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Please list some personal profile information such as your hobbies, family, favorites, etc.:

My mother came to the United States from Korea with my older brother and me in 1975, when I was five. We lived in Los Angeles and Orange County, then moved to the Bay Area when my brother Edward started college at Cal and I started high school. (It's a pretty tight family when your family joins *you* for college.) My mother passed away in 1999. Ed also became a professor, at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and we dedicated our first book together to our mom.

By the time I was done with my formal education, I'd spent twelve years in college and graduate school. I took my first academic job at the University of Texas at Austin in 2000, then in 2002, I started here at UCSB; I got tenure in 2005. My wife and I have three daughters now, and we live in Goleta, about four miles from campus.

What are your research interests?

I've been obsessed with immigration law and policy for a long time now, ever since I was a kid. I mean really, I'm *from* an immigrant family. My doctoral dissertation was on the philosophical and moral problems associated with immigration law, and about the development of federal immigration law and its impact on the first racial group targeted for federal exclusion, namely Asians. My background and training are in law and public policy, and I became an Asian Americanist rather later in my academic life. I really

enjoy teaching in ethnic studies, and because so much in the field of immigration requires interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, my work is never boring.

How would you describe your teaching style?

My favorite professors in college were really enthusiastic about their lectures and topics, and they were so thoroughly prepared that they seemed to anticipate any question. They were quite simply brilliant. And yet they were also very humble: as active researchers, they explained complex problems that they were working on, problems that had yet to be solved, and this was like an invitation of sorts, a way of saying that young students like me could contribute and develop a field of knowledge and expand our collective horizons.

I want my students to come to class not because they have to, but because they really want to. I want my students to realize that the universe of what we know is much, much smaller (teeny tiny) compared to the universe of things worth knowing. I want to share my obsessions, and to encourage others to pursue their own intellectual passions.

What is your idea of a good time?

Before the children were born, I enjoyed traveling, fishing, and reading, sometimes all together. The wife isn't really into fish, but we traveled a lot together. Lately, because of the kids, we've been going to museums, libraries, zoos, aquariums, amusement parks, and on family vacations. When the kids have fun, I have fun, too. And on most days, I go running.

But I really enjoy being a professor—I thoroughly enjoy reading, writing, advising, and teaching. Grading tends to be less fun, but with that one exception, it's all good. I think even if I were independently wealthy, I would still be a professor, and some days, I can't

believe I'm being paid to do these things I've always enjoyed. I truly love being immersed in a world of ideas.

What do you think is the most important thing for a student to learn at college?

The most important thing I got out of my own education was a sense of humility. When I was eighteen, I had already been pretty successful in school, and so I tended to be an arrogant, cocky know-it-all. In college, I slowly realized that I really hadn't known anything at all. What I knew before college could fill a thimble, what I knew after could fill a bucket. And yet I learned—the most important thing I learned—was that there is an ocean of things to know and explore, so much, much more than any one life could possibly fit. I came to college feeling immortal and limitless, but left a more sober, humble person.

(Consider this: Most undergraduates here will take between forty to fifty classes before they graduate. This University offers over two thousand, *every year*. And we design dozens of new ones all the time.)

I hope you'll leave with a greater appreciation of how complex things really are, and of how important and wonderful and transformative learning can be. I hope you'll learn *how* to learn, and then never stop wanting to learn and to know and to expand your own horizons.

What is your advice for new students at UCSB?

Please don't underestimate both how difficult and how fun college can be. For many new students, especially freshmen, this will be the first time they'll be unsupervised, where no one will tell them what to do, when to study, what to eat, when to go to bed, or how to party responsibly and in moderation. College can be hard because there are so many

pleasant distractions everywhere, all the time, and yet precisely because of that, things can get out of hand quickly. Learn to balance—whatever you’ve heard about UCSB, it’s first and foremost a major research university full of rigorous and highly motivated professors and scholars, all of whom tend to derive much of their pleasure and “fun” in a lab or a library or in quiet study and reflection. Goof off too much in their classes and it won’t be fun eventually. An F is no fun.

On the other hand, if you’re able to focus, if you find an intellectual or artistic or creative passion that you want to nurture, this place is endless opportunity. You can learn string theory, take violin, a seminar on successive waves of immigration to the United States, and surf, all in the same *day*. There’s just no other setting for young people to have that kind of life. If you can balance school and play, if you can *make* school as enjoyable as your play, college is amazing, and this place will just blow your mind. Oh, the places you’ll go.

And that leads to my last piece of advice: if you want to spend lots of time with people your own age, but unencumbered by responsibility or outside demands, if the desire for partying is too great, or if you’ve suffered a devastating loss or illness, either yourself or someone you love, or if you are too immature or too unfocused or too uncertain, if you know only vaguely why you’re in college—in short, if you’re not *ready* for serious academic work—then it’s not a bad idea to deal with these other things first, to grow and mature in other ways, and then come back to college when you’re truly in the right frame of mind.

When my mother died, I took a year off from almost everything. I eventually worked in a law firm, about six months after her death, but I didn’t do anything scholarly for another year. It seemed a natural occasion to pause, to think critically about my life, and for a time, I thought I might be a lawyer instead of a professor. Yet when I went back to my dissertation, I was surprised to find how much I’d missed it, how much I loved it. During that time, I also figured out that I wanted to become a parent, too, to have a vibrant family life even though I knew that pain and loss are inevitable in all families.

It's a lot of pressure to start college, to find a decent major (quickly), to get decent grades, to finish in four years. But as much as possible, arrange your time here so that you'll enjoy your journey. And don't be surprised if you must take a detour now and then before you reach your destination.