

Getting To Know Our Students

Wendy Choo, Master of Education (Curriculum and Teaching) graduate



Wendy
was previously the
Head of Department (Arts)
at Millenia Institute and is a
Master of Education
(Curriculum and
Teaching) graduate.

What were you working as prior to your Master's degree?

I was working in the Academy of Singapore Teachers (AST) as a Professional Development Officer when I started pursuing my part-time Master's degree in Education, and continued with the degree when I returned to school as a Subject Head.

What attracted you to a higher degree programme at NIE?

I thought that a Master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching would be helpful in broadening my understanding of curriculum issues, as well as issues related to teacher professional development, both of which were relevant to my job profile.

What was your research on?

My programme was coursework-based, but I decided to challenge myself by going on the dissertation route in my last semester, because I wanted to pick up research skills and learn to present my research findings in an extended piece of writing. My research explored Singapore students' conceptions of history, in particular how they understood history, and the ways our local social context influenced their conceptions.

How would you describe your interactions with NIE faculty members?

Coincidentally, my school engaged Dr Saito to coach us on the use of lesson study to improve our craft and I was enrolled in one of his classes on teacher professional learning. He even used a video of my lesson during the Master's class, which I found amusing. My supervisor, Associate Professor Jasmine Sim, provided a lot of critical feedback for my dissertation drafts, which in turn helped me improve greatly.

What was the best part of being a student at NIE?

What I really enjoyed as a student at NIE were the opportunities to interact with, and learn from, practitioners from other schools and across different fields. I remembered working together with classmates from primary schools on designing a science curriculum as part of a course and I was enriched by the experience even though it was not of my field. It gave me confidence in guiding my teachers to design the school-based curriculum, even though I do not have the same subject expertise as they do.

Has the programme been beneficial to you in bringing forth changes in your organisation?

The programme has been beneficial in preparing me for my role as a Head of Department, where I have to work with teachers from other subject areas to design the school-based curriculum, mentor new teachers and other fellow middle managers, and provide guidance on school-based research for the professional learning teams under my charge.