

College of Business Ph.D. Student Teaching Excellence Award 2020 –

Mr. Shaowei Zhang



My name is Shaowei Zhang. I am a fourth-year Ph.D. student at the Department of Accountancy. I am honored to be awarded the College of Business Ph.D. Student Teaching Excellence Award 2020/2021. I am grateful to the university and the college for giving us opportunities to teach tutorials and lectures, and for offering this award. These valuable teaching opportunities and experiences have improved my presentation skills and prepared me to be a good teacher in a future academic job.

I am also glad to have the opportunity to share some of my teaching experiences and philosophy. First, I believe that it is very important to let the student engage in the class and participate in the learning process. It is easy for students to listen to the lecture, but it is not easy to actually understand and remember the concepts without hands-on exercises. I bring some handouts to the classroom and let the students complete them. I then check their answers on the spot. If I find some typical mistakes, I analyze them so that the students can avoid them in future. When teaching was recently shifted online, I adapted my teaching methods accordingly. One key aspect is that I need to wait more patiently for students' responses, because they may be unwilling or unable to speak, and it takes longer for them to type their answers.

Second, it is important to ask students for feedback and adjust the teaching method in a timely manner. As a young and new teacher, I learn from students' feedback and suggestions because they sometimes have different perceptions of the lecture that I do not know. I usually ask for their feedback after two or three lectures and then again at around the mid-term point. I take their suggestions seriously and improve my teaching accordingly.

Third, try not to go too fast and avoid putting too much content on presentation slides. Because teachers are familiar with the course content, we sometimes cannot help but go too fast if all of the content is on the slides. If there are only key points on the slides, the explanation and demonstration process involves our own thinking, organizing logic, and oral expression, which naturally slows down the teaching process and allows students to follow more easily.

Finally, be patient and responsive. Students ask many questions through e-mails, especially when teaching using the online format. A timely and patient response encourages them to ask more and thus learn more.

The experience of my Ph.D. study at the Department of Accountancy has been valuable and unforgettable. I am trying to learn to become both a good researcher and a good teacher with the support of all the resources and help from the excellent faculty members. I also express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Yuyan Guan, for her unconditional guidance and support.