly research because things change so fast. It's a really fast pace field. I wouldn't want to teach anything my students wouldn't find applicable. I double check the relevancy of everything I teach to make sure the material still holds true," states Professor Florendo. She is a woman who finds the common ground between instructor and student. For various topics, Professor Florendo searches for events and structures that align with her subject matter to demonstrate real life scenarios; she's stressed that architects don't actually resemble Ted Mosby from *How I Met Your Mother*. Instead, expect to wear a vest and a hard hat. An example Professor Florendo has highlighted in her courses is an aspect known as setbacks when it comes to planning and design. It's important for students to understand that when they enter modular architecture, it's not purely about designing something; there are guidelines and laws in the Philippines that one must adhere to. Confusion frequently hits students when they wonder why they can't build on certain parts of owned land or use certain material, but one must take into account neighbors, the environment, etc. Above all, safety comes first.



Professor Florendo has seen some spectacular models this year from her students. In a course about tropical design, students had to build sun shading devices in which they learned about wind direction, solar fans, and other various concepts. When FU converted to the FUEL Program, Professor Florendo made sure her exercises were online friendly without compromising desired results. It was a challenge at first for students to virtually show their manual drawings – technology can also be a curse as much as a blessing. She discovered that many of her students were overediting with software, believing the edits improved their work, but in actuality, it detracted from their accomplishments. It was a matter of instilling faith in students' abilities that they can design well and that shouldn't use technology as a crutch. It's been a successful experiment of incorporating video editing, photo editing, and other platforms where students can learn to master new mediums as well as learn from their mistakes. "These are works that you came up with," Professor Florendo tells her students, "the very notion that you came up with them means that he thought about it and thought about whatever it is you've been forming. It's all about confidence – you're allowing yourself to meet people because you believe your design works. I really grill them on why they came up with something." By giving students the opportunity to defend their decisions in design, they learn how to trust their own talents and skills. Professor Florendo repeatedly reminds students why they are taking the course because at the end of the tunnel, they are the architects who build what people go in and out of and they must be decisive with the calls they make. "Ultimately, if you started out with dreaming about taking this course with us and that you really do want to change the world using whatever it is you're building, then I would say it's as simple as it sounds. That's what their goal should be." The best part about architecture is that it's not only about building. Students quickly learn how to relate one thing with another beginning from the ground up; they discover more about the environment, how to handle and manage people, and realize the impact that their creations have. Architecture isn't just about architecture – it's about making a spot in the world and changing it for the better.

### Marjorie D. Hoylar

It should come as no surprise that Professor Hoylar revels in the feeling of changing mindsets for the better since the field of agriculture is comprised of constant growth and change. She enjoys instilling and supplementing her students with ideas and new knowledge to guide them into appreciating the field. "My teaching philosophy is based on a philosopher named Robert Diagne. He suggested that there are five primary forms of information: intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, motor skills, verbal information, and of course, aptitude. This world of educational psychology gave me a window into the human mind. He offered the ability to understand our learns on a more profound level so that we can provide them with an effective learning experience. So based on this philosophy, I believe that my role as an instructor is to nurture and encourage lifelong learning in my students through various hands-on activities and classroom discussion. My hope is to prompt creatively exploring the unexplored and heighten their natural curiosity," said Professor Hoylar.



Students are to prepare questions after every lesson as well as ask their classmates for any additional insights to share with the group in Professor Hoylar's courses. There is a great deal of interaction to foster independent learning. The FUEL Program became an additional doorway of learning for students as they immersed themselves in new online platforms. Professor Hoylar even noticed that a few of her students preferred online participation as to face-to-face. Her PowerPoint presentations, exercises, and laboratory activities were appreciated by her students throughout the term. Soon, many students mastered how to identify insects, assess site collections, and create vegetable areas within their own homes. Some even sampled how to fashion vertical or backyard gardens as well as sell their produce at the market in Valencia, giving them hands on experience in a business way.



The field of agriculture is quite a comprehensive course in that it also covers biology, laboratory fieldwork, business, engineering, and environmental science. It's a fully accomplished package of science. Professor Hoylar concentrates on many technical skills in her teaching that students can then apply to future positions, such as a career in a local government unit (LGU). She also stresses the importance of navigating technology effectively and growing savvy with what is modern to get ahead. In the end, it's all about flexibility, something of which all agriculture students have by the end of their journey at FU. Flexibility in opportunity, flexibility in knowledge, and flexibility when being presented with huge problems that seem unsolvable. They aren't – agriculture can save the day while putting delicious food on the table.



The weight of the world's needs fall upon agriculture graduates: food. Farmers range from 50-60 years old these days and most people do not engage in farming anymore. The biggest challenge that faces agriculture students is to figure out ways to feed the growing population and save the environment at the same time, but it's also laden with opportunities. Every problem has a solution and where there's a will, there's a way. "This pressure triggers their skills and inner thinking," says Professor Hoylar, "I motivate my students by boosting their confidence towards the subject. I challenge them. I always end up saying to them what they learned in class is just half of what the future will grant them."

### Francis Jade Marimat



10 jumping jacks. 15 push ups. Go! Professor Marimat invigorates her students by keeping them on their toes. Criminology students must always be ready for the unexpected because they never know what the next scenario will be once they enter the field. Going online did not stop Professor Marimat from ordering her students to turn on their cameras, drop to the floor, and exercise. Why? Because cadets need to be fit – pandemic or no pandemic. We all want to know we're in safe hands with competent officers that can handle any given situation. Professor Marimat always repeats the best forms of practice to her students so it sinks in, as well as the virtues and values that go with becoming a cadet. She appreciates the power to change lives and make a difference in shaping her students into the adults that they become, endowing lessons that last a lifetime. Her classroom, be it face-to-face or virtual, is one that consists of pragmatism, participation, and democracy. Students' ideas are always considered as they dive deeper and deeper into the course. They have the opportunity to express their views while taking the time to understand new concepts. Professor Marimat also assigns groupwork to promote a sense of belonging amongst cadets because this feeling encourages comradery for the field. Officers need to be able to work together seamlessly in any given development.



Professor Marimat saw great success in her students over the FUEL Program. Some of the topics she addressed in her courses included ethical standards for officers, steps and procedures for conducting criminal investigations, and drafting reports in blotters. Students also found it exciting to give polygraph examinations and take fingerprints. In order to familiarize students with protocols, she requires them to interview police officers and front liners whilst carrying out informal research. This form of on the job training in addition to role playing in class helps students view how the real world compares to the textbook. No matter what the challenge is, whether it's passing the board exams, competing to find a career in an organization, or simply dealing with the uncertainties of today, Professor Marimat is there for her students. She is an exceptional listener that shows a great deal of patience and tolerance for her learners. After all, comradery is key. Professor Marimat had this to say:

“Skills are difficult to share, but I’m determined. I will surely do everything I can to best serve my students. For me, the skills that I possess are comprised of handling people with great humility and perseverance. I want to model the level with which my students will find it useful to emulate when they become officers. The same goes for agility and adaptability. Looking back 20 years ago, things were very different. Change has been a constant in our world. It’s very important for our future police officers and government employees to have the capability to adapt to our world’s changes, to serve our community’s people.”



### **Lurish Mett Gonzaga**

The level of maturity is apparent when it comes to the incoming cadets for the College of Criminology – they are ready to face reality and FU prepares them with the skills they need for it. While students may be initially fearful in the beginning of their physical and academic training, they steadily become more comfortable at accepting the challenges that are presented to them. “The goal is to produce leaders,” said Professor Gonzaga, an instructor who was once a cadet student himself. He scrutinized his own professors to adopt the right approach and attitude for himself or any given situation. Now, he imparts what he knows unto his students. He enjoys relating to them, discovering what’s trending and how it’s relevant to what they cover. From jokes to yoga, Professor Gonzaga engages his students on several levels to keep them both mentally and physically active, stating, “I want to see them excited to enter class!”

If you're late to class, you can expect pushups or jumping jacks. It's a fun consequence Professor Gonzaga continued into his FUEL courses as his cadets also continued mastering an instinct for time and a sense of discipline. He encouraged his students to take advantage of technology during these virtual times by creating videos as they interacted with personnel. They listened to people in law enforcement, asked questions to guest speakers, and learned about real world experiences from officers, including the field's dangers. For any given topic, Professor Gonzaga provides students with at least 2-3 scenarios to reinforce understanding. They also have live discussions that are recorded so they can revisit them later as well as their lectures. An interesting tactic Professor Gonzaga has taken up is to supply personal codes for certain material and assignments, that way students can complete their work individually; he does not want them to lean on each other too much during today's crisis. Support is important but so is independence and resilience. He challenges them to stop multi-tasking and focus on one thing at a time, expand awareness on gender, racial, etc. sensitive issues, and demonstrate compassion towards the victims they will encounter in the field. They cannot laugh, show disgust, or withdraw away from any unfamiliar scenario, including something sexual (i.e. sexual assault). "This job is about saving lives," said Professor Gonzaga, "You must be able to lead and provide fair service for all. You cannot have emotional, subjective reactions or heated arguments. You must remain objective and keep a sound temperament."



At the end of the day, Professor Gonzaga wants his cadets to be liberated thinkers, especially on controversial topics. He wants them to be able to think for themselves, foster empathy for their fellow Filipinos as well as foreigners, and investigate without dismissing anything. His cadets learn how to gather evidence with his guidance, improve their communication skills and emotional intelligence, and conduct a crime scene investigation efficiently. Professor Gonzaga stresses to his students not to aim for perfection but instead, aim for improvement because perfection does not actually exist. Only doing a better job does. That's what a leader does.

### Andrew Mores

Sir Andrew is an instructor that deeply respects how unique each student is when pursuing an education; however, the bottom-line is that a stimulating environment is required no matter what. He diligently works at manifesting an atmosphere in which his students can grow physically, mentally, and emotionally in the midst of a safe space, a place where they can share their ideas and collaborate. "Since we are in a field of computer related courses, my teaching style consists of hands-on activities. I guide them on how to use a variety of tools, discuss essential topics, and then together, we explore other areas of interest since technology is very broad. You have to throw yourself in," stated Sir Andrew. When it comes to programming classes, individual activities are a must because students need to learn how to think critically. For devising simple POS systems and such, Sir Andrew will group students together to test how well they can jointly manage their varying skills. Some students work on the design, some on programming the functionalities of the system, and some concentrate on the back or front end of the system. Additionally, computer studies learners master fundamentals such as coding or automation. What's fascinating is how integrated IT has become – nursing, business, agriculture – each field these days requires some sort of computer skills. Goodness knows how many of us have come into computer problems ourselves, but Sir Andrew also teaches basic troubleshooting for handling both servers and clients; we can depend on the next generation of FU graduates from the College of Computer Studies to help us all out.





The FUEL Program was an easy adjustment for students in computer studies (minus WiFi connection, but who doesn't have WiFi problems in the Philippines?). Students found their classes exciting, especially in discussion when they could share their initial ideas on a concept before diving in. They would ask questions and provide opinions while going at their own pace. There is a sense of liberation when one can submit their output at their own choosing. Sir Andrew's greatest strength as an instructor is his ability to encourage and motivate his students to learn in a fun and engaging way; he not only retains their attention but stimulates their minds. It's important to remember how necessary it is to view things as fun because the tech world is constantly fluctuating. Students have to adapt as technology grows rapidly; in fact, it's the largest hurdle in this field. Falling behind in software, tools, and navigating technological trends is quite easy to slip into. Sir Andrew pushes them to stay on top of every technological operation, including robotics, automation programming, and networking. Students that can manipulate these specializations can apply them to any area outside of computers as well. Like business, computer studies is an incredibly versatile field that is essential in helping people around the world. When it comes to addressing both local and global situations, computers can provide a lot of support, but it's actually the people wielding the computers from behind that make all the difference.



### Mark James Kho

Sir Mark actually began as part of the staff at FU but made the transition into instructor. Due to his experience and capabilities, he quickly became an excellent professor that students couldn't wait to work with. Being able to ask questions is a must – it demonstrates curiosity, investment, and involvement of a topic or problem, something of which Sir Mark likes to see his students do. Collaboration and compassion are other key ingredients that Sir Mark highlights in his courses. “Part of being in IT means staying

objective on whatever it is you're going to solve. When dealing with design, user experience, or user interface, you need to be able to put yourself in your users' shoes. How are they going to use the link, the app, the system itself?” said Sir Mark. He's witnessed some of his students develop online shops with their knowledge as well as design apps to solve community problems. One major Capstone project entailed how his students could tackle a pandemic difficulty: how do people get medicine if they cannot leave their home? By devising an efficient system to help pharmacies go online, Sir Mark's students created an e-pharmacy to promote medicine deliveries. “We always keep on learning until we die. Be a better version of yourself,” Sir Mark reiterates again and again in his classes, “computer studies is a way to contribute to society. There are lots of problems that arise in IT because it's always changing, but that means it's also a goldmine for solutions.

At the core of Sir Mark's values lies accountability. Students must hold themselves accountable for their own actions and for staying up to date on the swiftly changing world of technology. Even for the FUEL Program, he's stressed holding yourself accountable while staying in the same environment. It can be difficult to apply behaviors associated with an academic setting (i.e. the classroom) to the home but it's crucial right now. For his fourth years concentrating on research, they have formulated prototypes and get the opportunity to test it out. Coding is an entirely different language that demands thinking in another way: the computer's way. Students have to be meticulous when transforming their ideas into binary, digitized reality. An engaging activity that Sir Mark will often have students do is to jot down questions on a shared platform (e.g. Google Docs) to promote liberal writing and creative thinking; it connects his students both critically and emotionally. They can assess topics together while getting to experience the flow of productivity, and that always feels good! Students can discuss areas of improvement or what they want to achieve through a project management app they utilize as well. The FUEL Program has inspired another level of independence students were initially unfamiliar with but now, they know how to navigate this degree of responsibility while learning about technology. And learning the language of computers is a form of freedom unlike any other in our current times. Sir Mark is here to get you ready for it.



### **Nathalia Bulfa**

Did you know Professor Bulfa is an FU graduate? She had an incredible professor during her time as a student that transformed her from a shy and insecure learner to the interactive, supportive, and inspiring instructor that she is today. Because this professor saw her potential, Professor Bulfa was pushed to participate in competitions, be active in organizations, and go the extra mile in ways she never knew she could accomplish. For that reason, she remains forever thankful for such guidance and incorporates the same approach into her very own classroom. Professor Bulfa encourages students to find their voice in the classroom, ask questions as soon as they arise,

and have faith in all conversations, regardless of one's confidence level – there's always something to learn. Making a mistake is also supported in the her safe space of a classroom because it's how we learn best. It's in the challenge that Professor Bulfa gives her students while motivating them to achieve their best that this instructor excels in the College of Hospitality Management at FU. "I still miss going to school and seeing my students but I still get to learn from them and have a wonderful experience. As we delve into new topics, I get to help my students both discover and develop their strengths, talents, and skills, which is extremely rewarding for me, especially when I see them overcome their fear of public speaking," stated Professor Bulfa.

From tour guiding to world tourism to domestic tourism, Professor Bulfa offers a wide range of courses, and be prepared, she's the kind of instructor that will spontaneously call on you to share your ideas or opinions (and that's a good thing!). She prefers to see students generate a lot of output that tests their skills in research, communication, and even art. For the Digital Expo last spring, events management students were expected to join a marketing pitch competition to deepen their communication proficiencies. Seeing great potential in a former student, Professor Bulfa reached out to her and urged her to compete – and then she won! Another student full of potential was a selected leader for conducting a webinar, and Professor Bulfa gave her the opportunity to emcee an event. The student was grateful to practice her communication skills on top of practicing public speaking via interviewing guest speakers. Opportunity and experience go hand in hand, so Professor Bulfa invests a great deal into her students getting the involvement they need. It's not about settling for what a manual's instructions dictate, it's about contributing as much as possible to the subject matter. One of the most exhilarating projects Professor Bulfa assigned this year to her FUEL students was the creation of digital tour guiding videos in other countries. This required extensive research into other tourist areas, how to navigate technology, and find creative means to make their content engaging. Her students also participated in another competition that banned the use of edits in their videos (i.e. one-take only) and they created excellent presentations. Professor Bulfa believes that competitions are a way to address the recognition students crave deep down; this helps them to feel both included and valued. When we feel like we belong to something greater, that feeling of importance, people succeed. The truth is, the real world is far different than the ordinary rigor of a classroom; one must expect the unexpected, so Professor Bulfa emphasizes having people skills, learning how to handle people, and refining decision-making capabilities. "It's more important than what you find on the Internet!" Professor Bulfa exclaimed.



**Sheila Morados**

Ma'am Sheila is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at FPA who loves being a part of her students' lives. And with the help of technology, she's become an even bigger part of their lives because they're no longer limited to the classroom. Her practice follows the student-centered style of teaching in which she chooses the facilitator role for most of her activities; this is an exceptional approach for her particular age group. Students should be active in the process of learning and exploring, so they air out their ideas, concerns, and feelings throughout their online classes or written output. "I believe that pupils will learn best if they are involved. You provide them with activities for them to practice; they need to have their hands on the concept, whether it's math, English, or any other subject," remarks Ma'am Sheila. In her English lessons, she has students compose their own examples for sentence structures and has them incorporate them into conversation. Then they can practice delivering them in a presentation. Currently, students have learned how to integrate iMovie for their demonstrations, bringing these young, bright minds into the digitally creative era. Students also gain experience in collaboration when she assigns groupwork for certain topics. It has been impressive to see how even students at such an early age quickly determine how to virtually work together and present performances to their class. From creating PowerPoints to drafting proper letters to improving their essay and research skills, 5<sup>th</sup> grade at FPA is an adventure of learning for students.

The FUEL Program has opened new doors for Ma'am Sheila to reach her students. With different platforms of communication, she can individually check on students to see if they comprehend new material. When they are confused, she sends several examples, privately tutors, and confirms their understanding of the subject matter. There has been a growing trend that students feel more comfortable with informing their teachers when they're confused about something online than in a classroom; this new methodology of communication between instructor and pupil may be the next step in advancing education. Ma'am Sheila is a highly dedicated teacher, often giving up time on her weekends to make sure no student gets left behind. She even creates extra activities to extend topics and overflows with enthusiasm to energize her students into learning. Her classroom is an atmosphere of respect amongst

everyone, both face-to-face and online. Ma'am Sheila has noticed this makes discussion more fun as well for students, which enhances their learning. Another element that she focuses on is immediate feedback after a task so students know where they stand. This grants students the extra time they may need to study a complex topic. It also reveals just how much their instructor cares. Whether it's encouragement to do better or praise for excelling, Ma'am Sheila knows exactly what to communicate to her learners.



**Angellu Soriano**

Ma'am Angellu is an instructor that does not simply go by the books, she teaches from the heart. She is grateful to have found a career she feels not only comfortable in, but one where she can really flourish. FPA offers Ma'am Angellu a place where she can welcome fresh minds ready for molding. Recognizing how students have a life, Ma'am Angellu always check in with learners before and after to how they are doing. "I see their smiles on their faces during lesson theory. It's important that they feel comfortable even if they don't learn 100% of the material at first. Mistakes are part of the process, just like preparing for a topic. I like to interact with all of my different students and we use laughter to overcome challenging things," remarks Ma'am Angellu. Despite the difficult times and transition to virtual classes, it was great to see how the FUEL Program exposed the strength of habit. Students still attended class, participated in activities, and expressed themselves without fear of being judged in such a safe space. In the digital classroom, Ma'am Angellu's style consists of praising and rewarding her students, as well as addressing their weaknesses in a friendly manner. She emphasizes fairness in each activity since it's important to grasp this concept at a young age (her classroom age ranges from kindergarten to seventh grade). "What I like about FUEL is that it's very flexible. We can maximize programs, adjust our schedules, and still see each other online thanks to the iPad Program. There was always a pressure during face-to-face because students worry about being judged by their peers for what they did or how they look, but when communicating online, they feel freer to say what they think," notes Ma'am Angellu upon observing virtual teaching for a year now. There are even more possibilities and chances to be curious in a way that didn't exist before.

It's all about imagination. Ma'am Angellu likes to push her students to think outside the box and express themselves as precisely as possible, particularly when relating material to other subject matter. As most grade levels, students find math to be the toughest, especially when solving fractions. But she doesn't just teach math like a typical math teacher (i.e. "The shop has seven apples and Josh bought three apples. How many are left in the shop?). No, she'll start asking questions like "We're buying the apples in 1973 when they first began being sold...", which immediately grabs their attention. Painting a picture is key. Ma'am Angellu incorporates many educational games and interactive activities to guarantee students learn the material rather than memorize. What's fascinating to see is how integrity grows. Ma'am Angellu stresses integrity and self-discipline above all as her core values in the classroom. Over the course of the FUEL Program, she has even seen students who attempted to cheat come forward and honestly apologize for their wrongdoing; the faster a person learns how to take ownership for their mistakes, as they are always bound to happen, the faster a person expands their character. In terms of self-discipline, the rigors of learning this fell on time management as well as managing one's emotions. Emotional intelligence is a highly sought after ability in prospective employees, so it's great to know Ma'am Angellu instills it early on in her students. To keep them involved in current events, they'll discuss topics in the news to extend their understanding of the world as well as the language, connotations, and ideologies behind what happens. With ambitious students, it's pivotal to keep nurturing their potential and keep pushing them to dream big.

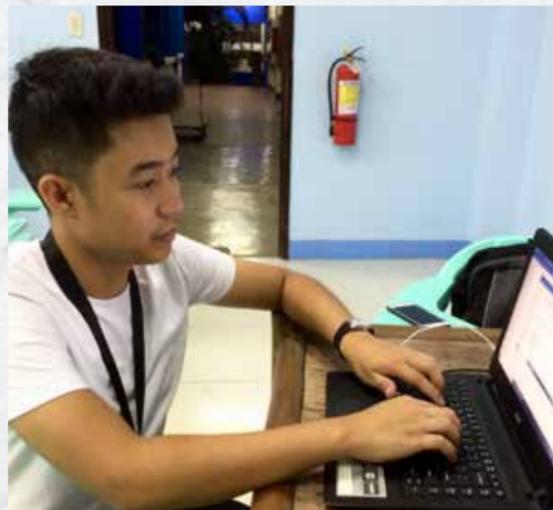


### **Richard Elumbra**

Sir Richard has been a part of FPA as a junior high school instructor for two years now. He teaches music, health, and the arts, and what he loves about FU is how technology-based it is. Having the right tools in a classroom offers greater possibility outside of traditional ones, especially when Sir Richard fosters such a positive and healthy learning environment

for us his students. It makes teaching all the more enjoyable when a teacher can conduct their job smoothly; it's not every day you get to change someone's life, but in teaching, it is. "My teaching philosophy is that students learn best when they are performing a task or practicing a skill that we are teaching them. Basically, if you tell them the facts, they might be listening to you, but it's far more important to apply the knowledge they learn into their lives. Practice makes perfect," says Sir Richard with a smile. This particular instructor likes to begin with a theme, cover what's important, and then launch his students into activities. For example, Grade 9 pupils studied classical painting by discussing its principles and elements; they formulated their own opinions, explored its subject matter, and realized their own prior knowledge about the topic. Then Sir Richard had them sample imitating reference material. His goal was to inspire his students, and they were.

The FUEL Program was a pioneer of education in Dumaguete City when the pandemic hit, and Sir Richard quickly adapted to going online. He discovered how much his students appreciated completing his courses in their own time through self-paced learning. Group work proved to be the most challenging transition because at such a young age, students had to learn how to collaborate in group chats, social media, and other platforms that they were previously unused to. But we all know how quickly children pick up a new language, and grasping a digital language is no different. Sir Richard witnessed his students quickly excel. By providing informative and engaging videos frequently (and filtered correctly), Sir Richard saw his students pick up music easily. They were exposed to new genres, both in a recorded and live sense. As students learned how to read notes for piano, Sir Richard could give immediate feedback, which is necessary for learning a musical instrument. He even managed ways to virtually teach first aid in his health classes. Of course, a crucial skill like first aid needs live interaction and demonstration, but everyone worked with what they had to the best of their ability. Once face-to-face is allowed to resume, junior high school students can put the skills they've advanced at home to the test. Regardless of when that day comes, Sir Richard wants his students to be prepared for the real world. He stresses the importance of knowing how to use technology and navigate the Internet for proper research. If students can learn how to incorporate such an invaluable tool into their lives (without letting it take over), then they will be set for what the future brings.



### Jenkens Baba

I finally found my life calling, muses Sir Jenkens about becoming an instructor at FPA Senior High School. It was with profound joy that Sir Jenkens

learned from several of his students that their achievements were made possible because of his attentive and supportive nature. His teaching philosophy shines through and radiates within his students: no student should be left behind. It's a strong sentiment of never giving up on anyone. "I know everyone has their own set of talents, skills, and strengths. I go the extra mile to make sure my students understand a topic much better. I know that at the end of the day, I won't feel fulfilled until I finally see them truly learn a difficult subject," states Sir Jenkens. He currently teaches science, math, and ICT in a student-centered manner, guided with technology. His expertise in the subject matter make him the best at what he does, as well as his patient and approachable attitude; students feel both relaxed and inspired in his classes. More often than not, Sir Jenkens assigns his students into small groups to increase participation as well as balance fast and slow learners. We all know that math isn't everyone's forte but when you're paired with a friend who knows what they're doing, things get easier. Sir Jenkens is also highly attentive of any students struggling with individual tasks and consequently juggles various pedagogical approaches until the material is grasped. Sir Jenkens says, "My routine is to keep giving my students things to improve their critical thinking skills. It ranges from robust puzzles to logic-based questions to using applications that can enhance problem solving skills."



The highlights from Sir Jenkins' FUEL Program classes consist of his capstone projects. Even though the students must collaborate online, they can interact extensively with each other and finish a multitude of exciting projects. A few examples include discovering alternatives for charcoal, manipulating banana and bamboo fiber into various products, and working with insects. Sir Jenkins does his best to prepare students for graduation and he's noticed two big challenges that face Generation Z (i.e. anyone born after 2000): time management and technological literacy. With so many different platforms and applications vying for attention, it's difficult for teenagers to eliminate distractions and focus on their studies. Additionally, technology is perpetually changing and not everyone has the opportunity to keep up. Bearing these challenges in mind, Sir Jenkins consistently addresses them in his classes to help his students feel prepared and secure with what they know.

"The concept is simple for me: people are motivated and engaged in things that they find interesting. If you can make something appealing enough for a student, they will be motivated to learn more. I apply different applications to my instructions so that students never get bored," says Sir Jenkins. By constantly altering his methods, Sir Jenkins also advances his students creative thinking skills. Creativity is the #1 skill in demand these days because at the heart of it, it's the ability to draw connections between things that seem unrelatable as well as to think outside the box when solving a problem. Creativity is demanded in every single field because the areas that do not require creativity are becoming more and more automated. Knowing this about the future, Sir Jenkins is determined to make sure his students are more than ready for their bright futures.

### **Marife Cabajon**

The best thing about industrial engineering is that its principles and theories can be applied anywhere – it is the most versatile field in engineering. Professor Cabajon exemplifies this notion by having her students engage in both macro and micro situations when approaching their studies. Due to the pandemic, they have not been able to access certain sites, such as lighting industries, so Professor Cabajon has had her students in physical ergonomics analyze the lighting within their own homes. How was it laid out? It is efficient? How can it be improved upon? These are the types of questions industrial engineers must ask themselves on a regular basis; it is upon them to save people time, effort, and money. By managing to provide hands-on activities amidst the current crisis, Professor Cabajon guarantees her students the necessary groundwork for real world scenarios despite the drawbacks of not having classrooms or laboratories.

Professor Cabajon is an instructor that finds it exhilarating to help others in their mission to understand industrial engineering. She enjoys seeing her pupils learn, grow, and develop into industrial engineers. “My teaching philosophy is to nurture and encourage lifelong learning in my students. I like to give them hands on activities to explore and expand their creativity,” she said, expressing that her style consists of mostly facilitating engaging discussions to promote discoveries in the field. It also helps enhance problem solving skills when students must repeatedly ask questions, dissect topics, and converse with their classmates on the material. In ergonomics, students evaluate usability in groups and then Professor Cabajon guides them on whatever they don’t understand at first. Patience is her greatest strength and a required one too for this area of expertise because revamping systems takes time, whether you’re a student learning how to do it or in the field itself. Professor Cabajon also strives to connect with each student by explaining difficult concepts in simple yet captivating ways. Connection is vital these days as we enter the 4.0 Industrial Revolution of technology – automation is growing more prevalent. Most of the industry involves smart technology and smart manufacturing, so the largest challenge is figuring out how to upgrade, so-to-speak. Industrial engineers must not only stay in the know of current technology but how to improve it; this demands thinking outside of the box. Professor Cabajon stresses that her students are not robots but skilled engineers who wield creativity in highly structured and practical ways. They must evolve their perspectives as technology continues to shift rapidly.

The FUEL Program has been an excellent experience for SIE students to see technology 4.0 at work. Their online courses have both diversified and improved communication between student to student as well as student and instructor. Discussions were recorded and uploaded throughout the term onto LMS, a canvas platform, for students to revisit throughout their studies. Virtually covering the application of theories in the real world has been the equivalent as if they were face-to-face, so there haven’t been any hindrances for SIE this year despite Covid. Professor Cabajon further promoted collaboration with students of other departments because industrial engineers must have a wide variety of skills at their disposal on top of clear communication abilities. Professor Cabajon wants her students to feel more than prepared for when they set out for careers in the industry, she wants them to feel excited for the ways in which technology evolves.

### **Christian Bungcasan**

Back when there were face-to-face classes, students could tell Instructor Bungcasan was right at home from the moment he stepped into the classroom. His comfort zone consists of being an instructor because he loves inspiring students, and he gets to do that whether it’s virtual or face-to-face. Going online did not make a difference to Instructor Bungcasan because he still gets to impart his knowledge, hone students’ skills, and assign useful, productive activities that help learners grow. In order to help students adjust to the FUEL Program this past year, Instructor Bungcasan became even more accommodating for his students. Whatever their situation required, he was there to address their concerns and go beyond his slated schedule, and he was met with appreciation from his students. They were able to dive further into computer applications and discover how pristine the results can be after the click of a button. There’s no manual work involved when solving a problem in this manner.





Instructor Bungcasan mixes up his teaching style with a combination of lectures, videos, and projects to reinforce learning. Students compose technical research papers to advance their problem solving abilities. For example, Instructor Bungcasan assigned a project on the black soldier fly that entailed the entire system: from production to collection to selling in the workplace. An industrial engineer must bear in mind every step for the process and how to make it better. The black soldier fly is a progressive form of waste disposal that the department of agriculture is also working on, but it's up to industrial engineers to make the system efficient. It is the belief of Instructor Bungcasan that capstone projects should be designed to produce relevant output for evaluation, and students have the opportunity to excel at the level of their understanding of the material they have previously discussed. He also likes to base several of their assignments on the interests of the students because more than likely, what they're interested in is what they will specialize in. Instructor Bungcasan teaches a wide range of courses to prepare future industrial engineers for their bright careers, including sophistic statistics, operations research, project management, and production management to name a few. He believes that his expertise in utilizing applications and statistical tools are his greatest strengths to share with his students, especially since it has been his area of concentration for over ten years.

Currently, Instructor Bungcasan deems the largest challenge for SIE students is to expose them to real industry experience right now. It's important for students to be able to relate to the job in a real world way but Covid has put a halt to this portion of the major; however, previous graduates have been sending as much information as they can about what necessary applications and skills students will need for the field. It just goes to show how supportive the FU community is, even if someone has graduated. The strong foundations of encouragement and guidance are always there no matter how dire things get. Instructor Bungcasan is certain that students will not only be competent in their field upon completing their degree, but they will obtain a successful, professional future. "I would say engineering is growth. We're not a niche field. I even tend to incorporate the business side of things into the technical stuff. I keep everything relevant, especially the software. I believe that in real growth is real pressure. People who like pressure like challenges and challenging projects, and that will provide the picture of how things should be done. That's how results are derived," said Instructor Bungcasan. Industrial engineering is like life: development, growth, results, and then improvement. If you're prepared for one, you're definitely prepared for the other. Instructor Bungcasan makes it happen.





# FUELing

Teachers, Students, and the FU Community.

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