Being in the “twilight years” of a 40-year long career, I have approached my teaching rather differently. First of all, I am what I am and I do not pretend to be anyone or anything else in front of my students. As much as possible I reveal to them my family and educational background, and those key experiences in life that I feel would help them make sense of what it means to be a student, a scholar, a teacher, a breadwinner, and a citizen of a nation. I let them peer into my own struggles, disappointments and joys in trying to make sense of the world around me, not just when I was undertaking formal studies but through coping with challenges I encountered in life and work after my schooling. At my age, there is much I can share with the youth by simply tearing away the veil that is instinctively erected around one’s persona especially by younger teachers trying to fashion a career and get ahead in the profession, as I once did.

Secondly, I am what I write. In the modules I have taught in NUS, I have always set my own works in the readings. The corpus is quite substantial by now: three major and two minor monographs, all self-authored, plus dozens of book chapters, journal articles, and sundry publications. By letting students read and discuss my publications, I give them the opportunity to interact with an author, a producer of knowledge, who has attracted praise as well as criticism for his works. Students then begin to understand how knowledge is shaped and circumscribed by a multitude of factors, not the least being the author’s intellectual formation, his philosophical and political positions, and his own desires and knowledge-blinkers.