

# Dialogue

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香港大學  
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Student Affairs

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MEANWHILE ■ By David Brooks

### What every college kid should learn

**I**ve got great news! You're young and you're smart and next year you're beginning college. Unfortunately, I've also got bad news. The only school you got into is Harvard University, where, as Peter Beinart of *The New Republic* notes, students often graduate without the kind of core knowledge that you'd expect from a good high school student, and required courses are a hodgepodge of arbitrary, esoteric classes that cohere into nothing at all.

But don't despair. I've consulted with a bevy of sages, and I've come up with a list. If you do everything on this list, you'll get a great education, no matter what college you attend:

**Read Reinhold Niebuhr.** Religion is a crucial driving force of this century, and Niebuhr is the wisest guide. As Alan Wolfe of Boston College notes, if everyone reads Niebuhr, the devout would learn that public piety corrupts private faith and that faith must play a prophetic role in society. The atheists would learn that some people who believe in God are really, really smart. All of them would learn that good and evil really do exist and that it is never as easy as it seems to know which is which. And none of them, so long as they absorbed what they were reading, could believe that the best way to divide opinion is between liberals on the one hand and conservatives on the other.

**Read Plato's *Gorgias*.** As Robert George of Princeton observes, the explicit point of the dialogue is to demonstrate the superiority of philosophy—the quest for wisdom and truth to rhetoric—the art of persuasion in the cause of victory. At a deeper level, it teaches that the worldly honors that one may win by being a good speaker can all too easily erode one's devotion to truth—a devotion that is critical to our integrity as persons. So rhetorical skills are dangerous, potentially soul-imperiling, gifts. Explains everything you need to know about politics and punditry.

**Take a course on ancient Greece.** For 2,500 years, educators knew that the core of their mission was to bring students into contact with heroes like Pericles, Socrates and Leonidas. No habit is so important to acquire, Aristotle wrote, as the ability to delight in fine characters and noble actions. Alfred North Whitehead agreed, saying, Moral education is impossible without the habitual vision of greatness.

That core educational principle was abandoned in the United States about a generation ago, during a spasm of radical egalitarianism. And once that

principle was lost, the entire coherence of higher education was lost with it. So now you've got to find your own ways to learn about history's heroes, the figures who will serve as models to emulate and who will provide you with standards to use to measure your own conduct. Remember, as the British educator Richard Livingstone once wrote, One is apt to think of moral failure as due to weakness of character: more often it is due to an inadequate ideal.

**Learn a foreign language.** The biographer Ron Chernow observes, My impression is that many students have turned into cunning little careerists, jockeying for advancement. To counteract this, he suggests taking wildly impractical courses like art history and Elizabethan drama. They should especially try to master a foreign language as a way to annex another culture and discover unseen sides to themselves. As we have evolved into a

**If you do everything on this list, you'll get a great education, no matter what college you attend.**

matchless global power, we have simply become provincial on an ever larger stage.

**Spend a year abroad.** Shibley Telhami of the University of Maryland believes that all major universities should require a year abroad: All evidence suggests this, more than any other, is a transforming experience for students that lasts a lifetime.

**Take a course in neuroscience.** In the next 50 years, half the explanations you hear for human behavior are going to involve brain structure and function. You've got to know which are serious and which are cockamamie.

**Take statistics.** Sorry, but you'll find later in life that it's handy to know what a standard deviation is.

**Forget about your career for once in your life.** This was the core message from everyone I contacted. Raised to be workaholics, students today have developed a carapace, an enveloping shell that hinders them from seeing the full, rich variety of intellectual and practical opportunities offered by the world, observes Charles Hill of Yale. You've got to burst out of that narrow careerist mentality. Of course, it will be hard when you're surrounded by so many narrow careerist professors building their little subdisciplinary empires.

But you can do it. I have faith.

## Interview with the Vice-Chancellor

Professor Lap-Chee Tsui was speaking to Mrs Susan Leung, Editor of Dialogue.



In this last issue for the academic year, I would like to share my thoughts with Dialogue readers:

- Students come to the University to learn knowledge; but knowledge is never-ending and learning is life-long. Learning is not about cramming in information. It is about learning by doing. It is about looking at issues in various ways and developing capacities, especially the ability to research and dig beyond the surface to reach the truth. It is also about finding the right information to solve problems and finish tasks. That is why our goal is to teach students to learn how to learn, rather than merely passing information to them. In any case, a lot of academic subjects change significantly and quickly over time. While information can become outdated, attitude to learning and ability to learn have a longer shelf life.
- The subjects of learning how to learn and how learning is recalled are fascinating and such research is still on-going. However, one must not forget that teaching should still basically arouse interest. It should inspire students and integrate knowledge of specific topics with a bigger picture. While one might not want to measure learning immediately after a class, I reckon we should consider checking what messages students have received and are taking home.
- I believe in the development of the whole person. I also believe that such development need not, and indeed cannot, take place in classrooms alone;

but that students should take advantage of the extra-curricular activities on campus to develop holistically. Students should not neglect this important aspect of their education. They should learn how to manage their time skillfully to enable themselves to participate in extra-curricular activities even if they are having a relatively heavy workload from their studies, such as those students doing a double-major. We are reviewing the content of compulsory subjects and the number of required credits for majors, minors and double majors. We are also considering how to give students more flexibility in the choice of subjects.

- HKU students are fairly confident in general. However, I would like to see more demonstration of active leadership since we want them to lead and serve others in future. For a start, they could learn to speak up. I understand the HKU Campus Toastmasters' Club is one of the places that provide a safe environment for students to get public speaking training and practice. Another attribute that I hope more students would develop is the kind of concentration and passion for learning that I have noticed among students in mainland China. However, while my colleagues and I are trying our best to provide enriching academic and co-curricular programmes to develop students holistically, it is really up to the students themselves to take advantage of the opportunities. Unless individuals are willing to learn, it is difficult for other people to mobilise them to do so. (Continued on back page)

## Editor's Comment

In his article 'What every college kid should learn', David Brooks argued firstly that US universities' courses can be 'a hodgepodge of arbitrary, esoteric classes that cohere into nothing at all'; and secondly that US students were being raised as workaholics, surrounded by 'narrow careerist professors building their little subdisciplinary empires'. They are conditioned to developing a narrow careerist mentality. Many would become what Ron Chernow, the biographer, calls 'cunning little careerists, jockeying for advancement.' If students do not use their university experience to

be truly educated and expand their intellectual and cultural exposure, they would, in the words of Charles Hill of Yale, develop a 'carapace, an enveloping shell that hinders them from seeing the full, rich variety of intellectual and practical opportunities offered by the world.'

In this last issue of Dialogue for 2005-6, let us find out in the form of a stock-taking, from various perspectives of campus life, what opportunities we have provided for our students to expand their horizon for personal growth and to realistically prepare them for the future.

**David Brooks** is a senior editor at *The Weekly Standard*, a contributing editor at *Newsweek* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, and the *Machine Age* columnist for the *New York Times Magazine*.

**Peter Beinart** is editor-at-large at *The New Republic*.

**Alan Wolfe** is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life at Boston College.

**Robert George** is McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and Director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University.

**Aristotle** 384 BC - 322 BC was a Greek philosopher.

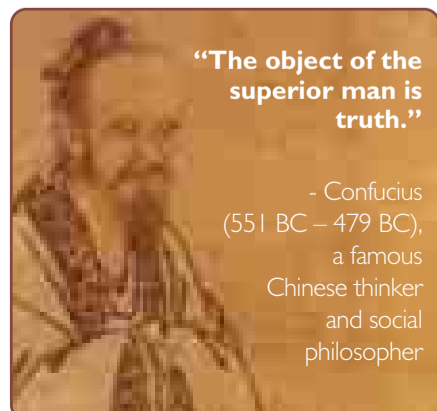
**Alfred North Whitehead** 1861-1947 was a British mathematician, logician and philosopher best known for his work in mathematical logic and the philosophy of science.

**Richard Livingstone** 1880-1960 was an eminent classics scholar, lecturer, broadcaster, and writer.

**Ron Chernow** is an American biographical author.

**Shibley Telhami** is Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland.

**Charles Hill** is a diplomat in residence and lecturer in International Studies at Yale University.



"The object of the superior man is truth."

- Confucius (551 BC - 479 BC), a famous Chinese thinker and social philosopher

**New Undergraduate Programmes**

Bachelor of Science in Information Management (BSc [IM]) – Faculty of Education

This programme targets the information sector and includes courses on:

- ◆ Information technology
- ◆ Knowledge management
- ◆ Customer services
- ◆ Information design and architecture
- ◆ Information economics and policy
- ◆ Sociology of information, and other information science

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education in Language Education (English) – Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education

This four-year full-time double degree programme comprises major courses in English Language and Linguistics and a minor course in Education Studies covering the following topics:

- ◆ Education foundations
- ◆ Methods and practices of teaching
- ◆ Information technology
- ◆ Linguistics
- ◆ Applied linguistics
- ◆ Literature and language proficiency

Bachelor of Business Administration (International Business and Global Management) – Faculty of Business and Economics

This unique programme integrates business and economics and social sciences to form a single, structured and coherent programme in international business and global management. The features of this three-year intensive programmes are:

- ◆ An international field trip / internship in America, Asia, Australia or Europe
- ◆ A global issue team project with students in other countries
- ◆ Exposure to real-world global business environment
- ◆ Application of academic knowledge to actual business practices during the summers of Year 1 and 2
- ◆ A compulsory one-semester international student exchange programme during Year 2

The programme is designed to be progressively more demanding in later years.

For details of all undergraduate degree programmes, please visit <http://www.hku.hk/acad/ugp/faculty.html>

**Undergraduate Broadening Courses**

Broadening Courses are provided in two semesters and during summer.

- ◆ Humanities and social science studies (16 courses)
- ◆ Science and technology studies (18 courses)
- ◆ Cultural and value studies (15 courses)
- ◆ Information technology studies (2 courses)

The Broadening Courses develop students' knowledge in wide varieties of studies. Some examples are:

- ◆ Body, beauty and fashion
- ◆ Knowing the unknown
- ◆ Quality culture in developed economy
- ◆ Food : facts and fallacies
- ◆ From Sherlock Holmes to modern forensic science
- ◆ China and Asia in 21st century
- ◆ Love, marriage, sex and family
- ◆ Understanding popular culture in Japan and Hong Kong
- ◆ Hong Kong cinema in the context of globalisation

For details of the Broadening Courses, please visit <http://www.hku.hk/student/broadening/>

# Interview with the Registrar Mr Henry Wai

**Q:** What is the function of the Registry?

**A:** The Registry provides administrative support to activities of the University.

**Q:** As things change very fast and Hong Kong has to develop towards becoming a knowledge-based economy, how is HKU responding to these trends?

**A:** The University is making every effort to enable its students to learn the latest in knowledge and skills, and our curricula are reviewed and revised every year. **New Undergraduate Programmes** are launched from time to time, and new pedagogy has been adopted to help students in their learning. More importantly, the University emphasises the importance of life-long learning skills and core competencies. Our students are equipped with the skills and ability to conduct life-long learning, which will enable them to cope with future changes and to be leaders in the knowledge-based economy.

With this objective in mind, the University is now designing a 4-year curriculum which will be introduced, following the "3+3+4" education reform in Hong Kong, in 2012. Students will find the new 4-year curriculum to be broader, with plenty of subject choices (under proper academic advice). "Experiential learning" will be an area that will be emphasised in the new curriculum.

**Q:** How do we help students cope with or compensate for their having to specialise in a particular field of knowledge or subject?

**A:** We have incorporated many **Broadening Courses** in most of our existing curricula to enable students to enhance their language, communication and IT skills, and to take courses across disciplines (so that arts students, for example, could take some science courses, and science students, arts subjects). Students will be provided with even more flexibility in their course choices in the new 4-year curriculum in the future.

**Q:** As the world is now referred to as a "global village", what are we doing to expand our students' experiences as "global citizens"?

**A:** In recent years, internationalisation is one area that the University has made great strides in. HKU has been an international university from the time of its establishment as far as its staff and research activities are concerned, but because of government policy, we did not have an international student community until rather recently. We are currently bringing an increasing number of international and Mainland students to the University, while also sending our students to overseas countries on exchange. We have exchange agreements with more than 150 institutions outside Hong Kong, and the number of our overseas

partners is increasing. HKU is indeed very attractive to students in many countries who wish to learn in this part of the world as we teach in English, and we have a worldwide reputation. The total number of incoming and outgoing exchange students each year is more than 1,000. In addition, another 1,000 students participate in study programmes or internship schemes each summer. All these activities will better prepare our students to be "global citizens".

**Q:** Can you tell us more about this local and non-local cultural mix?

**A:** We currently have non-local students of about 70 nationalities. Additionally, we also have students who are Hong Kong residents but who have education backgrounds different from mainstream Hong Kong students (e.g. students from ESF and international schools in Hong Kong, students with qualifications from overseas, part-time students who are expatriates of international business firms in Hong Kong).

The University would like to see cultural exchanges between its local students and students from different countries and backgrounds, which is the main objective of our efforts to "internationalise". So we try to provide more opportunities for local students to share experiences with non-local students. We set up a Global Lounge to provide a venue where local and non-local students can meet and socialise together. Instead of building a special "International House" for non-local students, we have arranged for local and non-local students to live in the same halls of residence and share the same University facilities. We would like to encourage our student societies to conduct activities in which overseas students can participate alongside Hong Kong students.

**Q:** In what way do our postgraduate academic courses contribute to offering the desired kind of postgraduate education for students?

**A:** We have **Taught Postgraduate (TPg) courses** and **Research Postgraduate Studies**. HKU offers a wide range of TPg programmes to provide the SAR with the expertise it needs. Interest in TPg courses is rising as more working adults look for part-time courses to improve and equip themselves for a knowledge-based economy, a change in career direction, or to fulfill their interest in a specific subject.

We have world class academics in all disciplines to supervise our MPhil and PhD students.

**Interviewer:** Thank you, Mr Wai, for such a focused and succinct account of our HKU education.

May 8, 2006

**New Taught Postgraduate Programme**

Postgraduate Diploma in English Studies

This two-year part-time course, covering eight compulsory and four elective courses, aims to enhance professional knowledge of in-service as well as prospective teachers of English.

The compulsory courses are:

1. Phonetics and phonology
2. Lexis, morphology and semantics
3. Pedagogic grammar
4. Written and spoken discourse
5. Sociolinguistics and English as an international language
6. Psycholinguistics and second language acquisition
7. Introduction to literature in English
8. Introduction to language arts

The elective courses are:

1. Genres in professional discourse
2. Language and electronic communication
3. Asian voices in English
4. English and subject knowledge
5. Variety of English
6. English as an international language in China

For a full list of Taught Postgraduate Programmes, please visit [http://www.hku.hk/rss/pp2006/reg\\_sylbs.html](http://www.hku.hk/rss/pp2006/reg_sylbs.html)

**Research Programmes**

HKU is very strong in its research activities, having been awarded the largest amount of awards in eight years out of the past nine, and produced the biggest output of refereed research publications consistently in the past nine consecutive years. Students interested in developing original ideas can apply for either of these two research programmes: Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) under the research professor of their choice.



"Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance."

- Confucius

# The OISE organises hundreds of exchange opportunities for students to study abroad

## Interview with Ms Katherine H M Wan Programme Director Office of International Student Exchange



Ms Katherine Wan (first on the left), at an annual dinner with exchange students and the Registrar, Mr Henry Wai (second on the right)

**Q:** What is the purpose of exchange programmes?

**A:** The main objective is to broaden students' horizon by giving them the opportunity to study in a different environment or a new city, and experience a new culture or a different mode of learning.

**Q:** Are there different types of student exchange programmes?

**A:** There are exchange programmes established at University level and those organised by individual Faculties or departments such as the Faculty of Business and Economics and the Department of Japanese Studies. Some exchange programmes include internship and work placement components. All exchange programmes are subsidised by the University.

**Q:** What about the number of students benefiting from these programmes?

**A:** So far, we have over 150 exchange partners in more than 20 countries. For credit-bearing exchange programmes alone we exchange about 550 students per year. Still many more students are being sent out on other programmes.

**Q:** How are these programmes arranged?

**A:** Reciprocal exchange agreements have been established with our partners and we generally send a minimum of two to a maximum of ten students to a partner. We also have an internal quota of the number of incoming and outgoing exchange students that we can cater for in a

year. The number of incoming and outgoing exchange students is not necessarily the same.

**Q:** Can you tell us some experience in making arrangements for outgoing exchange students?

**A:** We select and nominate students to our partners according to these criteria: academic standing, extra-curricular activities, contribution to the University, and performance at interview. We hope all outgoing students can be friendly ambassadors of HKU. Unfortunately not all students who wish to study abroad have a chance to do so.

**Q:** How do you help outgoing students integrate into different foreign communities?

**A:** We organise pre-departure briefing sessions together with the Office of Student Affairs. We conduct experience-sharing sessions for both incoming and outgoing students and give them advice on how to adjust to 'culture shock'. Handbooks are also distributed to students. All these will help them get prepared for studying abroad.

**Q:** Did any outgoing students give up half way?

**A:** Fortunately it has not happened. We always remind students to expect problems and to be careful. They have to manage their budget and time on their own in a foreign place where assistance might not be as easily available as back home. They also have to do a lot of things for themselves such as cooking their own meals. It is particularly trying if they are in a non-English speaking country and do not know the local

language. Safety is a particularly important issue and students should know how to protect themselves and be alert all the time. For example, pick pocketing is rampant in some countries.

**Q:** What are some precious experiences for them?

**A:** It is not always easy for students to integrate into a different culture and make new friends. No matter how positive exchange experiences might be overall, there are bound to be difficult times. However, solving problems independently and managing crises on one's own is one of the chief reasons for studying abroad. With such experiences, students become more mature and independent. Having said that I should point out that assistance is available to them from our overseas alumni chapters and overseas mentors, as well as from the host universities.

**Q:** So what about incoming students? What are the problems encountered by them?

**A:** The main problem is 'culture shock'. Non-local students have relatively lower tolerance for noise compared with Hong Kong students. Late night or early

morning activities in halls of residence are trying for visiting students. Acclimatising to the local climate is something that all visiting students have to do. For incoming students it is the heat and humidity of Hong Kong. For outbound students it is the cold climate of temperate regions. To help incoming students adjust, as well as to provide opportunities for local students to learn about a different culture, we have set up a buddy system. Exchange and visiting students are paired with a local student from the same hall of residence or Faculty.

**Q:** What about students who do not have the chance to study abroad? How could they benefit from the presence of international students?

**A:** Local students can always mingle with some 600 exchange and visiting students who are studying on our campus, in the classrooms and in halls. A talent exchange programme has recently been set up to encourage local students to make new friends with international students. Furthermore, our Office, the halls, societies, departments and Faculties organise a lot of social activities over the year for students to build up their social network. If both incoming and local students make use of these opportunities to learn about other cultures, their world view would be much broader.

**Q:** How would you evaluate student exchange programmes?

**A:** Although they are resource intensive, these programmes form a very important part in achieving the University's goal of internationalisation. For those who go abroad on exchange programmes, they have first hand experience of living and working overseas. I am happy to see that returning students, apart from developing academically, especially with speaking up in class, often become more mature and independent. Furthermore, many of them have enhanced their global outlook after having been abroad. For those who stay in Hong Kong there are around 600 international students from a range of 69 nationalities for them to interact with and learn from in the classrooms as well as in the halls and around the campus.



Ms Katherine Wan (front row, second from the left), on tour to Tai Po with exchange students

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

# Shaping myself into an all-rounder

Patrick Wong BBA III Exchange student to University of Navarra, Spain for one semester

The University has provided me with not only academic training and career advice but also vast opportunities to expand my horizon and grow as a whole person.

As a BBA student who seeks help from the Careers Education and Placement Centre, it is understandable how I have benefited academically and careerwise from HKU. Indeed, I have already secured a good job offer from a major international bank just one month after I returned. However, my learning experience at HKU is more than academic training and career advice. The group presentation on the topic of 'Banking in 2046' for the HKU-Citibank University Banking Course challenged my communication skills and teamwork ability. Incidentally we won a study trip to New York City with an innovative style. We adopted the style of a TV newsmagazine. We wanted to highlight the special features of our product. This style proved to have drawn the attention of the adjudicators throughout. Members were frank to each other, which enabled us to make quick decisions on a tight schedule. The Lee Shiu Socio-economic Study Project which took me to several major cities in the mainland and the internship in Citigroup helped me develop many aspects of my personality.



The transforming experience was, of course, the time that I spent studying abroad. In the first semester of my final year I had the opportunity to study international business administration at the University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain. It was there that my ability to win acceptance from students of different countries was tested. I also learned not to be discouraged or judge people by the first impression. For example, the Germans, who were cool, serious and cautious at first acquaintance, were in fact very friendly when I plucked up enough courage to strike up a conversation with them. They were not unfriendly as I first thought. I learned a lot about their culture as a result. The Spaniards, on the other hand, were very enthusiastic and friendly right from the start. They were very forthcoming and keen to make



people around them happy. I took advantage of such great company and enjoyed much hanging out and clubbing with them. With British and American students it was rock music, musicals and movies. Western Europeans were for sports, museums and galleries and Spaniards and Latin Americans, parties. My horizon about their cultural and social life has certainly broadened, with great social and health benefit, no less.

I could go on and on listing what I have observed about the different mentality or cultural habits of the people I met in Spain. In a nutshell, I learned different people have different lifestyles. Each has different traits, values and sensitivities and should be treated differently. I am now more understanding and open-minded when I make new friends.

However, the differences between people, particularly when it concerns views about right and wrong truly tested my ability to judge as I formulate my own value system. One simple example was smoking and drinking. Spaniards think they are only social habits which make socialising easier. Most Hong Kong people think otherwise. To what

extent is each side right or wrong? I choose to know more about them before I judge.

An obvious difference between Chinese students and those from other countries is that we are conservative and apprehensive about making mistakes. Few of us dare to voice out our opinions in class. Hence lectures in Hong Kong can be quite dull. The lively discussions in Navarra made attending lectures an interesting and rewarding experience. One can learn a lot by speaking up.

While in Spain, my Latin friends told me how bad their living conditions were in their home countries. I would never have known this if I had not met them. I am determined to do volunteer work in Latin America someday and I can practise my Spanish too. At the same time, I realised that I must not limit my vision and ambition to our local environment alone. In fact, I should look beyond Hong Kong and explore the world. Even Spain is a big place, not to mention the world. Hong Kong is just one tiny city among many habitations.

Above all else the socialising, partying, lectures and reflection helped me reach one very important thought. I now have a clear idea of how I can better balance my life and career because many of my friends that I met have very different lifestyles after all. There are many life-fulfilling things for me to do than just getting good grades and a good job.

**"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."**

- Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1984), a political and spiritual leader of the Indian Independence Movement



Patrick, skiing on the Pyrenees and partying with friends (top and right)

## The Global Lounge



A Student Ambassador at Global Lounge

- U – Ms Ung Lee Ling, Manager Global Lounge
- J – Joanna Wong (Comparative Literature & French Year II) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- A – Amy Tam (Linguistics & Translation Year II) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- Je – Jenny Ng (Master of Architecture) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- C – Convi Fung (Journalism Year I) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- W – Wallace Tang (German & European Studies Year I) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- Wi – William Tsui (Economics & Finance Year II) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- O – Oscar Chan (European Studies Year II) - Global Lounge Student Ambassador
- Jc – Jack Tsoi (Business Administration Exchange Student from Canada)

**Q:** What do you wish to accomplish through the Global Lounge?

**U:** The Global Lounge is a place where the world meets. No matter whether you are from across town or across the globe, you will be able to meet up with other students from around the world and get to know them in the relaxed setting of the Lounge. The Global Lounge is a social meeting place and cultural hub for students, featuring open seating spaces around a big screen plasma TV, an internet café, gym facilities and outdoor café seating. No matter whether you are a local or international student or a student interested in international exchange programmes, you will

also be able to find the information and assistance you need at the information counter and resource area located here.

We believe that 'internationalisation' is more than just a concept; it is a sense of community that can only be created when individuals from different cultures and backgrounds can connect, get to know each other and develop mutual trust. The Global Lounge is ideal for this.

We strongly believe in 'There are no strangers here, only friends you haven't yet met.' – William Butler Yeats. So what better place than the Global Lounge to connect and reconnect.

**Q:** What do you do to achieve that goal?

**U:** The Global Lounge is an ideal place for networking, a platform for students to come and exchange ideas on an international level. For students about to go away on exchange it is also a springboard to meet incoming students from prospective host countries. For those who are not going away as well as international students studying at HKU, the Lounge provides opportunities for them to learn about each other's cultures while staying in Hong Kong. In a nutshell – Globalisation at Home.

**Q:** How is that done?

**J:** I started a talent exchange corner fashioned after a similar scheme I am familiar with. Students are paired up to exchange talents. First you fill in a form listing your talents, such as language skills, and stating the kind of talents you wish to acquire. Matching of students is done by the computer. Most offers of, and request for, talents are language skills at the moment; but the student body here at HKU is actually very diverse and can be better utilised. Learning with a talent partner should be more effective and enjoyable than attending courses which are very often expensive and not interactive. Many good ideas have been generated by philosophers such as Plato or thinkers discoursing in salons. I hope one day great ideas will also come from discussions inside the Lounge or the garden outside.

**U:** I cannot agree with you more. Take Christine as an example. She is a very special and talented person, a Fulbright Fellow. Despite being visually handicapped she is more than willing to exchange her talents with other people.

**Q:** What facilities do you have that would encourage people to mix and socialise?

**U:** As you can see, the Lounge is very cosy and comfortable. Its ambience is very relaxed and is conducive to socialising. There is other means to encourage students to discuss international issues, such as personal computers with Broadband connection, seven international and local news channels, daily newspapers, a reference library on the over 150 exchange programme partners of the University and of course there is our collection of national flags of our partners.



The talent exchange corner at Global Lounge



The fitness room at Global Lounge

Besides catering for the mind we also cater for the body in the form of a mini, but comprehensive fitness room, and a cafeteria serving snacks, coffee and tea – the whole person development.

**Q:** What do Global Lounge Student Ambassadors do?

**A:** We assist in the organisation of events for the Global Lounge. It is a very valuable experience for me as I feel I am a partner of the Lounge, rather than an employee. It is particularly valuable for students who do not live in halls of residence and therefore have few opportunities to come into contact with people of different nationalities. Besides learning to communicate with people from different backgrounds, the greatest satisfaction is to help lonely exchange students feel welcome and at home.

**C:** It is not only students that we get to meet in the Global Lounge, but also visitors from diverse social strata. This is really a very good experience. My friends often wonder what I do here and why I get such a chance. They think I am very lucky to have so much opportunity to learn by answering questions raised by exchange students and chatting with them. Of course I also help organise events. The first Lantern Festival was an unforgettable experience. We were all nervous about it but still we tried our best. It was good to see that this event was very well received and appreciated.

**Je:** Yes, indeed, and it was not only students who came that evening. Staff members actually came. Some even brought their family members. It was a gathering of people from different social backgrounds, age groups, nationalities and academic disciplines. The atmosphere in the Lounge was great with all the lanterns. This experience emphasised for me the Global Lounge's role as the University's focal point for cross cultural interaction. Even when I am off-duty, I still like to ask my friends to come here when we work on our own projects.

**J:** Indeed, the Global Lounge is much more than a geographical location. It is also a psychological reality. By looking at the people in the Lounge one can see how internationalised HKU is. Reading a book about it may not give one the same feeling. The other thing about working for the Lounge is the satisfaction you get from the freedom it gives you to generate and implement your own ideas.

**Je:** The significance of the Global Lounge to me is the imagination and leadership that made it possible in transforming an unremarkable area of a student amenities centre into a nicely decorated international student hub, a platform for international exchange.

**O:** When I first came, I was very shy about speaking to other people; but now I have become good friends with some exchange students. We often go shopping and outing together. This is my first experience in befriending foreigners.



The resources centre at Global Lounge



TV showing both local and international news

Now, I find it much easier to interact with people from different countries and to talk to them about their culture. The Global Lounge is a great place for me to develop an international view. It is also a very comfortable place to make friends and to work in. We are paid a small remuneration for working here but the experience is much more valuable than the pay.

**W:** I do not live in a hall of residence and therefore, do not have many chances to contact exchange students. But in the Global Lounge, I have learnt how to socialise with them and have become increasingly active and bold in chatting with them. I want to know more about their cultures and histories. I want to know their opinions, some of which are totally different from mine. Talking with them has broadened my views and cultivated my creativity. It has also helped me find truth, or what is close to it. We are really privileged to have such a cosy learning and meeting place. Of course, it is not just intellectual discussions that we enjoy together, for we often go out for parties and gatherings.

**Wi:** The Global Lounge has given me experiences that could not be obtained from other student societies. When I work here, I act as a representative of the University, explaining the function of the Lounge and the uniqueness of the University to visitors and students. I hope to give them a more comprehensive perspective of the University. I remember a snap visit from a group of people when we were packing up after a function – despite the suddenness of the visit we still managed to successfully entertain the visitors and also to show them round the Lounge. It was good training for multi-tasking. This demonstrates that all of us are committed to carrying out our responsibilities to the best of our ability under any circumstances. We also try to add new elements to every event to enhance students' understanding of what the Global Lounge is about.

**U:** Working with student ambassadors produced a by-product: a cohesive group that we can all depend on. I greatly appreciate their willingness

to become leaders as well as assistants. Through hard work, the Global Lounge, apart from its international perspectives, is also a good training ground for personal development. We may not have the opportunity to travel all round the world but the exposure to different international cultures certainly helps in enhancing our outlook.

Besides organising events and answering questions, the student ambassadors also facilitate different groups of students to meet, conduct and take part in functions and events together.

**Jc:** I am an exchange student from Canada and am a frequent visitor of the Global Lounge. On my first day at HKU, I came to the Lounge to meet other exchange students. My first reaction was 'nice'. Everything looked beautiful. It was nicely decorated and air-conditioned. We were introduced to some really traditional Hong Kong snacks which was a positive start. I hang out here almost three times a week to meet up with friends, to do homework or watch TV. People and the staff here are wonderful, and the gym is just equally impressive.

As new comers to Hong Kong we did not really know where to go for help, but these people here, like Jessie and Oscar, really helped us a lot. They answered lots of questions for us, showed us where to go, what forms we had to fill out, etc. This is really a good place for exchange students to start their studies and make friends.

**Q:** Ms Ung, do you have some parting words for me?

**U:** I am grateful to the Student Ambassadors for being so dedicated right from the very start. Our aim is to continue to work hard towards further enhancing the Global Lounge as a popular meeting point for all students. The number of students who visit the Lounge is definitely increasing and we firmly believe that during the course of the next academic year the number of 'clients' will continue to grow as we forge ahead to organise events throughout the year.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

# Recruiting Students From Overseas

The Student Liaison Office frequently takes part in overseas education fairs to recruit students from all parts of the world to study in the University of Hong Kong.



Ms Isabella Wong, Director of China Affairs Office (left), explaining to a student at the fair held in Dubai



Professor John Spinks (right) and students at the fair held in Malaysia



Ms Isabella Wong, Director of China Affairs Office (left), Professor John Spinks (second from the right), HKU alumni, students and staff at the fair held in Malaysia



The staff and visitors at the fair held in New Delhi, India



Ms Isabella Wong, Director of China Affairs Office, (second from the right), students and a parent at the fair held in Dubai

## The University of Hong Kong – Participation in Overseas Education Fairs

(A) Undergraduate Fairs		
Location (Country)	Location (City)	Name of Fair
Canada	Toronto	The Go Abroad Fair
Hungary	Budapest	29 International Fair UTAZAS
India	Mumbai, New Delhi & Bangalore	India International Education Fair
Indonesia	Jakarta, Bandung (萬隆)	留學中國教育展 - 印尼
Korea	Seoul & Busan	Korean Student Fair
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	Star Education Fair
Poland	Warsaw	5th Warsaw International Education Fair
Singapore	Singapore	Careers 2006
Sweden	Stockholm	SACO's Student Fair
Thailand	Bangkok	留學中國教育展 - 泰國
The Netherlands	Utrecht	Studie Beurs & International Section Scope on the Globe
UAE	Dubai	Gulf Education & Training Exhibition
(B) Postgraduate Fairs		
Location (Country)	Location (City)	Name of the Fair
Chile	Santiago	World Graduate School Tour
China	Beijing	
China	Hong Kong	
China	Shanghai	
France	Paris	
Germany	Berlin	
Germany	Frankfurt	
Germany	Munich	
Greece	Athens	
Italy	Milan	
Mexico	Mexico City	
Singapore	Singapore	
Spain	Madrid	
Taiwan	Taipei	
Thailand	Bangkok	
Turkey	Istanbul	
UK	London	
Venezuela	Caracas	

## Students from 69 Countries/Regions Studying in HKU

The University of Hong Kong is committed to developing a global perspective and cross-cultural understanding among its students. It has developed a network of reciprocal student exchanges with universities around the world. It is also admitting larger numbers of non-local students. At

present, our student body is composed of 69 nationalities. The following table shows the flags of the nations/regions where our students come from. Are you able to recognise all of them? Ask your friends also to take this challenge. (See answers on P.16)



# Why do students take up postgraduate studies?

## Franklin LU PhD student in Computer Science and Chairman of PGSA

I decided to enrol on a research programme rather than a taught programme because I enjoy doing research. My original career aspiration is to develop IT programmes or products. However, my career goal is gradually changing after my research training at HKU. I might want to continue doing research in academia after all.

Besides research skills, my experience at HKU so far taught me how to find out what I should learn, adjust my goals, and charter new paths. In my opinion, this is what university education

should achieve, i.e. helping students learn how to learn and expanding their life experience.

That is why I decided to join the Executive Committee of the PGSA last year and stay on as Chairman this year to provide continuity and smooth handover for the new team.



## Kassian POLIN Master of Economics student

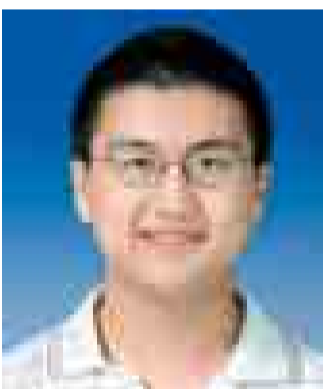
I have always been interested in economics, and enrolled in HKU after graduating from the US because I wanted to take advantage of HKU's excellent faculty and networking opportunities to prepare myself for entry into the world of work. During the past year, I have certainly developed a much better idea of my career interests, and had ample opportunities to explore real world business problems. My Putonghua skills were greatly improved with friends from the Mainland!

I reckon we should all take advantage of our time at universities to develop:

a) Open-mindedness, as one certainly needs it when making friends with people who are ten years older, or when attending job interviews; and

b) Time-management skills, without which life will be a mess.

But above all, HAVE FUN! Don't take life too seriously, or you'll never get out of it alive.



## Sharon CHAN Chemistry PhD student

Science subjects are more intriguing than arts and literature to me. Since secondary school I derived a great sense of satisfaction and achievement from physics and chemistry. However, despite the significant advances the world has achieved in the sciences, progress is still relatively slow. There are still many uncharted territories in our knowledge of the human body. That is why I decided to work for a PhD degree in chemistry.

Doing research opened my mind to many different kinds of thinking. My attendance at the London International Science Forum, during the second year of my postgraduate study, brought me in touch with over 100 fellow young researchers from the four corners of the world. The experience opened my eyes indeed. Conducting research and solving problems independently enhanced my confidence. I am now more willing to try new things and face adverse situations with a positive attitude.

Besides acquiring knowledge, studying at HKU gave me limitless opportunities to learn to think, and interact with local and overseas students. One

of the experiences that I treasure greatly is the opportunity to mingle with younger students and international students in the Lady Ho Tung Hall, where I am a resident. The other valuable experience I have is the freedom I enjoy. It enables me to realise my dream of learning, exploring, asking questions, finding answers, solving problems, developing as a whole person, and learning how to lead. Most important of all, I have learned social awareness, ethics and moral values.

Indeed I did not come to HKU to secure an occupational qualification but to cultivate my intellect and broaden my horizon. I am able to do what I do because of the resources the Government spends on higher education. The reciprocating attitude should thus be within all graduates who should do whatever we can for the community.



## Jeff CHENG Master of Architecture student and Vice Chairman of PGSA

I enrolled on the Master's programme to qualify myself for professional practice as an architect. One of the distinctive features that I appreciate about the Faculty of Architecture is its relatively small size. I can truly benefit from the problem-based learning process that the Faculty employs. It is also rewarding to learn with other students who are motivated and responsive to good teaching rather than be just a small piece among a mass producing factory that churns out graduates.

However, the time I spent at HKU went beyond the mere acquisition of professional knowledge and skills. I definitely grew as a person and widened my exposure. For one thing, I have become a more independent, logical and reasoning thinker. When people around me hold different opinions, I learn not to respond to their views superficially. Rather,

I try to work out why they hold such thoughts. This helps me find convincing solutions. I have also learned not to focus too much on bureaucracy. In order to be innovative, original and creative, one has to think out of the box. As the saying goes in a positive way, "rules are set to be broken".

I have met many people from various walks of life through different occasions and encounters in the University. That is why I took up the position of Vice Chairman of the PGSA. I hope to increase the publicity of the Association and build a stronger connection with other students, societies, and HKU management.



## Ella WONG February 2006 PhD graduate in Chemistry

When I was an undergraduate I spent most of my time studying. That seemed to me to be the right thing to do at that time. During the three years of undergraduate studies, I only took part in the orientation camp and helped in the Open Day. After all, I won a few scholarships and represented HKU at the Hong Kong Chemistry Olympics. However, when I proceeded to postgraduate studies, I realised something was missing in my university life. I had never been an executive committee member and I did not have any hall experience. Then one Saturday afternoon when discussing the research topic with my supervisor Professor C M Che, he reminded me of an important thing: Postgraduate study is not merely a way to equip oneself for a profession. The problem-solving techniques learned during the process are equally important. In addition, one needs to be alert to changes and try to broaden one's scope when there is a chance to do so.

Upon reflection, I decided to experience hall life through joining the summer hall at the end of my 2nd year of postgraduate studies, even though I am older (only slightly, I hasten to add) than the other participants. Though being distracted from my research and study, better time management enabled me to balance study and student activities. Also, these experiences helped me to further explore my leadership as well as interpersonal skills; e.g. learning how to facilitate discussions by drawing out salient points from the participants and convincing the group to arrive at a consensus. This was particularly useful at an orienteering activity when success hinged on appropriate decision-making by the group. Friends noticed the difference that the summer hall experience had on me. They found that I was more light-hearted and high-spirited after living in hall. This encouraged me to seek further residence in a hall since I realised that I could manage my postgraduate studies, which are more demanding than the undergraduate course, (In the meanwhile, I have even won

the renewal of the Sir Edward Y o u d e Memorial Fellowship), while participating in student activities. I am also pleased to be appointed a floor tutor of R C Lee Hall since Nov 2004. It is exciting and rewarding to be able to interact and learn from young hallmates and watch how each of us grow. Though I might not be able to join all their activities, they understand I am always an interested observer and keen supporter. Sticking to studying alone, as I did when I was an undergraduate, is definitely not the appropriate approach to university life. I am glad that I have made such a change at the right time. One would miss a lot of learning opportunities without such valuable experiences.

A unique feature of a research postgraduate programme is the opportunity to attend an international conference with financial support from the University. The travelling experience, discussions and sharing with postgraduates as well as experts from all around the world engaged in a similar field of research were really eye-opening. Being exposed to new ideas and their works, I gained new insights and views at the topics I was tackling with.

I do think undergraduate students should take full advantage of the numerous exchange programmes, which were lacking in the old days, to step out of Hong Kong and gain overseas experience. I also think that we graduates should give back to the community, which has contributed resources to our university education, and maintain a strong bond with the University to ensure growth from generation to generation.



"Wisdom begins in wonder."  
- Socrates (470 BC-399 BC), an ancient Greek philosopher

# Interview with Professor CHE Department of Chemistry Member of the Chinese Academy of Science



**Q:** What are your responses to David Brooks' views?

**A:** It would be good for both undergraduates and postgraduates to spend some time abroad to widen their horizon, either in exchange programmes or in attending international conferences. The University of Hong Kong has already made sure each of our postgraduate students has an opportunity to attend international conferences to present their research findings. This is especially important for Hong Kong because our local academic circle is very small. When they are exposed to a foreign environment and realise they are compatible to the world's best, this will boost their confidence. It is always good to learn a foreign language, especially in extending one's network and becoming a "global citizen". Neuroscience could be a broadening course for our HKU undergraduates. Our postgraduates should be smart enough to know that topic while focusing their effort in his/her own research.

**Q:** How do you expand your research frontiers? How are research topics decided?

**A:** Working in interdisciplinary subject areas and chatting with research students and professors from various groups and disciplines are the means to expanding my research areas. Of course, my desire to develop new areas of Chemistry which bridge Physics and/or Biology provides the driving force as to why

I keep on expanding my research frontiers. For any postgraduate who has the intention to work with me, he/she should be mature enough to know what area, in a broad sense, to do; for example, either in synthetic chemistry or in catalysis or chemical biology. Of course it is important that the area chosen would also be the area that I am interested in and have the expertise. I conceive my research group could provide the chances and opportunities to postgraduates. I conceive that research is usually driven by curiosity and have to remind students that they have to do new things to solve problems that have not been resolved. You need a clear and good grasp of basic concepts, knowledge and insight. In the academic world, to be distinguished from industrial research, I usually start with vague ideas without knowing the details and or possible outcomes. That is why I tell my students that they need the drive and interest in observing and tackling the issue. Once in my team, they follow their seniors to acquire relevant knowledge, techniques and skills. They also have frequent dialogue and discussion with me to know 'what to achieve' and 'why'. In the second year, they should have a clear idea of the background and the direction of the research. Then they will have to take the challenges to formulate and defend the details of their research.

**Q:** What are the new areas of research, and how do you decide what kind of research will meet the needs of the community?

**A:** There are two areas of research. The first is to integrate Chemistry and Biology. Many people denote this area as Chemical Biology and the topics under investigation are Inorganic Medicines and Biomimetic Reactions. The other is to develop interdisciplinary research that connects synthetic chemistry and applied physics and the topics under investigation is advanced functional materials for optoelectronics. Chemistry usually works on molecules but materials science studies deal with the properties and function of bulk materials, which are the consequence of millions of molecules coming together. It is important to realise that collective, weak intermolecular interactions provide the driving force for molecules to come together, and the ways to manipulate such intermolecular interactions to achieve targeted properties remain a formidable challenge in the scientific world. I usually present lectures to both specialists and lay people outside my areas of expertise. I will be very happy and consider my research successful if both the specialists in and outside my areas of expertise and lay people could appreciate my research and have a high regard for what I have done.

**Q:** Do you think there will be any further breakthrough in science in HK after Professor Charles K Kao's Fiber Optics and Professor Lap-Chee Tsui's cystic fibrosis?

**A:** Yes. I have the confidence that in the next 10 to 15 years, at HKU, there will be breakthroughs in the areas of disease gene analysis originated from Professor Tsui's work on cystic fibrosis, synthetic chemistry, infective diseases, and "materials science + computational/theoretical physics". I conceive the ways to accelerate such breakthroughs are to group the world's top-notch chemists, biologists, and physicists of this university together and provide a platform for these scientists to interact and collaborate. Given the talents of these top-notch scientists, they should be able to formulate the means to achieve the next height of their careers. It is not necessary to have tons of money to achieve this goal but a stable fund, say HK\$10 million per year to support several research groups for 10 years. With such support, I am optimistic that HKU would be able to produce success stories in these areas with a world wide impact. Indeed, I said similar things about Chemistry in a previous interview with people from the Croucher Foundation. This is my aspiration to develop my research in the forthcoming decade and would like to see this happen before my retirement or departure from this University.

## Academic Standing of the University of Hong Kong

The University's vision is to sustain and enhance its excellence as an institution of higher learning through outstanding teaching and world-class research, so as to produce all-round graduates with life-long abilities to provide leadership within the society they serve.

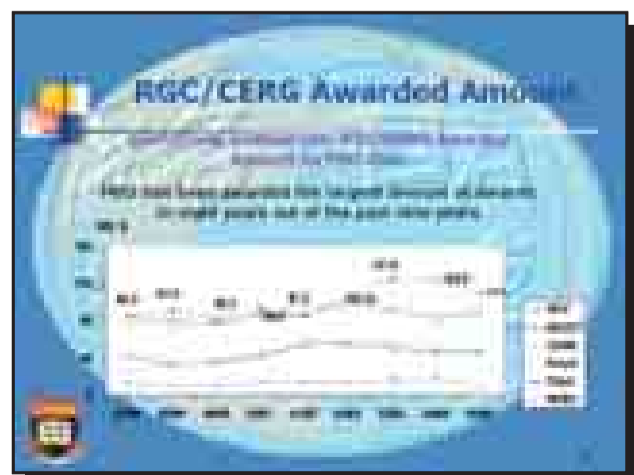
In support of that vision, the research mission of the University is:

- (a) To advance the bounds of scholarship through engagement in innovative, high-impact and leading-edge research within and across disciplines;
- (b) To partner with the community in research

that advances the cultural, social and economic welfare of the society;

- (c) To provide leadership in research and research collaboration among researchers in Hong Kong, China and Asia, and act as a gateway with the rest of the world; and
- (d) To become the leading centre of academic excellence in research postgraduate education in the region, that fully develops individual students' creativity and innovative abilities.

The following graphs demonstrate the University's research achievements of the decade:



\*RGC - Research Grants Council; CERG - Competitive Earmarked Research Grant





Dr Albert Chau delivering a speech on cultural adjustment for non-local students

# A Word from the Dean of Student Affairs Dr Albert Chau

In the University's mission statement, it is clearly articulated that HKU aims to produce '... responsive leaders of integrity and willingness to serve society'. This message is reinforced every year when the Vice-Chancellor welcomes new students to the campus at the Official Welcoming Ceremony. They are urged to be aware of other people's needs and take initiative to shoulder responsibilities. A wide range of co-curricular activities is organised by various units of the University to complement academic programmes and achieve this particular mission of the University. As important as these official programmes, I am very proud of the vibrant educational, cultural, sportive, and social activities that the students themselves organise. The myriad banners around the campus are testament to the



Professor Lap-Chee Tsui, the Vice-Chancellor delivering a speech during the inauguration ceremony

energy, values and social awareness of our students. It is heartening to see such a high level of activities among students. This is a culture we should value.

# Living with other young people will make you laugh and might make you cry, but you will grow as a person.

Dr Albert Chau Warden  
University Hall (1996-2006)

Living in a hall of residence is one of the great ways to develop a sense of right and wrong such as mutual respect, fairness, justice and equality. From day to day, fellow students will form an opinion of each and every one as a member of the community. That opinion affects the student's chances to stay in the hall the following year when the Hall Association conducts the annual readmission exercise. Daily comments from other students and feedback from the exercise no doubt provide much fodder for open-minded students to learn about themselves.

Living in a hall builds students' moral reasoning power. There are many instances when students are required to exercise judgement, resourcefulness and creativity to resolve conflicts. For example, should a student who has not participated actively in hall activities be allowed to stay the following year? If not, why not? What is the moral, and constitutional justification? If

one student wants to turn off the light to sleep but the roommate is working, who should respect whom and give in? Why?

Students who do not live in halls of residence or mini halls but are affiliated members can benefit from residential camps organised by hall associations or by various societies. They can sample communal living and practise interpersonal skills. Those affiliated members who choose to do the organising have similar opportunities as the residents to practise decision making, value formulation, conflict resolution and organising skills.

Another important aspect of campus life is the opportunity for good conversations, especially late at night. When I was a hall resident myself many years ago, we had lively discussion about books, problems, ideals, views, and passions. It was a

good way to understand what was important to other people. It also helped us develop our own value system. I believe much of it still occurs in the halls. Of course, such discussions need not be confined to halls of residence, but living under the same roof does help.

On average, 20% of the residents in a hall of residence are non-local students. Some of them participate in hall orientation programmes and executive committees of student associations while others initiated new activities for their hall. At University Hall an English Speaking Week was organised by exchange students during which



Students participating actively during the Trivia Night



The guest - Dr Ng Wing Ying (second from the right); Warden - Dr Albert Chau (on the right) and tutors of the University Hall at High Table Dinner

everyone was required to speak, play games or compete with each other using English. With more non-local students studying at HKU and residing in halls, opportunities for hall residents to develop as a global citizen will increase.

Halls of residence have a long history of producing leaders. Many community notables acknowledge the role hall residence had on their personal development. Many of them pass on this benefit to current students by returning to their halls as speakers at High Table Dinners to share their thoughts with students. Among recent speakers are Anson Chan, Fanny Law, Leung Chi Hung, etc.

**"We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools."**  
- Martin Luther King, Jr (1929-1968), a Baptist minister and American political activist who was the most famous leader of the American Civil Rights Movement

**‘Participating in SU activities helps students grow as a person, make new friends and gain greater exposure. However, the most important reason for participating in SU activities should be to serve others. Of course, the more active we are, the more we gain in personal growth. But that should be a by-product.’**

Lau Fong President Hong Kong University Students’ Union Session 2006



Students joining the Reality Tour to the Philippines

**Q:** David Brooks, in his article ‘What every college kid should learn’, argued that university students should not develop the mentality of a narrow careerist. What are your views on that?

**A:** There is a general perception that the society needs specific kinds of graduates. If you are going to do business, you just need to have good knowledge of business, be able to do accounting and communicate in English. This is a social problem. Universities have a role to advance the society and not produce narrow careerists. They should cultivate the whole person and persuade the society to adopt this view. This is particularly important for the elite of the society on whom the welfare of many people depend. It is important for employers to understand why this is so. If they are persuaded to adopt this view and start testing job applicants’ general intellectual ability, exchange experience, cross cultural understanding, foreign language ability, philosophical views, sense of right and wrong or truth and wisdom, then I am sure the tendency for students to be narrow careerists will soon be redressed.

**Q:** Do you think students are able to develop a sense of right and wrong, pursue wisdom and truth, etc through involvement in activities of the Students’ Union?

**A:** Yes. Students are able to acquire different kinds of skills, training or experience through these activities. In the study tour to the Philippines to examine the situation of ‘people power’ in that country, every participant gained something, for example, better writing skills, greater exposure, better understanding of social problems, ideas about solving these problems through participation in social movements such as advocating sustainable development.

**Q:** Do you think students can develop important values through participation in SU activities?

**A:** Participating in SU activities will definitely help students develop their own value system. It will also help them grow as a person, make new friends and gain greater exposure. However, the most important reason for participating in SU activities should be to serve others. Of course, the more active we are, the more we gain in personal growth. But that should be a by-product.

**Q:** What is your view over student participation in university governance?

**A:** HKU students are playing a greater role than before; but it is still not frequent nor substantial enough. Professors should have a greater say on issues like the syllabi and teaching methods; but students’ opinions should be respected on issues like the provision of meals and the arrangement of sports facilities. Greater student participation in university governance will be good for both. In having a greater say on issues, even minor ones, students will be more interested in the development of the University.

**Q:** What do you think students get from participation in university governance?

**A:** Under the present situation, student representatives gain administrative experience from sitting on University committees. However, the number of students who can sit on such committees is not big enough. If participation is enlarged more students will benefit. Their general campus experience will also be enhanced. More importantly, through participating in university governance, they will be able to exercise their rights and obligations as responsible citizens. They will have to learn to strive for their own group interest as responsible members of a bigger family.

**Q:** Can you tell us something about the constitutional reform of the Students’ Union? What is the aim of the reform?

**A:** In the past 50 years the scale and function of the Students’ Union have changed

tremendously and is still changing. However, no significant changes have been made to the constitution during that time. As an institutional document alone, the constitution needs to be reviewed and reformed. Furthermore, we need to understand and remind members of the SU’s core values and rebuild its centripetal force. Through a constitutional debate/reform, we want to make every one understand again why we have an SU and why there are certain rules and why some outdated ones should be redressed. We will first organise forums and debates to gather ideas. After that working groups will be convened to seek further opinions. Later on, students will be invited to vote on key issues. If more than 10% of students vote for the reform, and we have a simple majority among those 10% of votes, the constitution will be amended.

**Q:** What do you think students can gain from participating in the reform process?

**A:** By setting the rules and agenda together, individual ownership of the SU would increase.

We would have a new social contract. Students’ duties and obligations would be justified. Above all, through the reform process, we hope that people would experience and understand the spirit of democracy.

**Q:** What is the major difficulty of this reform?

**A:** Firstly, we have to balance the interests and views of the vast membership which comprises around one hundred sub-organisations and thousands of members. You can understand how difficult it is for so many people to reach a consensus. Secondly, making changes to a constitution which has a long history will not be easy. Drastic and immediate reforms are not likely to

succeed. Nevertheless, we should make a start; develop a meaningful model and list of modifications and work on it step by step. It might take us a few years to complete the whole reform.

**Q:** Do you have any special/unforgettable experience or disappointment?

**A:** My participation in the anti-WTO protests is most unforgettable. We worked with many overseas student communities on the protests. My time was torn between taking examinations for my studies and taking part in the protests through assisting the demonstrators to seek justice for a better society. It was a worthwhile cause to fight for, which gave me great satisfaction. The disappointment laid mainly in the apathy of the general student body. Very few of them took part. We were also disappointed with media coverage of the protests and the response of the general public. Nevertheless, we believe that if these activities would benefit some ordinary citizens in the developing world some day, we would continue to take part.



Posing here are Mr Lau Fong (on the left), the President and the Executives of the Students’ Union, Session 2006



Students taking part in a tea gathering with Mr Tam Chi-keung, a commentator and Vice-Chairperson of Hong Kong Journalists Association

**“The great leaders are like the best conductors - they reach beyond the notes to reach the magic in the players.”**

- Blaine Lee, a founding vice president of FranklinCovey and author of *The Power Principle*

# General Education

The University of Hong Kong established the General Education Unit in 1995 to provide whole person education to all students of the University. It aims to cultivate among students: breadth of knowledge, competencies, and qualities expected of educated individuals. It also works with other units of the University to create an intellectual and humanistic campus climate which is conducive to student growth, intellectual discussion, cultural interflow, reading, and art appreciation.

The aim of General Education activities is to stimulate students to critically reflect on themselves and grow holistically. Through its activities, students get a fuller appreciation of life, culture, and the arts. They acquire better understanding of local and global economic and political issues.



Students at the Tung Chung Visit learning about life and beliefs in the New Territories from Dr Patrick H Hase, Honorary Research Fellow of the Centre of Asian Studies

Every year, the General Education Unit provides more than 40 courses and a few summer programmes on a variety of topics. Most of its courses are delivered by outside professionals and experts in respective areas. Besides didactic courses, the Unit also employs experiential and service-based learning to facilitate critical reflection.

In future, additional emphasis will be placed on ethics and moral education, life education, cultural diversity, and character education. It also plans to popularize the concept of general education to secondary schools and the general public.

The unique feature of General Education courses is that they are non-credit bearing. Students do not have to worry about assessment requirements but are motivated to learn through curiosity and a desire for knowledge.



Ms Sammi Cheng (third from the left), a famous Hong Kong singer and movie star, and students at a seminar on the film - *Everlasting Regret*

## Interview with Dr Donna Chu and students

**Dr Donna Chu** General Education Officer  
General Education Unit  
**Alexander Leung** Year III Bachelor of Social Sciences  
**Michelle Tsang** Year II Bachelor of Social Sciences  
**Charles Kwok** Year II Bachelor of Science

**Q:** How does the General Education Unit (GEU) help students grow as a whole person?

**Dr Chu:** We take the lead to inspire students to think about the values that we emphasise, such as human spirit, the continuity and transformation of history, understanding of current issues and the pursuit of values. We want to remind them that the world is big; that there is a lot worth learning even in subjects that are not closely associated with their academic discipline. Our aim is to stimulate students to critically reflect on themselves and grow. However, when designing courses and activities we focus on what they are interested in and build our messages around them. Since our courses are non-credit bearing, students enjoy greater space and can learn in a more relaxed manner.

**Q:** Do you have any difficulties attracting students since your courses and activities are non-credit bearing?

**Dr Chu:** Whether students will come to our courses or join the activities is not our greatest concern. Rather, it is designing and launching meaningful courses and activities. In my experience, smart students will come if our courses are fresh, interesting, worthwhile and meaningful.

For example, the 'Gourmet DIY' course which was about food and diet attracted a hundred applicants. It included actual cooking, a visit to a traditional Chinese restaurant and wine tasting. The aim of the course was to help students realise that food and diet represent a kind of tradition and culture and contain great knowledge. We adopted the experiential learning mode for this course. Students were given the opportunity to try, experiment and experience. They were encouraged to discover and ask questions for themselves.

We try to achieve a balance by developing courses on topics that are interesting but are not

covered by degree programmes. However, we will not be guided by students' interests alone although we make sure worthwhile programmes are aligned to their lifestyle, their interests and the popular youth culture. This is how we attract students to our courses and activities which are basically voluntary.

Besides attracting participants, our other challenge is improving our own knowledge. Since we cannot design courses on something that we do not know ourselves, we have to talk to different people, read more books, etc, to enrich our own knowledge.

Another of our aspiration is to launch our programmes in a more systematic way.

**Q:** How do you rate the present efforts of the General Education Unit in providing whole person education to all students?

**Dr Chu:** Education is a fascinating industry. However, you will be quite distressed if you look for immediate results. I think the most satisfying moment is when students really enjoyed our programmes and became inspired.

**Q:** Alexander, could you tell me why you took courses offered by the General Education Unit?

**Alexander:** When I was a first-year student, I did not know what to think or what I should do. But my experience during my exchange to Canada opened my mind. I have realised that people have different views about life and that there are many important things other than money and career. When I came back I made different attempts to explore and have found out what I am suitable for. I also worked at learning how to establish relationship with others. That is why I attended General Education courses. They opened a window for me and developed my thinking.

What greatly impressed me at the time was the course, 'Road to University' (大學之道). It made me ask myself why I am here, what I want from my university study, and how I should find my own way.

**Q:** What have you learnt from the programmes offered by the General Education Unit?

**Alexander:** It has made me realise that the world is big. It broadened my vision generally and added new perspectives to my daily life. Besides, it has taught me to interpret things from different perspectives. More importantly, I have met different people through the General Education courses and learned new things from them.

**Q:** And Michelle, do you think the University has provided students with opportunities to develop as a whole person?

**Michelle:** Yes. But, I think it can work harder to promote the idea of whole person education among students and encourage them to develop holistically.

**Q:** What motivated you to take part in General Education activities?

**Michelle:** I found them interesting and started to take part in my first year. I enjoyed particularly the community services organised by GEU and decided to take a major in social administration in my second year as a result.

**Q:** What have you gained from these activities?

**Michelle:** The courses and activities offered by the Unit cover a wide range of topics. Some of them, such as sex, language and history, are closely associated with our daily life and have helped me see how much there is to learn from our environment and what we do everyday.



Posing here are (from left) Michelle, Dr Chu, Alexander and Charles

**Q:** How about you, Charles?

**Charles:** I agree with Michelle that whole person education is not promoted adequately. We do not yet have a lively and enthusiastic holistic development atmosphere on the campus. Students are not active in joining meaningful activities.

**Q:** How did you get to know the General Education Unit?

**Charles:** It was through the GEU prospectus that I received when I was a first-year student. The content was interesting so I wanted to find out what general education is and started joining some of the activities.

**Q:** What have you got from joining GEU activities?

**Charles:** It has broadened my view and given me new inspirations. I have discovered that people look at things differently and that you have to decide for yourself which viewpoint is more suitable for you. To do so, you need to understand the whole picture, make comparison and judge for yourself. You should do so with the utmost objectivity.

**Q:** Finally, do you think there is a danger of students becoming too narrowly focused on career success?

**Dr Chu:** Students in Hong Kong and mainland China have to work hard to gain admission into universities. Many of them consider degree qualifications as passports to good jobs and spend a lot of their time preparing for their career. These students seldom ask themselves what they like to do, what are suitable for them, what they are good at, etc. They tend to be passive and are influenced by social expectations. If they adopt a narrow careerist mentality, they would miss a lot of mind-opening opportunities to develop as a whole person. They would not have a colourful student life and it will be a social tragedy.

**Alexander:** Career is an important aspect of life, but definitely it is not the only thing in life. One should also pay attention to the society, local communities, culture, other goals in life, etc. Being an undergraduate at HKU is the best time to explore, try different things and grow as a person. The number of compulsory courses is few. Examination pressure is comparatively low. Institutional restrictions are few. Opportunities to try things out are many. We really should use this high level of flexibility to develop ourselves. During our undergraduate years, I think the most important things for us to do are: develop our own thinking, learn how to view the world, define our position in it and play our role well.

**Michelle:** I agree that nowadays most students pay too much attention to money and career. Secondary school students choose university courses because they think certain subjects will enable them to get a good job and earn high salaries. They do not seem to have life goals other than finding a good paying job after graduation.

**Charles:** Personally, I do not think career success is the only thing in life.

**“Maturity begins to grow when you can sense your concern for others outweighing your concern for yourself.”**

- John MacNaughton, former Director of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs

## CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMMES

# Sports

Competitive sports are provided by 23 sports clubs and the HKUSU Sports Association administered University teams. These activities are supported by the Institute of Human Performance (IHP) through the provision of coaching, facilities and subsidies. IHP staff also serve as team managers, advisors or consultants to the clubs and U teams which compete in local, regional and international competitions such as the Hong Kong Post-Secondary Colleges Athletic Association, Intersports competitions in Hong Kong and mainland China.

The HKU Sports Scholarship Scheme encourages young men and women, who have demonstrated outstanding sporting prowess and academic ability, to study at the University.

Every month the IHP recognises outstanding sportsmen/women with the Performance of the Month Awards. In April, it hosts the HKU Sports Awards Presentation to recognise individuals and teams for their achievements and contributions to sports during the year.

Competitive sports are both enjoyable and enriching. There are ample opportunities for students to hone their skills and enjoy the company of other young people.

### HKU Sports Teams:

- Swimming (Men & Women)
- Cross Country (Men & Women)
- Badminton (Men & Women)
- Basketball (Men & Women)
- Football (Men)
- Squash (Men & Women)
- Table Tennis (Men & Women)
- Tennis (Men & Women)
- Volleyball (Men & Women)

### HKU Sports Team Competitions:

- The AIG Rowing Competition
- The 8th Jackie Chan Challenge Cup
- The AIG Swimming Competition
- The Hong Kong Post-Secondary Colleges Athletic Association
- The 41st HKPSCAA Swimming Competition
- The 18th HKPSCAA Cross Country Race
- The HKPSCAA Ball Games Competitions
- The AIG Athletics Meet
- The AIG Ball Games Competitions
- The 44th HKPSCAA Athletics Meet



A prize-giving moment at the 25th AIG Swimming Competition



Students participating in the 18th HKPSCAA Cross Country Race

# Student Ambassadors for the Centennial Campus

The Centennial Campus is an exciting event. It aims to provide university students and staff a dramatically enhanced environment to fulfill the University's ambition to be among the very best in the world. Models of the different designs proposed for the Centennial Campus are being exhibited on campus and around Hong Kong; and students have been recruited to explain the concept and the models to the general public.

Over 70 student ambassadors participated in the exercise. They undertook a six-hour training on heritage preservation, ecological environment of the Centennial Campus site and presentation technique to prepare them for their assignment which was undertaken from early March to end of April. More student ambassadors will be recruited in coming years to provide an additional learning experience for students. The training might be developed into a broadening course.



Student Ambassadors at the Centennial Campus site



Student Ambassadors participating in the training session

# Buddies

The Buddy Programme provides incoming exchange students with local students as guides to help them settle down and integrate into the

local community. On the other hand, it enables local students to learn about caring for other people, being more resourceful in solving practical problems; and of course, learning about the cultures of his foreign buddies.

# Independent Clubs

Numerous clubs are open to students to hone their communication and organisation skills and enjoy each other's company. They are overseen by the Independent Club Association.

### ICA clubs and websites:

Name	Website
AIESEC-LC-HKU	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/aiesec">http://www.hku.hk/aiesec</a>
Animation and Comics Association	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/acabox/">http://www.hku.hk/acabox/</a>
Art Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/artclub/">http://www.hku.hk/artclub/</a>
Astronomy Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/suastro/">http://www.hku.hk/suastro/</a>
Biology Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/biosoc/">http://www.hku.hk/biosoc/</a>
Bridge Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/bridge/">http://www.hku.hk/bridge/</a>
Buddhist Studies Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/buddhist/">http://www.hku.hk/buddhist/</a>
Catholics Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/hkukatso">http://www.hku.hk/hkukatso</a>
Chess and Boardgames Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/chessoc/">http://www.hku.hk/chessoc/</a>
China Education Association	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/hkusucec/">http://www.hku.hk/hkusucec/</a>
China Study Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/css/">http://www.hku.hk/css/</a>
Christian Association	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/casu/">http://www.hku.hk/casu/</a>
Computer Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/compsoc/">http://www.hku.hk/compsoc/</a>
Dancing Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/dance/">http://www.hku.hk/dance/</a>
Debating Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/debateso/">http://www.hku.hk/debateso/</a>
Drama Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/dramasoc/">http://www.hku.hk/dramasoc/</a>
Electronics Society	<a href="http://www.eee.hku.hk/~electsoc/">http://www.eee.hku.hk/~electsoc/</a>
Film Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/filmsoc">http://www.hku.hk/filmsoc</a>
Fishing Club	<a href="http://web.hku.hk/~fishing/">http://web.hku.hk/~fishing/</a>
German Association	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/deutsch">http://www.hku.hk/deutsch</a>
Greenwoods	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/~gmwoods/">http://www.hku.hk/~gmwoods/</a>
Hong Kong Award of Young People	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/hkuayp">http://www.hku.hk/hkuayp</a>
Investment Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/ishku">http://www.hku.hk/ishku</a>
Magic Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/magic/">http://www.hku.hk/magic/</a>
Music Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/musicclub">http://www.hku.hk/musicclub</a>
Photographic Society	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/photosoc/">http://www.hku.hk/photosoc/</a>
Ramblers' Club	<a href="http://web.hku.hk/~ramblers/">http://web.hku.hk/~ramblers/</a>
Rotaract Club	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/rotaract/">http://www.hku.hk/rotaract/</a>
Social Service Group	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/hkusussg/">http://www.hku.hk/hkusussg/</a>
Weapons & Tactics Association	<a href="http://web.hku.hk/~wtahkusu/">http://web.hku.hk/~wtahkusu/</a>
World University Service	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/wushk/">http://www.hku.hk/wushk/</a>
Writing Workshop	<a href="http://www.hku.hk/writing">http://www.hku.hk/writing</a>
Youth Literary Awards Association	<a href="http://web.hku.hk/~ylaa">http://web.hku.hk/~ylaa</a>

# Mentorship Scheme

The HKU Mentorship Programme was established in 1997. Not only was it the first programme of its kind, it has become the exemplar of similar programmes.

Second-year undergraduate students are paired with friends and alumni of the University who are professionals and experts from an academic discipline different from their own. The one-to-one relationship or partnership between the Mentor and Mentee gives students the chance to look beyond the classroom and learn from a senior member of the society through mutual respect, support, trust, sharing and understanding.

As HKU becomes more internationalised and more foreign students study on our campus, the Programme has been extended, since 2003-4, to incoming students admitted through the HKU Worldwide Exchange Programme.

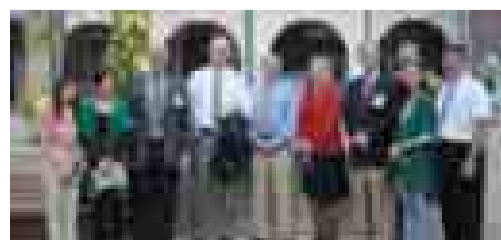


The inauguration ceremony 2005-06



Professor Amy Chan and Mr Peter M K Wong (Mentors since 1997) and Mr Gary Ho and Mrs Agnes Ho (Mentees 1997) sharing their experience

# Green Gown Guides



Student Ambassadors and a delegation from Minnesota, USA

The Green Gown Guides programme provides students with opportunities to practise communication skills. Student Ambassadors are given the responsibility of introducing the history of the University to visitors. During campus tours they also share with the guests their experiences at HKU.

# Personal Development and Counselling Centre

The Personal Development and Counselling Centre offers individual counselling and group activities to support students' personal growth. Through individual and group activities, students learn to deal with problems and develop social and leadership skills.

Services available include:

- Individual counselling
- Lunch time information sessions and drop-in hours for urgent issues

- Assistance for students with disabilities
- Coaching for application for scholarships or exchange programmes
- Peer support groups
- Evening support groups for both postgraduate students and mainland students
- Evening therapeutic groups on eating problems, stress management, internet addiction and control and sexual orientation

## Interview with Dr Gracemary Leung Acting Director PDCC

**Q:** What kind of personal development programmes does the PDCC run?

**A:** We provide different kinds of training like EQ, communication and relationship skills, etc. Our aim is to encourage students to accept themselves and others, be prepared to learn from other cultures, develop different kinds of interests, and pay attention to both body and mind; in short, to attain holistic wellness.

**Q:** What are the difficulties in helping students develop as a whole person?

**A:** Breaking the traditional mode of learning is one of our greatest challenges. Learning traditionally takes place in the classroom; but now we emphasise problem-based learning. We should also learn from socialising with other people. The idea of 'mix and mingle' encourages students to make contact with society or local communities to experience how organisations function, be exposed to different situations of human interaction, observe rules of social etiquette, and learn appropriate manners in different situations and cultures. However, finding the time to liaise with other parties and organise such events can be a challenge. The pressure that students face from parental expectation is another challenge that we are faced with. Most parents have high, and maybe unrealistic, expectations of what their children should earn with a university degree.

**Q:** How do you rate the present efforts of helping students develop as a whole person?

**A:** Each workshop can take only 20 students; but there are thousands of students on campus. In this sense, we are not able to meet the needs of all students. On the other hand, some students do not realise they have needs. They think they come to university just to study, attend lectures and hand in assignments. This culture should be transformed. The University should promote the idea of 'whole person' development. Self-development, self-growth, interacting with others, facing issues with a positive mindset, etc, will reap beneficial results. About 50% of students need such training but they lack motivation to do so.

**Q:** How could this problem be solved?

**A:** I think some university-wide cultural campaigns should be organised. We have to develop a culture of everyone being eager and active in listening and grasping new knowledge. If people

around you are doing so and believe it is important to do so, you will soon follow suit. Alternatively, moral and leadership training might be made compulsory. We should also promote a culture that emphasises you must come forward; otherwise, you will lose out. However, finding the staff to work on these issues is a problem. When resources are reduced, one has to prioritise.

**Q:** In what ways do the PDCC support academic programmes?

**A:** We provide extracurricular training for personal development. With academic general education as the groundwork, we pay attention to human relations, philosophy of life, self-restraint and self-control. Our clinical psychologists also help students cope with problems when they are going through hard times. Our goal is to release students' potential and empower them to achieve great things.

**Q:** Do you agree that students should be wary of becoming narrow careerists and neglecting a holistic development?

**A:** Yes. Most people in Hong Kong are materialistic. They look for good jobs with high remuneration. The vision of seeking a good job, earning a fat salary, and working for promotion is too narrow. Rather, they should reflect on the purpose of life, truth and morality. They should aim to be leaders who work to achieve and contribute to the well-being of their families and society. If they do so, they will eventually develop self-discipline and good moral and ethical standards. I do hope students will broaden their vision beyond material career success. The world will be a happier place. Maybe a four-year degree programme will give us the time to provide students with a comprehensive education which is one of the missions of universities.



Posing here is Dr Gracemary Leung, Acting Director of the Personal Development and Counselling Centre

# China Programmes

The University of Hong Kong was founded in 1911 to 'serve as a focal point of intellectual and academic endeavour in Hong Kong, China and Asia and act as a gateway and forum for scholarship with the rest of the world'.

Following this heritage, the China Affairs Office of the Academic Liaison Section of the Registry works closely with mainland universities on student exchange, academic collaboration, cultural activities, updating information on China affairs; and promoting HKU in mainland China.



An intern in Shanghai

Among its many activities, the China Affairs Office organises the HKU Worldwide China Programme 2006 for students to learn about life and work in the mainland. This Programme comprises the Summer Exchange Programme and China VacTrain Programme. In collaboration with key point universities, such as Peking, Tsinghua, and Fudan, the Summer Exchange Programme offers three to four-week summer courses on history, law, medicine, culture and business management. China VacTrain Programme, on the other hand, provides two-month internship placements in Beijing and Shanghai.



Students of the Summer Exchange Programme

**ILOP** The Intensified Learning Opportunity Programme aims to develop a crop of outstanding graduates for the 21st Century, in consonance with the University's vision for undergraduate education, which states, amongst other things, "to produce graduates of distinction committed to lifelong learning, integrity and professionalism, capable of being responsive leaders and communicators in their fields".

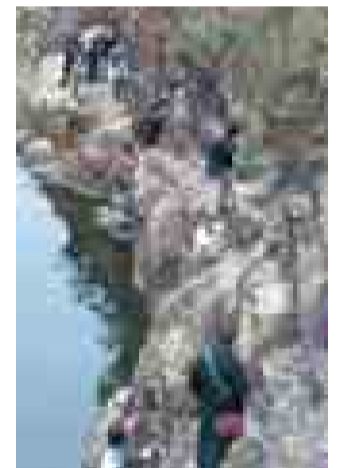
The Programme is designed for students who aspire and are committed to becoming visionary, responsible, and responsive leaders with a strong integrity and commitment to society and life. ILOPers should have a high degree of social awareness and social commitment, a broad international outlook and acceptance of and appreciation for cultural diversity. They should aim at working towards global goals such as sustainable development, and ethical values such as equality and human rights. They should be able to create wealth and opportunities for other

people. They always operate according to the highest ethical standards.

To work towards these goals, the Programme seeks to help each participant discover his/her own strengths and aspirations, overcome personal blocks to development, gain experience, acquire competence and confidence in mastering new situations and functioning creatively in an ever-changing world.

The Programme encompasses co-curricular learning activities over a period of fourteen months. These activities can be broadly classified into the following areas:

- Personal Growth & Leadership Development
- Cultural Awareness
- General Education
- Corporate Values and Business Ethics
- Internship at Non-Local Commercial Organizations or NGOs
- Mentorship



ILOP students taking part in a three-day adventure camp



ILOP students visiting a migrant worker

## Young Leaders of Tomorrow

The "Young Leaders of Tomorrow" Community Leaders Scholarship Scheme is open to first-year undergraduate students who have demonstrated excellence and leadership potential through active participation in arts, sports, community service, responsible positions, or other extra-curricular activities during secondary school.

This Scholarship Scheme was first launched in 1998 as the Young Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship Programme. With the support of the Home Affairs Department, 90 local community leaders contributed to an endowment fund to support the scholarships and celebrate the University's 90th Anniversary in 2001. Since its inception, over 450 Young Leaders

were awarded the scholarship.

The Young Leaders are invited to assist in University events, organised by the Development and Alumni Affairs Office as occasions required. This year, present and previous Young Leaders plan to

organise community services together. Besides, a scheme for the adoption of children is being considered.



Young Leaders at the awards presentation ceremony in March 2006

# Careers Education

One of the missions of the Careers Education and Placement Centre (CePc) is to facilitate students to enter personally rewarding careers. It believes that as part and parcel of whole person development, students should have a clear idea of what they are interested in, what they value and are good at. They should be able to describe themselves adequately to other people. They should also be aware of what people do in the world of work and how real business problems are solved in different sectors of the community.

A web-based occupational interest questionnaire and database of career information, Prospect Planners, is available at <<http://www.hku.hk/cepc/NEW/forstudent/choosing.html>>. Guidance materials and graduate employment statistics are posted on the CePc website <<http://www.hku.hk/cepc/survey/ges/index.html>> for self-learning. Graduate sharing sessions and application and interview workshops are conducted frequently to augment published material, while honorary career advisers are available for one-on-one consultation by appointment.

Besides careers education, the CePc also organises internship programmes, hosts recruitment talks, runs pre-employment training programmes and conducts graduate employment surveys.

PLACEMENT

# Students should be cautious against becoming narrow careerists. Is a careerist's interest antithesis to the 'whole person' development? Successful job hunters seem to be able to do both, developing employability and growing holistically.

## Tan Veng Yen BBA (Finance and Marketing) 2006

Financial Analyst at a prominent investment bank

I became interested in finance since Year Two because, firstly, my instinct tells me I will enjoy it. Secondly, I like its professionalism and growth potentials.

What helped me secure the analyst position, apart from fate or luck, I would say, are time management and forward planning. The year I spent in Australia on work holiday doing different jobs also helped. I was a waitress in Sydney, a clerk in Brisbane, and a farm worker in small towns. During that time, I became more mature and open-minded and was better at communicating and working with foreigners. The experience definitely enriched my life experience.

Besides the work holiday experience which I took after my first year of study, I also learned Putonghua and Spanish, for future travel purposes. I took part in summer exchange tours, participated in overseas competition, took painting lessons and learned history. I wanted to enjoy life and be both street-smart and book-smart.

While I was happy experimenting on my own, I think it would be helpful if the University would require students to take compulsory courses in the arts, humanities, IT and foreign languages to help us get started. Besides, more flexibility for



Tan Veng Yen with Lord Wilson at the 173rd Congregation Ceremony

students to take courses from different faculties and providing more affordable opportunities for students to go abroad would certainly help our development. More business competitions and internship positions should be organised to prepare students for life after graduation. However, participating in all these activities takes time. Ways have to be found to make best use of limited time. Maybe the University could consider integrating different forms of learning activities, be they course work or extracurricular activities, into a meaningful whole, balancing time spent on independent study, group work, and goal-specific activities.

I do believe HKU provides students with a broad spectrum of opportunities to learn in a holistic manner. How much individual students get out of the University depends on how well they are prepared for challenges; how good they are at grasping learning opportunities and how far they are willing to stretch themselves to achieve excellence.



## Sharon Pang BBA (Law)

to graduate in 2007

I hope to be a PR person. My interest was developed during the 2 years in HKU. The reputation of a company is vital. One can build up his/her company's image through branding, advertising, and communications. I believe the world is becoming more a people's industry, and I can see the importance of public relations is growing. Moreover, I really like to interact with people. It would be ideal to turn my interest into a future career.

To be successful, I reckon, one must be open-minded, friendly and hard-working. Working in a people-oriented industry, one must be able to accept new people and new things. On top of that, one must be extremely friendly to make people feel welcome even when they meet for the first time. I think hard-working is one of the success factors because one might have to work round the clock. There are a lot of graduates who refuse to work over-time or complain about long hours of work. However, I believe in 'no pain, no gain'. You can never benefit or get anything without putting in your own effort.

I lived in St John's College last semester and

had loads of experience learning to relate to people. This is as important to me as learning the subjects for my degree. It would be great if I could also learn other knowledge that I cannot grasp on my own

such as philosophy. Another example is foreign languages. My sister and I are planning to take either German or Spanish lessons together this summer so that we can practise together.

Meeting new friends and creating a social network are the other important aspects of my university life. I do so through the public relations role that I hold with the Hong Kong Federation of Business Students. This has trained me into an all-round person and at the same time a person fit for career advancement. Every opportunity the university provides students with, be it an exchange programme, internship, a member of an executive committee, is an invaluable chance to grow, become presentable and be able to communicate with others.

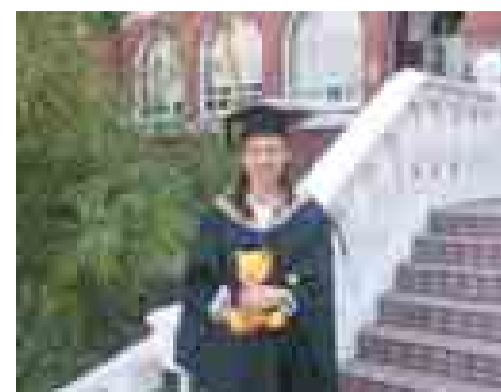
## Flora Tsui BECON&FIN 2005

Customer Development Management Trainee with Johnson and Johnson

I am interested in FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) industry as it is a highly dynamic and competitive sector. My long-term career aspiration is to be a well-respected Business Development Director in a leading FMCG firm. My current job in Johnson and Johnson has helped me explore the SWOT of different retailers and the distinct ways to team up with them. An acute sense to business and market change are of vital importance to my job. I believe that people network will be an added asset for further career development.

I succeeded in getting my job in JnJ, I reckon, because of my strong logical sense, problem-solving skills and abilities to identify business opportunities. The soft skills that I developed through hall life, extra-curricular activities (say, debating) and one-year-exchange programme in Canada are undoubtedly advantageous to me.

Quick thinking, fast acting, being proactive with a flexible mindset for turning problems into opportunities are essential attributes for working in JnJ. The technical skills that I have to possess for my job may not be directly



related to the subjects I studied at the University; however, the analytical and problem-solving skills are similar to those I learnt in HKU. Since one can learn these skills from any degree, I think students should be encouraged to follow their interests, rather than market trends, when they choose academic programmes. Learning to solve diverse problems independently and studying a subject that interests you wholeheartedly are more important than learning specific subject matters that you are not really interested in.

University life has been a very enjoyable and fruitful experience to me. Treasure your time in HKU and seize every opportunity to broaden your horizon. I wish that all of you are able to find the right subject to study and the right industry to develop your career.

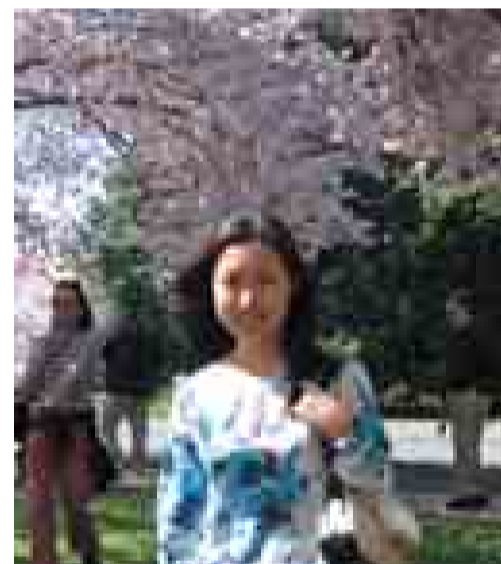
## Vivian Zhang BECON&FIN 2006

I became interested in solving macro problems since reading books on economics when I was in high school. Hence, in 2002, I enrolled on economics courses in Tsinghua University, from which I hoped to learn conceptual frameworks for solving such problems. In 2003, I was awarded a scholarship to study at HKU and came here to continue my study.

My long term career aspiration is to bring some enlightenment to the world. One day I might go back to graduate studies after I have gathered some real life experience and identified significant and worthwhile problems to study. For the time being I shall take up a Financial Analyst position with an investment bank after graduation.

As part of the scholarship, I went for an exchange programme at the University of California, Davis, where I spent the first and second quarters before proceeding to another exchange programme at the University of Washington, DC. While abroad, I took the initiative to approach employers for internship positions and was fortunate enough to be given such opportunities by the Private Wealth Divisions of both Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch and the American Enterprise Institute. By the time I came back to Hong Kong in 2005, I developed enough confidence to feel that I was in charge of my own destiny. I knew where I wanted to go and I took advantage of resources at HKU to grow and continued to work as an intern. This time it was at JP Morgan in Hong Kong. I am now completely fluent in Cantonese and am comfortable working with Hong Kong people, Americans and other nationals.

My experience has convinced me that a good financial services industry is of paramount importance to the economic wellbeing of China. Hence, in August, before my final year, I started finding out more about the industry and took steps to prepare myself for job hunting. Besides reading, I talked to my supervisors at work and other interns. I asked them about their work to understand how an investment bank works. I



studied all the websites of the banks that I was interested in. This helped me decide the aspect of finance I am best suited for, which is sales and debt capital analysis. The next thing I did was to try it out. I expanded my reading from general information about the industry to investment issues. I also chatted about market situations with like-minded students, to find out whether I really like it. I also used the reference materials in the Careers Education and Placement Centre and practised technical discussions with Mr Herman Chan, the Placement Consultant.

Although I have a clear idea about what I want to do as a career and did spend a lot of time on internship and job hunting, I believe I have developed beyond a narrow careerist's interests. General Education Courses and High Table Dinners opened my eyes. I remembered being shocked by some of the speakers. For example, one of them admitted in public that he was gay. He even talked about how he tried to attract the attention of other gay men when he was in London. I have also met leaders of political parties that I used to be wary of. These experiences challenged my concepts of right and wrong. They also introduced me to value systems that are different from mine. The Arts All Scheme nurtured my love of classical music and the exemplary fairness of the professors of my Department showed me how to be fair and respect individuals irrespective of their ability.

## Ng Kiu Sum BSS 2005

Trainee (Marketing) with Nestlé Hong Kong Limited

I enjoy marketing particularly. It is very gratifying when my promotion ideas are adopted by my supervisor and are successful with customers. I also enjoy the opportunity to challenge my communication skills and interact with different people. It helps me become more sensitive, tactful and thoughtful at work and in life.

I reckon I succeeded in getting the job at Nestlé because of my ability to communicate easily with people from different background and in different situations.

The ability to argue with reason, evaluate objectives, and weigh up different approaches to tasks, which I learned from courses in Politics, Public Administration, Journalism and Translation, were very helpful too. The ability to identify positive aspects from negative situations also helped since in sales and marketing one has to deal with many conflicts and pressures.

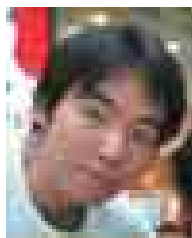
## Jacky Chung BENG (CivE) Year III

I attended interviews for the graduate trainee position in civil engineering and other industries but became more and more interested in accounting from the discussions I had with the interviewers.

I reckon what helped me secure job offers with the accounting firms is the logical reasoning ability that I acquired from my engineering degree. This was very apparent during interviews. The year that I spent studying at Colorado School of Mines in the US entirely transformed my way of thinking. I became more independent, more



University is a good place to test self-discipline. I think most fellow students would agree that without teachers and parents watching over us, we have to rely on ourselves to manage our time and complete assignments. The self-discipline that I acquired at university is a great help for my career. Meeting deadline with others in a team is even more challenging. The experience at HKU has prepared me for getting things done with colleagues now.



experienced in solving problems and adapting to changes. I became good at thinking spontaneously and logically. Interviewers were often interested in my ideas and the way I think.

While logical thinking, engineering knowledge, and studying abroad were very important to my development, I think general education, history, multiple perspectives, and lateral thinking are equally important to my personal growth. They also helped me secure job offers from international accounting firms.

## Raymond Chan (not his real name) Final Year Master's degree student

When I started attending recruitment talks to find out what I would be interested in doing for a career, I came to realise that the management consulting industry suited my career objective best of all. Firstly, it exposes me to many different industries and I will learn how the business world functions. Secondly, management consultants work on a global basis; this is what I would like to do. Thirdly, business prospects for the industry are huge given the market potentials of mainland China.

I know what personal qualities I possess, but I reckon I have to acquire the confidence to present these qualities in an attractive manner to people who do not know me. I benefited from the assistance of the Careers Education and Placement Centre (CePc), where I also learned about the management consulting industry and the business problems that management consultants have to solve.

It is undeniable that the job seeking process was very exhausting, and demanded a surprisingly large amount of time and effort. I spent almost 80% of my time on job hunting until I secured a job offer. It was really difficult balancing job hunting and study.

This is so because the interview process for management consulting is very demanding. Generally there are several rounds of competence-based interviews and case interviews. Competence-based interviews are relatively easy, covering questions like

strengths and weaknesses, previous experience and reason for choosing the company etc. There are no right and wrong answers. The trick is to present what you have achieved in the past as a whole person in an interesting manner and to answer probing questions that delve into what you did to develop yourself as a person and what you plan to do in future. To do well needs a lot of practices. The CePc definitely helped me reflect on my past, formulate plans for the future and align them with the job I was applying for. The process was harsh, but it has to be done and the experience was invaluable.

On the other hand, the case interviews were much more challenging. I was given quite a handful of complex information and was asked to digest, analyse, pick up key issues, solve a real life business problem and present the solution within a very short period of time. Apart from attempting the questions with concise and descriptive answers to show your critical thinking, I also tried to demonstrate my interpersonal skills by interacting with the interviewers. I managed to do so through the numerous practices I had and the useful materials I read at the CePc.

Besides interviewing skills, what helped me secure the job with a management consulting firm were: general knowledge, wide perspective of current local and global affairs, understanding of what the industry is like and how it suits me, keen interest in the industry, knowledge about its performance, intellectual curiosity, a strong analytical mind, and the ability to learn very quickly.

# From Mr Herman Chan Placement Consultant Careers Education and Placement Centre

**Commonsense and problem solving ability are important attributes to develop.**

Students who have wide exposure, a good track record of accomplishments and clear career objective are more likely to win interviews than uninitiated applicants. However, once past the application stage, commonsense and problem solving ability are of paramount importance besides fundamental communication skills, as you can see from the following sample situational questions that students experience at employment interviews.

Sample questions:

- (1) You are an analyst with a management consulting firm. What advice would you give a client, an office furniture distributor, who is considering the following options for expanding into the mainland market?  
Options:  
(a) direct entry on its own,  
(b) appointing a sole national distributor, or

- (c) setting up a network of regional distributorships.
- (2) You are a management trainee with a property developer and are shown the floor plan of a new shopping centre. How would you market and promote it? What strategy would you recommend?
- (3) You are a capital market analyst with an investment bank and are given the valuation of three specific bonds. What comments do you have? Where do you think the Asian bond market is moving?
- (4) You are an audit trainee with an international accounting firm. What impact do you think the Sarbanes-Oxley Act have on the financial reporting of US listed companies? What impact do you think recent changes in tax legislation in mainland China, or new international accounting standards, have on your work?

For demanding interviews, such as those given by management consulting firms, generally only one in five students could cope. What is

required is the ability to size up the situation quickly, ask intelligent questions, discuss the problem with the interviewer in an interactive manner, and propose strategic solutions. A commonsensical approach, and not high level professional standard, is adequate since it is potential, and not experience, that interviewers are looking for.

**This can be acquired through observation and reflection.**

The answer is: reflect on what you see around you. Take an interest in situations around you. Analyse how things are done, and reflect on the result. Collect information, identify problems, find out what people think, and devise solutions. Chat with your friends and mentors about your thoughts. Over time you would develop a sense

about life around you that is common knowledge to people in that walk of life.

Now that you know how things work around you, you are in a good position to 'think on your feet' and discuss solutions to problems with interviewers. Try hanging your ideas on a structured, strategic and logical framework such as the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), BCG Matrix, Michael Porter's Five Forces Model and the 4P concepts of Philip Kotler. These are explained in management books.

**Original ideas are important.**

As important as presenting your knowledge in a structured manner is having your own ideas. Even when you are asked a straight forward question such as 'What are fixed income products?', you are expected to go beyond surface information, picked up from published material, to discuss your personal insight on the significance of bonds to the issuer, the investment bank and the capital market, etc. Practise doing so by synthesising what you learned from books with the real world. For example, how would you apply the principles and theories about valuation that you learned on an investment course to value the worth of a real company?

**"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."**

- Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965), a British politician and author, best known as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during the Second World War

# Comments

Professor Adam Lui Yuen-chung Honorary Professor Department of Chinese; HKU Honorary Adviser on Qing Archives HKU Libraries; former Head of Department of History HKU

It is with great pleasure for me to learn from draft articles for this issue of Dialogue that students learn from their university life at HKU knowledge and experience beyond the prescribed syllabi and courses. I must also applaud the Vice Chancellor's intention to improve teaching and learning, which will no doubt enhance students' holistic development. The Dean of Student Affairs, and former Warden of University Hall, on the other hand, exalted the benefits of hall residence, which I can easily subscribe to. Nevertheless, several questions came to my mind. In the spirit of 'Dialogue', I venture to offer my humble comments here, as a long serving but retired member of the HKU family, to generate discussion.

The first point I wish to make relates to the approach to general education. I reckon general education should focus on methodology rather than content. It should help students acquire the ability to assess and analyse people and issues. This, I believe, is the aim of the General Education Unit. However, I would suggest that students should also learn to express their views on various topics interestingly both to themselves and to the subjects being assessed. They should assess issues from viewpoints of the past, the present and, possibly the future; from Western and Eastern perspectives; and from science-oriented and humanistic angles. When assessing people, students should employ empathy as far as possible. Placing oneself in the position of the person described, one would understand why such a person does this or that. This is what I would call 'general education approach' to life. It draws people together; makes them open, civil and understanding. I will discuss this concept of general education approach in a more substantial way in a future essay.

The other point I wish to make is the updating of syllabi. Some departments are quite slow to change their syllabi, despite the heavy demand made by students. Departments which are not under pressure from lack of funds or teachers are likely to resist change because they are afraid of



troubles that change might bring. For example, arts subjects, particularly History, have become unpopular among students because practical application of arts subjects is not apparent, and arts graduates think they are disadvantaged in the job market. Would the University consider creating an "Applied Arts Centre" to relate the humanistic side of arts courses to practical social needs? This would definitely make arts subjects more attractive to students; at the same time, retaining the value of the humanities. In this contemporary world, the East and the West are having closer and more frequent contacts; so should the Centre of Asian Studies be changed to the Centre of East-West Studies? Or, should a new centre be set up to promote East-West Cultures? Should departments change their syllabi to include emerging issues such as the Middle East, Africa or South America? I reckon, in considering curriculum reforms, departments should not over-worry about whether or not the new subjects are in line with in-house expertise. Lecturers, being versatile scholars, could use their research skills to reach out beyond their areas of expertise to embrace new subjects.

What has been suggested above are merely my own vision, and what I hope is that it will attract more concrete and useful suggestions from administrators, teachers and students. As the role of Dialogue is to engender mutual sharing of ideas and brain-storming, I venture to put in my own analyses of what our University might consider. The University, under the auspicious guidance of the Vice-Chancellor, has been moving up to the level of first class universities in the world. Its contributions to medicine and science have been acknowledged by the world. My humble suggestions, I hope, will go some way to balance science and arts, theories and practice.

# Interview with the Vice-Chancellor

Continued from page 1

In closing, I would like to conclude with the following thoughts:

- HKU provides students with opportunities to learn; but never in the form of spoon-feeding. Having collected information, students must be able to digest it to make it part of them and ensure that the information is transformed into some useful knowledge.
- Under its fine tradition, HKU continues to pay great emphasis on the training of leaders. Changing from a 3 to 4-year curriculum will provide more flexibility to the design of learning experiences. Teachers will have more time to work with students in guiding, advising and counselling them.
- HKU will look at teaching techniques of its teachers head-on. However specialised, teachers should pay attention to teaching techniques, the aim of which is to teach students how to think; to develop their life-long learning skills and core competence; and to prepare leaders who can adapt to changes and move with the times. Faculties could help the development of pedagogy by giving it higher priority in their development plans. Together, we can develop career development opportunities to empower lecturers to teach students how to think.

- What I would like to see in the next academic year and in future is more students participating in University functions. Students, for example, are invited to give their comments and suggestions on the HKU Centennial Campus project, which is a major milestone in the University's history. Many students have already participated in the forums for this project and given us their views which will be most valuable in our planning as the new campus will be for students and we need to understand their need. I am expecting suggestions and comments from more students in the coming months. Our students have been asking for more participation in university governance. I welcome such interest and would like to see more of them attending seminars and events, do their research on the issues, and contribute their thoughts at public meetings, committee meetings, or Council and Senate meetings; either directly or through their representatives. I hope through Dialogue we can air issues and voice opinions from all sides. I also wish to stress that my doors are always open for students. I look forward to understanding what students value and strike a few sparks with them.
- Finally, it is my sincere wish to see the HKU family joining forces to contribute to the society.



**"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."**

- John Wesley (1703-1791), an 18th-century Anglican clergyman and Christian theologian who was an early leader in the Methodist Movement

## Answers to Flags of Nations/Regions:

