

Hot Profs in NUS!

You see them in the lecture theatre, you listen to the lecture and then you drool. What exactly is it about these lecturers that make them so Hot? **Pei Yee** speaks to some of these professors and finds out that what makes them Hot is not just their looks.



Dr. Daniel Goh
(Department of Sociology)

We met Dr. Goh at Coffee Club Express just outside LT12. Ever the gentleman, he asks if we would like a drink before beginning the interview. An open and thoughtful person, he considered each question carefully despite the seeming frivolity of being called a Hot Professor.

How do you feel about being called a Hot Professor?

I don't know how to respond to that! No one has said that to my face before although I get some hints in student evaluations. (laughs) I feel what is more important is to connect with the students – share jokes with them, be on the same wavelength and share their interests in terms of pop culture and such – and if that is what's hot, I'm glad I'm hot that way.

So what do you do in your free time?

To relax: I like to cook, something I picked up during my PhD studies. Cooking was an activity that allowed me to think about the different sensory experiences and use my left brain. It's the only way I get to use my left brain because I can't draw or paint or do music, as much as I love art and music. My wife (tadaa! taken!) really likes my pasta because it's simple and elegant good pasta. And I brew beer too. My current batch is still fermenting.

Lace or leather?

Neither. Cotton. White, please.



Mlle Malwina Baranska
(Centre for Language Studies)

She speaks French and as they say, French is the language of love. Speaking to Mlle Baranska, who has taught French in NUS for the last 2.5 years, was an absolute pleasure. The elegant Mlle Baranska is Polish but has lived in France most of her life. She's proof that being a Hot Teacher is not just about good looks or speaking French but having a great personality as well.

How do you feel about being called a Hot Teacher?

Surprised! Well, a little apprehensive at first because in French, 'hot' means something else entirely. But I guess 'hot' in English means someone who is friendly and approachable and perhaps fashionable.

What do you love most about the French language?

It is a rich language and you can never get bored of it. One thing can be expressed in 10 different ways. There is a lot of beautiful French poetry and literature out there. Although the language is complicated, you get great satisfaction out of it as well.

How about a shout out to the students of NUS?

It's been a pleasure working here and teaching them. The students are enthusiastic and it's great to find them so interested in Europe which is so far away! Thank you for the enthusiasm and patience. Also, don't be late for class!!



Dr. Irving Chan Johnson (Department of Southeast Asian Studies)

Dr. Johnson's spontaneity and enthusiasm in everything he does could not have been more evident than in how he readily agreed to this interview. Known for spicing up his lectures by performing shadow

puppetry, singing and then complaining about how Singapore has no spontaneity, this man strongly believes in discovering your angin. This interview was conducted by email because the Hot Professor was running off to look at paintings in Thailand.

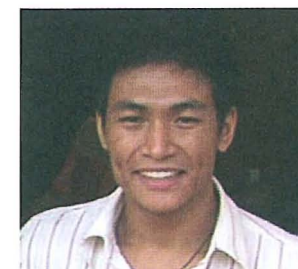
How do you feel about being called a Hot Professor?

It's great! Finally some credit. Thank you ExpressMen and GQ. But then again, it depends on how you say it. :)

What is your angin?

Ah... my passions. I really like performing Thai shadow puppetry (NANG TALUNG). I don't know why. My dream is to one day perform across southern Thailand – buy myself a pickup, and travel from village to village performing at temple festivals, funerals, etc. Can't do without nang talung. I think if there ever came a day when I couldn't do puppetry, I'd shrivel up into a dry mass of sadness and depression. I also really enjoy painting in the classical Thai style. I'm working on a painting right now for a wall in my living room. It's been more than a year now and it's still far from complete because I only work on it in my spare time.

A shout out to the students of NUS: FOLLOW YOUR ANGIN! THINK OUTSIDE THE SILLY BOX.



Imran Bin Tajudeen
(Department of Architecture)

(Interview [regrettably] conducted over email.)

How do you feel about being called a 'Hot TA'?

Flattered. I hope this has never affected how my delivery of lessons has been received! I like to think I conduct my classes with passion and can fire up students' imagination – pun unintended.

So, what is your definition of Hot?

Alluring and sexually appealing. There's a great degree of personal preference to it.

A shout out to the students of NUS:

Suspend assumptions and cultivate an inquisitive disposition – hopefully a sense of criticality will eventually emerge as well.



Prof Rajeev Patke
(Department of English and English Literature)

(Interview conducted over email. Read his charms! This photo was Prof Patke's suggestion!)

What do you think of being called a 'Hot Professor'?

I am acutely aware of how temporary and unpredicable this type of recognition can be.

Why did you choose academia?

I like reading.

A shout out to the students of NUS:

I don't follow

So, what is your definition of Hot?

Not my vocabulary, actually. I don't use the word in the sense students seem to use it. I guess what they mean is that they find the teaching experience exciting?

