

Getting To Know Our Professors

Dr Alfredo Bautista



Dr Alfredo Bautista

is currently the Higher Degrees by Research's programme leader for the Education & Cognitive Development Lab (ECDL), Office of Education Research (OER), where he works as a Research Scientist and Lecturer.

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

I joined NIE in 2013, where I currently run several research and development projects as Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator. My research focuses on teacher professional development (PD), the analysis of exemplary instructional practices, and the translation of scientific knowledge to foster teacher PD. I work with kindergarten, primary, and lower secondary in-service teachers. My main content areas of interest are mathematics, music, and the arts. My research is applied in nature, so it doesn't only impact my own work at NIE but also the work of PD providers and teachers, which in turn contributes to better the learning of students.

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

I can't think of a better context for me to develop my scholarly work and grow as an educational researcher. Firstly, NIE is a very large institution with many bright and prestigious scholars (i.e., researchers, professors and lecturers). Coming from a rather small education department in a US university, I really value having the opportunity to work with and learn from so many colleagues. Secondly, as a researcher in the field of teacher PD, I enjoy the close working relationship with policymakers, PD providers-facilitators, schools, and teachers. I have never experienced this level of collaboration in any of the other countries where I have previously worked in. Finally, I appreciate the support from the Ministry of Education and other funding agencies in the process of developing our work. Education is taken very seriously in Singapore, that's for sure!

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

NIE conducts cutting-edge research in many areas. Being a higher degree student in such a vibrant research institute offers lots of opportunities for learning. In NIE, higher degree students benefit from the expertise of scholars who specialise in both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. The link between theory and practice is very strong, which I think is something highly valued by most higher degree students.

How would you describe NIE higher degree students?

NIE higher degree students are highly committed, bright, and very collaborative. For example, I currently supervise two Master of Arts by Research students whose dissertations focus on music teacher PD. I meet them weekly, often together, and it makes me very happy to see how much they help one another in their work. Instead of competing in a negative way, they work together with me towards a common goal.

What have you learned from your students?

When I started to serve as ECDL's Higher Degrees by Research programme leader, I decided to create a discussion group to bring the students together on a weekly basis. We were initially a very small group, but we have been growing and growing over the years... My email list has now about 70 contacts, which includes not only higher degree students but also research staff and faculty from various departments in NIE. We hold weekly sharing sessions where we discuss research, give feedback to our colleagues, and engage in conversations regarding education, theory and practice, and academic life. I have learnt so much from leading this group, both academically and personally.