As we head full swing into Semester 2, we see more faculty heeding Provost Prof Tan Eng Chye’s call “to build our own technology-enhanced education culture on campus” (Tan, 2013). Whether it is using the IVLE to engage students or developing open online courses so more students can gain access to desired modules, it is evident that more educators are incorporating technology into their teaching.

However, it does not mean that these technologies are being adapted wholesale for their own sake. If anything, educators are mindful that however innovative such technologies are, how they are adopted in the syllabus ultimately depends on one’s teaching objectives and goals. This is a point shared by the authors featured this issue, including our 2013 Outstanding Educator Award winners Assoc Profs Johan Geertsema (University Scholars Programme) and Willie Tan (Dept of Building) as they reflect on the impact of technology on the educator’s role (p.2) and the basics of effective teaching (p. 19). This is also addressed by other colleagues featured in this issue, discussing the diverse ways in which they adopt the flipped classroom approach in their courses, which gives them the chance to “maximise student learning opportunities in the classroom by deliberately shifting direct instruction to outside of the group learning space” (Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight & Arfstrom, 2013, p.6).

With the instructional and more theoretical portions of their lectures moved to video and online platforms, they could now use lecture time in different ways “to work through problems, advance concepts and engage in collaborative learning” (Tucker, 2012). For example, besides using the lecture to discuss and clarify key points, Prof Chi-Hwa Wang and Dr Praveen Linga (Dept of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering) invited an industry practitioner to be a guest lecturer, providing students with valuable insight into the role of heat exchangers in process industries (p. 4). Similarly, Dr Alberto Corrias (Dept of Biomedical Engineering) and Dr Ong Pei Shi (Dept of Pharmacy) used lecture time as opportunities for students to participate in activities that challenged their higher cognitive abilities, whether it is applying the mathematical theories covered in the videos to solve a specific problem (p. 10) or being able to identify a drug-related problem in a case scenario based on concepts gleaned from e-modules (p. 14).

References

