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When I came to Taiwan I was excited to start a new chapter in my life. Unlike many of the colleagues I was shortly to meet at NCCU, I was already deep in a career that I loved and I knew exactly what I wanted from the program there. I began searching for a mentor that would ultimately lead me to new discoveries about myself and about my field. What I found with Dr. Chou turned out to be more rewarding than I could have expected.

My first meeting with Dr. Chou was before my first semester had started. I went to her for a simple signature, but ended up talking with her for more than an hour. She quickly put me at ease and made me feel welcome as we spoke about the joys of teaching and the fascinating topics that we would explore in her classes. Of all the courses I took at NCCU, hers were by far the most challenging and the most rewarding. The students discussed things openly in each session, learned from each other as well as from her, and shared discoveries that we made along the way. All the while Dr. Chou pushed us to improve our writing, to be precise in our communication with each other, and to question ourselves and each other respectfully and openly. When she eventually approached me about working with her as a research assistant, I knew that it would be an opportunity I should not pass up.

As an RA for Dr. Chou, I was challenged more than ever to think, to write, and to improve as a scholar. Through her guidance and support, my voice as a writer began to take shape and mature. Together we worked on several topics, none of which I would have considered myself qualified to write about, but Dr. Chou believed in my ability. She gave me the freedom to explore my own ideas, and when we discussed them in her ever growing team of protégés, we challenged each other to improve and validated each other's hard work. Her generosity and support didn't stop with her dedication to teaching, however. When we finished a project, she offered to put my name on the work that we submitted together. Nothing quite compares to the pride and confidence I gained from seeing my name alongside my mentor's on my first publications.

The relationship between a Teacher and a student is unique and impactful. A teacher must be patient as her students experience the pains of growth, but must also be firm so that her students don't become complacent. She must be open as her students explore their complex thoughts and feelings, but she must also insist that they rigorously examine their ideas. Perhaps most importantly, though, she must care for her students the way a shepherd cares for her flock. I know this because this is the teacher that Dr. Chou is for her students, and the teacher that she is for me. She believed in me when I needed it most. She saw the potential in me and challenged me to bring it to the surface. As I return to my career as a teacher, myself, I will remember the teacher that she was to me, and strive to be that for my own students. Thank you, Dr. Chou, for everything you do.