

**Tribute by Amitabh Sinha,  
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As a teacher at the start of my career, I often wrestle with how to become a better and more effective teacher. A big source of inspiration is the several excellent professors and teachers who have taught me. One such teacher was Prof M.C. Puri.

Prof. Puri taught me two courses in Operations Research at IIT Delhi during 1994-1999, but more importantly, (as my wife will attest), he taught me more than a few things that affect my classroom teaching today.

My first encounter with Prof. Puri was in my second year, when I attended his class on core optimization. While the class itself had a reputation of being somewhat difficult, Prof. Puri displayed ample patience, never hesitating to explain things over again. He was a soft-spoken person with a solid grasp on both the subject matter and how best to teach it.

In my final year, we managed to convince him to offer an advanced elective for the small group of us who were interested in the area of operations research, and he was delighted to do so. He was even more enthused when we actually suggested some topics that he might cover, and he took tremendous care to prepare the material and teach us.

Prof. Puri's reputation for being a stickler for personal as well as academic integrity stretched beyond those who were taught by him. It's always a difficult task for a teacher to teach mathematics to a class of mostly disinterested students, yet Prof. Puri never let it get the better of him.

I've recounted several times, one particular lesson in humility from Prof. Puri. In my youthful arrogance, I once decided to sit for an exam in one of his classes with a cup of coffee in my hand. Prof. Puri immediately and politely asked me to take the coffee out of the room. That lesson in sticking to one's high standards and not compromising on one's integrity stays with me even today.

As a teacher, I find that one of my greatest rewards is when a student tells me that something I said or I did had a real impact on their lives.

Prof. Puri, you taught me not only the simplex method and Karmarkar's algorithm - but also integrity and humility.

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*About the author:* **Amitabh Sinha** studied in the Mathematics department of IIT-Delhi from 1994 to 1999 in the Integrated M.Sc. in Mathematics and Computer Applications program. He took two classes from Prof. Puri: the basic optimization class in his second year, and an advanced class in his final year. **He currently teaches at the University of Michigan.**