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# “The stand-up comedian professor uses academic rigor to pursue his interests.” - College of Science Vice Dean Jiun-Tai Chen



*Jiun-Tai Chen, Vice Dean of the College of Science at NYCU, taught himself ventriloquism. His puppet, Little Wu (Second from left), ordered from the United States, serves as his assistant, and they often make videos together.*

By NYCU Alumni Voice

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Jiun-Tai Chen, currently serving as the Vice Dean of the College of Science at National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University (NYCU), is driven by curiosity to explore the principles behind things. He excels at memory techniques, impromptu speaking, ventriloquism, and magic performances. His multifaceted talents are effectively utilized in teaching, making his courses lively and engaging, thus earning him widespread popularity among students.

In 2022, a unique contestant emerged in Taiwan's largest and most influential comedy competition, the "Comedy Stand-Up Competition" - none other than Jiun-Tai Chen, the Vice Dean of the College of Science at NYCU. After rounds of auditions and preliminaries, he advanced to the finals. During the preliminary round in Hsinchu, Jiun-Tai Chen secured second place, earning him a spot in the finals, where he competed alongside other talented comedians, ultimately achieving an eighth-place finish.

Jiun-Tai Chen has studied memory

While these explorations and learnings originated from personal interests, they have also helped him to see things from others' perspectives. For example, his nervousness before participating in the stand-up comedy finals enabled him to better empathize with students' apprehension when delivering presentations. In the classroom, Jiun-Tai Chen also incorporates these talents into his teaching. He effortlessly performed a magic trick with three ropes to explain the characteristics of polymer material molecular chains, leaving a lasting impression on students.

Additionally, he designs various teaching activities such as escape rooms and taking students to shopping centers to search for nanomaterial products, igniting their learning motivation. Thanks to his lively and engaging teaching methods, students highly regard and love him.

**Embracing Passion and Perseverance  
with a Scholarly Spirit**

techniques and even participated in the Taiwan Open Championships of the World Memory Championships in 2017 and 2018, achieving commendable results. Therefore, memorizing scripts is a manageable task for him. However, he believes that stand-up comedy not only tests memory but also requires quick thinking and adaptability on the spot. Even with identical content, the delivery order or a slight pause in the wrong place can affect the humor. Moreover, considering his educational background, his performances are reasonable; he must strike a balance and adhere to certain constraints in his delivery.

He wrote about his experiences and shared them as articles on his Facebook page, "**Jiun-Tai Chen - Teacher Jiun-Tai (陳俊太 - 阿太老師)**," receiving significant feedback, which was an unexpected outcome.

### **Driven by Curiosity: Exploring the Principles Behind Things**

When discussing his initial motivation for learning stand-up comedy, Jiun-Tai Chen mentioned that it wasn't simply about performing; instead, whenever he felt curious about something, he was compelled to understand its principles. For instance, his curiosity about the mechanisms that trigger

In addition to stand-up comedy, memory techniques, ventriloquism, and magic, Jiun-Tai Chen often refers to himself as a 'meditator.' Engaging in seated meditation is not for pursuing spirituality or religious exploration but rather to understand its effects on the brain. Through regular meditation sessions of 40 minutes each day, he found that he could clear the clutter of thoughts generated by busy daily life, thereby achieving relaxation.

Despite the apparent divergence of various interests, they are fundamentally rooted in curiosity about the principles of things and practical exploration, much like scientific research. Jiun-Tai Chen, who has made various innovative inventions in polymer science, shares his learning approach. When he develops an interest in a specific field, he first reads representative books in that area, then seeks out teachers and arranges regular courses. Having someone assist in adjusting along the way can significantly enhance learning effectiveness.

He also often encourages students to pursue their interests wholeheartedly. "Human time is limited, but if you manage it well, you can accomplish a lot," Jiun-Tai Chen remarks. He mentions that he has many things he wants to learn, including

"humor" led him to start learning stand-up comedy. Witnessing someone memorize a shuffled deck of cards briefly intrigued him, prompting him to learn memory techniques. After seeing a ventriloquist perform, he wondered if the voice came from the stomach. Consequently, he began to experiment and practice independently, and now he can perform ventriloquism and sing using this technique.

photography, oil painting, writing novels, and even creating unique ventriloquist dolls. He continues to explore various facets of a fulfilling life.

Please refer to the [original text \(Mandarin\)](#) for details.

### Related Image(s) :



Professor Jiun-Tai Chen mustered the courage to participate in the largest stand-up comedy competition in the country, advancing through several rounds to reach the top eight in Taiwan. (Photo from CommonWealth Magazine)

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