General Education and University Curriculum Reform: An International Conference in Hong Kong

Conference Proceedings

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Paul Corrigan
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# Table of Contents

Preface  
S. Han CHENG and Glenn SHIVE  
v
GE from L to I: An Introduction to the Conference Proceedings  
Paul CORRIGAN  
vii

**Conference Papers by Theme**

## Theme: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

- Embedded Learning to Learn in the General Education Classroom  
  John Freeman BABSON  
  1
- Facilitating Educational Transformation at a Large Public Research University  
  Spencer A. BENSON  
  6
- Designing a General Education Program in a Private Management College in Hong Kong: Opportunities and Challenges  
  Kenneth W. Y. LEUNG, Victor C. M. CHAN, Anselm W. K. LAM  
  12
- Transformative Curriculums: Chinese General Education and the Liberal Arts  
  Ivette VARGAS-O’BRYAN  
  18

## Theme: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses

- The Challenges and Opportunities of Sub-degree General Education Development under the New Academic Structure  
  F. T. CHAN, Simon LEUNG, Selwyn CHENG  
  25
- Within a Broad Policy Theme on ‘Progress and Development’: General Education for ‘Transport and Society’  
  Robert Ian CHAPLIN  
  32
- Barriers to Change: General Education in Hong Kong  
  A. Reza HOSHMAND  
  37
Theme: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula

Critical Reading and Discovery in General Education
Shing Yue SHEUNG

Theme: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

Re-embedding Literacy in the General Education Classroom
John Freeman BABSON, Shari LUGHMANI, Kay H. SMITH

Reading the Word to Reading the World(s): Teaching Literature in GE Curriculum
Vicky LEE

Teaching ESP in University of Science and Technology
Huei-Chun TENG

Language Teaching and Learning for General Education: Moving Beyond the Communicative Paradigm to “English for Liberal Arts”
Paul WADDEN, Chris Carl HALE

Theme: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curriculum for GE

Internationalization of Liberal Arts Education at Washington & Jefferson College
Zheya GAI

An Interdisciplinary GE Course: From Preparation to Execution to Formative Assessment
Kelvin LEE, P.C. Yuen

Self-Interpretation of Student Dreams as a Tool for Personal Growth in General Education Classes
Stephen R. PALMQUIST

Theme: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

Erikson, Vygotsky, and Illeris: Implications/Challenges of Hong Kong’s University Reforms
Roger Y. CHAO Jr.

GE Integration into Groups of Mutually Related Majors
Alexandar DJORDJEVICH
Programmatic Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education: Best Practices, Resources and Examples
Chau-Ming T. WONG, Daniel J. BLANKENSHIP, Marina WONG

Theme: Assessment of GE Programmes
The Study of Core Competency Learning and Outcome Assessment in General Education
Yu-Hui CHEN

Theme: Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes
Teaching China’s Civilization in a Chinese (Hong Kong) Environment: What to Teach and How to Teach it
David PONG

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE
Preface

General Education and University Curriculum Reform: An International Conference in Hong Kong was held on the campus of City University of Hong Kong from June 12 – 14, 2012. The conference shared the Hong Kong experience in General Education (GE) curriculum reform and considered wider patterns of application. As a global city with a flourishing higher education system, Hong Kong provided the ideal backdrop for this multinational event while CityU’s state-of-the-art campus provided the perfect venue for the conference. The 421 participants came from 15 countries in Asia, the Middle East and North America, making the scope of the conference truly international.

The Opening Ceremony featured speeches by Professor Arthur B. Ellis, Provost of CityU; Dr. Richard Armour of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong; Dr. Carol Geary Schneider, President of the Association of American Colleges and Universities; and Dr. George Iwama, President of the University of Northern British Columbia. Over a period of three days, a total of nine keynote and plenary sessions were attended by the participants, featuring renowned leaders in higher education in Asia and North America. Nine additional V.I.P. sessions featured current and former heads of tertiary institutions in Asia, while a further 83 concurrent sessions were offered by researchers and practitioners in GE around the world.

The conference was co-organized by CityU and the Hong Kong America Center (HKAC). CityU, a publically-funded university, was founded as City Polytechnic of Hong Kong in 1984, attaining full university status in 1994, and since then breaking into the ranks of the top 100 universities in the QS World University Rankings. It excels in professional education and research and has developed a robust GE curriculum for its undergraduates, known as Gateway Education. The Hong Kong America Center endeavors to promote understanding between the societies of Hong Kong and America through educational and cultural exchanges. In so doing, the Center advances cross-cultural understanding between Chinese and Americans over the bridge of Hong Kong. In recent years, the Center has administered the Fulbright Hong Kong General Education Program, supporting the work of Fulbright scholars at Hong Kong’s higher education institutions as they have provided expertise and advice to those universities in developing and launching their own GE programs. Many of these Fulbright scholars, as well as
senior academics from Hong Kong’s universities and higher education sector, served on the Program Committee for this conference, selecting proposals and creating the program for this three day international event. The Advisory Committee to the conference also provided vital advice in organizing the conference. Other partners in the conference included the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA) which also generously provided support for many V.I.P.s to attend, as well as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the ASIANetwork, and the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education (FSTE), a Hong Kong organization. We wish to express here our gratitude to all of them for making the conference a success.

Professor S. Han CHENG (CityU) and Dr. Glenn SHIVE (HKAC)

Co-Chairs, Programme Committee and Advisory Committee
GE from L to I: An Introduction to the Conference Proceedings

The purpose of this volume of conference papers is to serve as a forum for sharing policy and pedagogical issues in General Education (GE). The papers submitted for publication in these pages were accepted for and presented at the June 2012 conference, General Education and University Curriculum Reform: An International Conference in Hong Kong. Papers were categorized by the authors themselves as falling within the particular themes of the conference. Ranging from Leadership to Integration, the papers included here represent a wide scope of issues and expertise in both policy and pedagogy in reference to GE.

Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development
Four papers follow the first theme of the conference. In the first, Dr. John Freeman BABSON of Hong Kong Polytechnic University describes how development of study skills is crucially important for GE students and discusses measures that can be taken to help students learn to learn.

Professor Spencer A. BENSON of the University of Maryland discusses the challenges which faculty at a research university face with their teaching and how faculty learning communities can assist in faculty development.

Professor Kenneth W. Y. LEUNG, Dr. Victor C. M. CHAN, and Dr. Anselm W. K. LAM of Hang Seng Management College propose a model for a holistic college program comprised of a foundation for developing basic learning abilities with further layers of General Education and professional specialization.

Dr. Ivette VARGAS-O’BRYAN of Austin College draws from her experience teaching and researching in China as she discusses some administrative, cultural, and faculty issues in the adoption in China of a Western-Style curriculum with a General Education component

Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses
The first paper within the “Policy Lessons” theme is by Dr. F. T. CHAN of HKU SPACE Community College; Dr. Simon LEUNG of Hong Kong Community College of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University; and Mr. Selwyn CHENG of the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education. They discuss diversity, communication, collaboration, and quality assurance as major issues in the development of GE in Hong Kong’s post-secondary education sector, including their project for enhancing GE.

Dr. Robert Ian CHAPLIN of the University of Macau describes the design of a GE course on the subject of transport and society, arguing that the topic is so vital today that such a course could be considered mandatory in the Macau context.
Professor A. Reza HOSHMAND of Hong Kong Baptist University sketches the misunderstandings and obstacles from society, students, and faculty in the design and implementation of GE in Hong Kong and acknowledges that more must be done to see that the GE initiative in Hong Kong succeeds.

**Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula**

Dr. Shing Yue SHEUNG of City University of Hong Kong discusses a GE course on discovering Hong Kong’s colonial and modern experiences and how it critically engages students in the reading of literary and non-literary texts related to those experiences.

**Enhancement of Students' English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula**

Four papers fall with the theme of English in the GE curricula. Dr. John Freeman BABSON and Ms. Shari LUGHMANI of Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Dr. Kay H. SMITH of the College of Charleston discuss the need to re-introduce embedded literacy in universities in Hong Kong, outlining how it can be done within an institutional framework.

Dr. Vicky LEE of Hong Kong Baptist University College of International Education analyzes traditional arguments against including literature for students whose second language is English, and proposes it be treated instead in the GE curriculum as a social experience through which students can hear a range of voices speaking.

Professor Huei-Chun TENG of National Taiwan University of Science and Technology notes English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as part of GE is receiving increasing emphasis in tertiary education. Professor TENG reflects on teaching two such courses and suggests that similar courses should be driven by the needs of students and the experiential knowledge of teachers.

Dr. Paul WADDEN and Mr. Chris Carl HALE of International Christian University propose an integrated model of English for the Liberal Arts which transcends a discrete skills approach found in current models of English in the liberal arts or GE curriculum, for students using English as a Second Language.

**Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE**

In the first of three papers in this section, Professor Zheya GAI of Washington & Jefferson College (W&J) describes how W&J was able to internationalize its liberal arts education through effective leadership, faculty dedication, and recognizing limitations in setting out an agenda.

Dr. Kelvin LEE and Professor P.C. YUEN of Hong Kong Baptist University discuss their successful experience planning and implementing an interdisciplinary course with diverse elements by using a holistic pedagogy with outcome-based teaching.

Professor Stephen R. PALMQUIST of Hong Kong Baptist University shares his framework for his long-running GE course on interpreting dreams which engages students to creatively interpret their own dreams while learning and applying psychological theories.
Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

Three papers have been categorized under this theme. Mr. Roger Y. CHAO Jr., a Ph.D. student at City University of Hong Kong, synthesizes a framework for understanding students in Hong Kong’s new 3-3-4 education system (which includes liberal studies and General Education) and, under the right conditions, sees universities developing the expertise to support students’ development.

Dr. Alexandar DJORDJEVICH of City University of Hong Kong illustrates a hypothetical process by which students might choose General Education courses to fulfill their requirements, and then suggests that others instead of the students should develop and recommend packages of GE courses for students to take in partial fulfillment of their requirements.

In a paper which also straddles GE program assessment, Professor Chau-Ming T. WONG and Professor Daniel J. BLANKENSHIP of Saint Joseph’s College, and Professor Marina WONG of Hong Kong Baptist University, look at why and how assessment is conducted and propose that GE program assessment can be facilitated with Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) outcomes developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

Assessment of GE Programmes
Professor Yu-Hui CHEN of National Cheng-chi University explains how the process of globalization has given rise to a need for, and assessment of, multiple competencies in higher education; in light of this, non-traditional, multidimensional assessment needs to be considered in liberal arts and General Education.

Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes
Professor David PONG of the University of Delaware describes what content to include in a multidisciplinary GE course on Chinese history and how such a course could be taught, in order to help students to understand breadth of human understanding and to engage with it.

While the efficacy of General Education is manifest and its institutional frameworks may be both flexible and resilient, it is nevertheless a project which is never really completed. Our own knowledge seems always incomplete and sharing the knowledge that we do have results in the creation of new knowledge. New knowledge and new ways of understanding the world, as well as new priorities and constraints within institutions, will inevitably influence GE’s future development. As Hong Kong continues to develop General Education in its own higher education system and others do the same, it is hoped that sharing these conference papers may make a positive contribution towards such development.

While aiming for consistency in the format of these proceedings, I have also kept to the variety of English in contributors’ submissions. I wish to express my appreciation to all the contributors for working closely with me all these months to share their ideas and experiences in these pages.

Dr. Paul Corrigan City University of Hong Kong
Editor of the Conference Proceedings February 2013
Embedded Learning to Learn in the General Education Classroom

Dr. John Freeman BABSON, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong SAR

Theme: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

The Challenge and Need for Learning to Learn
Worldwide it is noted that too often students entering the university bring with them study habits that are less than as effective as they ought to be. Hong Kong students are certainly not an exception to the rule. This is the first of two papers addressing embedded learning to learn.

For three years, starting in September 1999 (Ho, et. al., 2001a and 2001b) with the assistance of a UGC competitive Teaching and Learning Development Grant, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) explored alternatives and practical strategies to learning to learn. This went through three distinct phases. We started with a meta-literature search on the subject of student learning, particularly in their first year in the university followed by student focus group surveys on their experiences and concerns. To us, a fundamental question needed to be asked and answered: Is it more productive to offer students separate “study skills” classes or to embed such learning into regular classes? The answer we got was that embedding is more effective because first, a separate “study skills” class is easily dismissed by too many students and second, proper embedding will result in the student receiving repeatedly the same message aimed at success in multiple classes and so, much like repeated advertising, is liable to have an effect. Finally, in the last stage, we developed and collected practical materials and pedagogical techniques, which can be readily applied (“off the shelf”) by the individual teacher in the classroom. Ultimately a website, the PolyU Learn to Learn Network (http://www.polyu.edu.hk/learn-to-learn/), was established to collect, preserve, and disseminate this understanding.

Given the traditional nature of PolyU and its focus on rather specialized education and applied technology, there was a tendency to try to specialize these materials in the form of handbooks aimed at specific programs. Little institutional thought was given to General Education. Being a very active member of the Learning to Learn Project team, the only one representing the General Education community, I took it upon myself to remedy the situation.

Triangular Design of a GE Science Subject
In particular, I teach general science classes such as descriptive astronomy or human ecology. However I would argue that my approach to embedded learning to learn is applicable to any concept-based subject. In embedding learning to learn, I visualize such classes as being formed
from a triangle of goals – scientific method, (specific) subject matter (e.g. astronomy, ecology, etc.), and as the base underlying everything, learning to learn. Such goals are not necessarily measurable learning outcomes but certainly inform such outcomes.

As we all know from our plane geometry classes, a triangle is a very strong structure with each leg mutually supporting the other two. As a scientist, teaching a science class to students who may find my General Education class to be the first and last such class they may ever take, I want to be particularly sure that they have learned something of the way of thinking and knowing called “science”. This is most easily done by explicitly introducing them to the scientific method as a dialog between two longstanding worldviews, namely empiricism and theory. Unfortunately there isn’t the space here to go into this in detail but you should be able to get the idea that it fundamentally encourages enquiry (Babson, 2000a and 2000b).

Once that is introduced, one can proceed to use it throughout the rest of the semester in establishing the basic principles of the particular subject matter (e.g. astronomy or ecology) and their application, which forms the second leg of the triangle. The last leg, forming the foundation, is learning to learn. Thus learning to learn is embedded in the subject, not just something that is tacked on as an afterthought.

Reclaiming Their Primate Birthright

Because I teach science, I am particularly interested in student enquiry. Leon Lederman, the former director of Fermi Lab, is noted for proclaiming “Physicists don't really ever grow up.” (Lederman and Teresi, 1993, p. 198). The essence of good science is curiosity, what I describe to my students as their “primate birthright”. The problem is that by the time that I get them, the formal education system has turned them incurious. They need to reclaim their birthright. A major obstacle however is that one has to also overcome Confucian cultural resistance in which students tend to “shut up and (pretend to) listen to honorable teacher.” When I examine the approach of many of my students, particularly those who end up during office hours in a discussion with me concerning their study habits, I find all too often they only take a surface approach to their studies. They do not understand the word “understand”, instead they confuse it with “memorize”.

The approach I take to help turn this around is deeply psychological, namely that we will together try and reclaim their lost birthright. (Overcoming the cultural taboo tends to follow in part as human empowerment is reclaimed and curiosity reawakened.) I summarize this as a cyclic process with the acronym EAR – enquiry → awareness → reflection, etc. This cycle of enquiry leads to awareness which needs to be discussed, debated, and digested (the three D’s), leading to reflection further stimulating enquiry ad infinitum. Get your students involved in this and you are on your way!

1 There is a tendency in some contemporary educational circles to only value measurable learning outcomes. While this is important, if a subject is only judged on such quantitative measurements, important qualitative things which will take years to sink in (ex: ethical perspective) will be left out. This is equivalent to classical economics discounting services supplied by nature as an externality. One must be careful to not throw the baby out with the bathwater.

2 Observed directly through a multi-decade teaching career which spans Korea, Hawai‘i, Japan, and Hong Kong.
Teaching and Learning Activity (TLA) Awareness

In practice, I begin with awareness. One of the major impediments to effective learning is that students are often unaware of the concept of a teaching and learning activity. As such, they drift into lecture, tutorial, etc. with insufficient insight and preparation to gain the maximum benefit with the minimum of effort. Thus right from the start in the first lesson, I introduce them to the notion of TLAs. In particular in my classes they experience six: mass lectures; small group tutorials; study group discussions; midterm exams; (independent) reading; and formal writing exercises. In this paper I will discuss the first four and leave the last two (reading and writing) to the companion paper. The syllabus provides them with explicit descriptions. An example description is that of a mass lecture as “a formal weekly two-hour meeting of the entire class. The main focus of lecture is to cover the highlights of your assigned reading, not to generally introduce new material or to spoon-feed you.”

The Use of Learning to Learn Forms

To help overcome student resistance to working with questions, as part of their participation grade, I require students on a weekly basis to fill in a form which gives them repeated experiences in working with questions. The first of these, which I typically introduce after the first midterm quiz experience, is known variously as the “Three Column Table” or “Learning Review Table” (LRT) (see the URL above for this and other forms mentioned here). A topic is chosen and written into a box near the top of the form. Beneath basic identification data (student name, ID number, study team, date, etc.) there are three columns. The first column is labeled “Understand” and here the student is to write down a question for which they are mostly sure that they understand its answer. In the second column, labeled “Don’t understand”, the student writes down a question for something for which they do not understand the answer. Finally, in the third column, the student fills in a question for which they “Want to know more”. While it may seem silly, it is actually effective because it gives students (outside of public view) who have been habituated into not engaging in questions some experience and permission in doing so while remaining focused on a topic.

After about five weeks of the LRT, I have the students switch to a second form, the Question Asking Guide (QAG). As its name implies, this exercise gives students a bit more guidance in asking questions pushing them beyond the superficial. Again there is basic identification information to be filled in and a topic area to be chosen. The idea now is that the student has to write down a question and then work with it over time to make it better. Having done that the student is then challenged to evaluate it along two scales. The first is from merely “recalling information” to “integrating information”. The second is from “focus on a topic” to “go beyond (not off) the topic”. This encourages the student to develop considerably more insight into the process of questioning. Various tips are supplied, such as asking questions that relate concepts, to help the student experience empowerment through meaningful questioning. Again, these forms are collected in lecture on a weekly basis, earning the student participation points. I do not
grade them *per se*. What is most important is that the student repeatedly experiences the process of asking questions.

Tutorial students are subdivided into small Study Groups, ideally with five students in each group (each with a self-chosen group or “team name”). In tutorial, the groups are thrown into a cooperative/competitive environment. Typically the topic of a tutorial, depending upon the content nature of the subject, is either a detailed study of a textbook chapter not covered in lecture (astronomy) or a computer model of an ecosystem (ecology). In both cases, considerable reading and advanced discussion are in order to support the student facilitated questioning and subsequent discussion, which makes up the dynamic of the tutorial (I ban deadpan presentations in which there is little or no engagement and enquiry). To support this, as well as to encourage discussion of lecture materials and associated reading, as pointed out above, each Study Group is expected to meet weekly outside the classroom for an hour, perhaps during lunch. There, students can discuss everything and anything they wish concerning their studies in whatever language they may find convenient.

In the end, they fill in a “Study Group Meeting Report” (SGMR) in which they communicate when and where they met, who attended, what material was discussed, and most importantly what questions they still have remaining (even encouraging them to continue on the back side of the form should they need more room). Again this is collected weekly in tutorial and students receive participation marks. I read these looking in particular for common questions arising from different groups. When I find these, I incorporate discussion of the question into the next lecture. Thus a meaningful dialog among the students and the teacher is encouraged.
References


Ho, A. S. P., et. al. (2001a, May 24-26). *Implementing learning to learn in-context of teaching and learning*. Paper presented at the 2nd Hong Kong conference on Quality in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in Hong Kong, University of Hong Kong.

Ho, A. S. P., et. al. (2001b, May 24-26). *Learning to learn: developing student’s cognitive, motivational and interpersonal strategies for learning*. Paper presented at the 2nd Hong Kong conference on Quality in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in Hong Kong, University of Hong Kong.

Introduction

"Teaching is leading students into situations where they only escape by thinking."

This manuscript summarizes the take home lessons from presentations at the “General Education and University Curriculum Reform: International Conference in Hong Kong”, June 2012. Educational reform within universities is often difficult, slow and burdened with challenges ranging from financial and physical infrastructure limitations to faculty and student attitudes and resistance to change. This is especially true for institutions which have a strong research mission. Many faculty at research universities see their primary role as research and teaching as a tax that they pay in order to be able to engage in the work of discipline research. This perception is often supported by the feeling that only scholarly work that results in grants or publication is recognized and rewarded. As such many faculty approach teaching not as a scholarly pursuit that is intellectually challenging but as journeymen whose role is primarily to transmit information to students rather than that of a teacher/mentor who facilitates student learning and intellectual development. These factors can result in a faculty attitude and perception “that those who can do and those who cannot teach” resulting in teaching being an undervalued activity. In addition most university faculty lack any formal training in how to teach, or an understanding of how people learn and tend to hold on to the assumption that what worked for them as students will work for their students. To implement education reform these challenges of a journeyman’s attitude, lack of training in effective teaching methods, little understanding of how people learn and misconceptions regarding students must be addressed.

Using Faculty Learning Communities to Change Faculty Attitudes Towards Teaching

In order to effectively change faculty attitudes regarding teaching one often needs to change the educational culture and perceptions regarding teaching and student learning within the university. There are a number of common barriers to institutional change especially with respect to General Education. These include: established or historical institutional structures such as departments and colleges that are territorial with respect to discipline content, imposed limitation on who can teach what, and institutional isolation of staff and faculties through discipline and departmental barriers, both physical and intellectual. At the department and individual faculty level there are: apathetic disengaged individuals, naysayers, those that inherently resist change, individuals who are too busy with other aspects of their professional or personal lives to be bothered, and those that cling to the belief that if it isn’t broken then there is no need for change. Despite these challenges it is possible to bring about a shift (change) in the attitudes of faculty which respect to
teaching. This is often a necessary first step in the implementation of a new or re-envisioned General Educational program. In order for reform to take hold and grow and enable implementation of a new or revised General Education program a significant number of faculty must “buy-in” to the idea that the new way of teaching or new General Education program is better or at least as good as what is current and that there is something of inherent value for them in participating in and supporting the change.

Faculty value financial incentives, community, and intellectual engagements that involves solving challenges and discourse among peers. At Maryland we have used faculty learning communities (FLCs) as a venue for educational reform and cultural change by integrating those things that faculty value into the structure of learning communities. Milt Cox and Laurie Richland (Richlin & Cox, 2004) have championed the use of faculty learning communities for improving faculty understanding of teaching and learning. They define FLC as “a group of trans-disciplinary faculty, graduate students and professional staff of a group size 6-15 or more (8 to 12 is the recommended size) engaging in an active, collaborative, yearlong program with a curriculum about enhancing teaching and learning and with frequent seminars and activities that provide learning, professional development, transdisciplinarity, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and community building” (Richlin & Cox, 2004). At Maryland we have found that the key components for establishing and maintaining a healthy FLC are: a common goal or incentive, regular meetings, an atmosphere that supports dialogue and discourse among the community members, leadership to oversee the community, an expectation of a product or outcome, and the goal that each individual will take away from an FLC experience something of value. Each year at Maryland the Center for Teaching Excellence oversee eight to ten FLCs for both faculty and graduate students. These FLCs are focused on improving student learning, changing faculty attitudes towards undergraduate teaching, and increasing understanding of what works in teaching and learning. Three examples of ongoing faculty learning communities at Maryland are presented below.

The oldest faculty learning community at Maryland is the CTE Lilly Faculty Fellows (“Center for Teaching Excellence: University of Maryland, College Park,”-a). This community has been in existence for more than twenty years. Each year faculty from all disciplines and ranks are encouraged to apply to be a CTE Lilly Faculty Fellow. Based on a short (two-page) letter describing their progress as a teacher and scholar and how the applicant envisions a year-long CTE-Lilly Fellowship would contribute to their ongoing development as a teacher-scholar and a supporting letter from a chair, dean or senior colleague, up to ten faculty are selected to become CTE Lilly Faculty Fellows. Each fellow receives $4,000 (USD) in recognition of their contributions to enhancing undergraduate education. In accepting the fellowship, faculty agree to: regularly attend and participate in weekly one-hour meetings of the CTE-Lilly Faculty learning community during the academic year, participate in a half-day retreat during the academic year, be willing to contribute to and participate in CTE-sponsored workshops and
events, participate in the annual Lilly-DC Meeting on Teaching and Learning and provide documentation of their learning/professional growth at the end of the yearlong fellowship.

The CTE-Lilly Faculty learning community meets weekly throughout the academic year to design and implement a campus wide project related to enhancing teaching and learning (“CTE Education Program - University of Maryland,” n.d.-a). Starting in 2010 we have enlisted the CTE Lilly Faculty Fellows to help address the challenges of adopting a new General Education curriculum. Specifically the challenges of implementing two new course categories, “Cultural Competency” and “Scholarship in Practice” (“General Education Program - University of Maryland,” n.d.-a). After completing their tenure as a Lilly Fellow each remains attached to the community as a CTE Lilly Faculty Alumni. More than 130 current faculty are members of the CTE-Lilly Faculty Alumni group. These individuals represent a who’s who among those engaged in improving undergraduate learning. Because of their experiences in the FLC, most remain deeply committed to undergraduate education and serve as invaluable campus resources fostering changes in attitudes towards teaching. Many have advanced to leadership positions within their departments, colleges, or the University.

A different example of a FLC that focuses on undergraduate teaching and learning is the host pathogen interactions (HPI) learning community (G. Marbach-Ad et al., 2010). This FLC is composed of individuals with faculty ranks of assistant to full professors and graduate students and a science education expert. The HPI learning community came together around a “shared research and teaching interest” (ibid) which evolved into an ongoing leaning community that is now entering into its eighth year with approximately 20 members. Several components served to unite the group: discipline research in host-pathogen interactions, responsibility for the undergraduate courses within the microbiology curriculum, a desire to improve the curriculum through increased understanding of what students know and learned as they progressed though the major, and the goal of developing and validating a HPI concept inventory (G. Marbach-Ad et al., 2010). Development and on-going maintenance of the HPI learning community is facilitated by strong leadership within the group, the intellectual satisfaction that accrues when faculty tackle a difficult problem, and support from external grants. The HPI learning community each year issues an invitation to join the community to all faculty who teach courses in microbiology. The HPI learning community meets regularly throughout the academic year approximately twice a month over lunch.

As the impact of technologies on university teaching and student learning continues to grow, the need for mechanisms by which faculty can learn, pilot, and test various existing and emerging technologies for improving teaching and student learning has become critical. To address this, in 2007 the Center for Teaching Excellence developed and piloted a 3-day summer institute for Teaching with New(er) Technologies (STI) (“Center for Teaching Excellence :University of Maryland, College Park,”-b). During the summer institute 12-16 faculty work on implementing a technology to address a specific pedagogical problem of their choosing. Each summer institute yields a faculty learning community (STI-FLC) composed of faculty and staff from different
disciplines and ranks. Faculty apply to be part of the STI learning community by describing a pedagogical problem they hope to address through the use of technology. In the application they must discuss how participating will help them to improve student learning and suggest a new technology they might adopt. Each STI-FLC faculty member receives a $1500 stipend in recognition of their commitment to engaging technology into their teaching. Initially the STI-FLC was situated within the three-day institute where faculty shared ideas and approaches. In 2011 participation in the learning community was expanded to include periodic meeting throughout the academic year where faculty came together over lunch to share their successes and challenges in using technology to enhance teaching and learning. The STI-FLC learning community meets approximately six times each semester.

These three learning communities in combination with other FLCs at Maryland are helping to change faculty attitudes toward teaching and the culture with respect to teaching and General Education. Attitude and cultural changes in higher education with respect to undergraduate teaching and General Education occur slowly and are difficult to measure. We believe that the recent changes at Maryland in these regards are real as evidenced by increased informal and formal conversations among faculty regarding teaching and student learning, the level of participation in the learning communities, attendance at workshops on teaching and learning and requests from college and department to CTE for workshops, presentations, and consolations on teaching and learning. The premise that there has been a positive change in faculty attitudes toward teaching is also supported by survey results and personal comments; “participating in the learning community has changed the way I think about teaching” (English professor); “I have to rethink everything about how I teach …it has been great” (Classics professor). A survey of the members of the STI learning community showed that all (100%) of the respondents (n =13) members felt that participation in the learning community increased their understanding of how to facilitate student engagements and 86% reported that participation in the learning community increased their understanding of how technology can be used to enhance student learning. Our work on developing and using learning communities to address issues related to teaching and student learning has yielded the following lessons learned: 1) monetary incentives are important but not essential; 2) having meetings at lunch time with food increased attendance; 3) members need to be recognized and rewarded for their work; 4) having a project or deliverable is essential; 5) meetings need to be regular and where possible at standard times and days of the week; 6) members need to be included in setting meeting agendas; 7) meetings need to be conversational rather than presentational; and 8) participants need to feel that they are receiving something of value in attending and participating.

A Simple Tool for Improving Teaching and Learning

By using a learning community model we have been able to build momentum and capacity for change, increase faculty understanding of what constitutes good teaching practices and garner support for General Educational reform. However in any given year only a small number of faculty who are directly involved in our learning communities. To help address the teaching
needs for faculty who are not participating in a learning community we have developed a simple tool to help them teach more effectively and efficiently (Benson, S. 2010). We refer to the tool as the Three Cornerstones for Good Teaching (Figure 1). By cornerstones we mean essential, basic principles that provide a firm grounding upon which effective teachers can build courses and forge deeper learning and understanding. The three cornerstones—content, engagement, and transparency—are represented in the figure as overlapping, interconnected components. In other words, effective teaching and student learning improves when these principles intersect with and inform one another. The cornerstones of good teaching apply to all course types. Every course includes content that needs to be appropriately challenging, engaging, meritorious, and relevant to the course and students’ lives. Student engagement is a cornerstone for deeper learning and goes beyond passive acquisition and dissemination of information and often includes hands-on, minds-on learning activities that help build student knowledge and understandings. Finally, students must understand what is expected; therefore, transparency forms the third cornerstone of our tool. Achieving transparency is often one of the most difficult aspects of teaching, since often, what we assume is transparent to us is not transparent to our students. How often have you diligently explained your expectations for an assignment or student product, and then received student work that seems completely off topic because what you thought you said and what the student apparently heard differ? To help faculty achieve high quality learning we encourage instructors to ask themselves three questions as they are developing there course and learning activities: 1) Is this content relevant and appropriate? 2) How will the activity foster student engagement? 3) Do the students fully understand what I am asking and what I am expecting? Remembering to ask these three questions is easy and it provides an easy way for improving teaching and learning.
References


Designing a General Education Program in a Private Management College in Hong Kong: Opportunities and Challenges

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Theme: Leadership in Curriculum Reform

Introduction
Following the educational reform in the high school sector, colleges and universities in Hong Kong are also undertaking their own curriculum reform. As the length of study is changed from three years to four years, General Education will become an important component in the four-year undergraduate curriculum. This historical background points to the fact that GE, though having a very long history with established educational benefits recognized in the United States, is still not clearly defined, even less standardized, in local universities and colleges in Hong Kong. This offers Hang Seng Management College (HSMC) a great opportunity to look at its GE program and re-define and design a new GE core program that makes HSMC a front runner in the race of offering a GE program that benefits the students most.

This paper will first review the current GE core requirements in various programs at HSMC. It is followed by a re-conceptualization of GE core program, beginning from college mission to the learning outcomes of a four-year undergraduate curriculum as manifested in students in the forms of five different abilities, namely, intellectual-analytical, aesthetic-appreciative, moral reasoning, self-management, and a set of skill-based abilities. Being a private management college, HSMC is new, small, and unique. As such, it may be possible to provide an all-round education that produces graduates who possess a broad knowledge base, inter-disciplinary in nature and in a management context. On top of this, a specialization in a major area of study develops. With these in mind, this paper will conclude with a proposal of a four-year General Education curriculum.

Current HSMC GE Core Requirements: Issues and Challenges
Currently at HSMC, the BBA program requires its students to take nine modules in GE; SCM program ten GE modules; BTB program, six GE modules; BJC program, twelve GE modules and BA (English) program, three GE modules. While the GE core program is considered as one of the service modules that include not only GE, but English and Chinese languages, computing and Mathematics, BBA, SCM and BTB programs also require their students to take other non-GE-heading language modules.
The current GE core program at HSMC is a smorgasbord, and as such, any educational or training modules not classifiable into any of its academic programs can be “absorbed” into the GE program. Furthermore, many students considered GE modules as something irrelevant, not useful or not necessary in their four-year education scheme. So, it seems that GE at HSMC is not well defined and thus not meaningfully incorporated into individual academic programs, nor can it function as it should have been.

A Re-conceptualization of GE

A management college may incline to provide strong professional training for future business leaders. Most of the business leaders, however, would agree that an understanding of business knowledge is not enough to be a leader in today's world. Indeed, many argue that virtuous character is the foundation of a business leader. As Hong Kong society becomes globalized and our economy turns towards being knowledge-based, our university education should not be satisfied with equipping students with professional knowledge and skills only but also enhancing fundamental character formation of a whole person (Hong Kong General Education Initiative 2012). The traditional education model with strict boundaries between disciplines probably cannot give students a flexible mindset to face challenges in the changing world today.

Against this backdrop, HSMC formulated its mission statement:

    To provide quality university education with a focus on business and its integration with other disciplines, and through this to develop caring, capable, creative and conscientious individuals for Hong Kong, China and the world.

    (from “3.1.2 – Mission,” pg. 7 of Final Report of Retreat, Jan 18, 2012)

In an effort to achieve the objectives of the College Mission, the General Education department identified five abilities that students at HSMC should acquire by the end of their four-year undergraduate studies:

Specifically, the General Education Core Program at HSMC intends to nurture in students the following abilities:

(a) intellectual-analytical ability from a multi-disciplinary perspective, which enables a student
    (i) to find inter-connectedness among different fields of knowledge and (ii) to apply such
    analytical skills in their everyday life issues. This integrative and synthetic ability would be
    enhanced through the exposure and examination of the basic knowledge of the various
    disciplines in humanities, social sciences, and science and technology;

(b) aesthetic-appreciative ability, which enables a student to appreciate beauty in various forms,
    be it beauty in nature or beauty in man-made art forms, such as music, painting, and literature.
This skill should also enable a student to appreciate the inherent and manifested beauty in other people as well as in his/her own self;

(c) **moral reasoning ability**, which enables a student to distinguish good from bad, right from wrong, ought from ought not, and why;

(d) **skill-based abilities**, which include (i) the languages of Chinese and English, that enables a student to communicate clearly, understandably and convincingly, in spoken and written forms (two languages and three dialects); (ii) IT-computing, that enables a student to function efficiently and effectively in the twenty first century as a IT/computer literate; (iii) Mathematics / Statistics that enable a student to understand figures and read research journal articles/reports competently; (iv) Critical and creative thinking ability, which enables a student to plough through myriads of information, numbers, facts, arguments to group, as well as classify and reason about the inter-relationships between and among them. This ability should also enable a student to see the whole iceberg from just the tip, to discover meaning and significance from everyday normal routines, and to penetrate through dark clouds to find light;

(e) **self-management ability**, which enables a student to manage himself or herself, in regard to management of one’s time, money, talents, relationships, emotions, sufferings, failures and success, etc. These abilities or skills probably could be developed through attending workshops and/or talks organized by the Student Affairs Office.

With these thoughts in mind, we propose a holistic college program, which consists of an individual professional specialization on top, liberal or general education underneath, and basic learning abilities at the bottom as the foundation of all sorts of learning, harmoniously integrated as follows (Figure 1).
Figure 1: Holistic College Education

Individual academic disciplines (departments) Specialization

General Education Core Program
Providing broad knowledge base across academic disciplines of humanities, science, social sciences, enhancing intellectually an integrating ability from an inter-disciplinary perspective.

Basic Learning Abilities

(1) Language
Chinese
English

(2) IT and Computing (abilities to use computing facilities to access, collect and manage information from various sources)

(3) Mathematics / Statistics (abilities to understand figures and read research journal articles/reports)

(4) Self-management Abilities (abilities to manage himself/ herself, in regard to management of one’s time, money, talents, relationships, emotions, sufferings, failures and success, etc.)

(5) Thinking Skill (abilities to think logically, critically and creatively.)

A Proposed GE Core Program
It is important to note that the proposed GE core program attempts to: (i) build a broad and strong knowledge base for each academic major; (ii) to help students acquire an intellectual-analytical ability that synthesizes and integrates knowledge from different academic disciplines; (iii) to give students greater freedom to select module of their interest.

The proposed GE core program consists of 23.3% of credit distribution in the entire academic structure (out of 129 credits). A detailed description of this program is shown in Table 1:
### Table 1: Detailed Description of Proposed GE Core Program Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Core Program</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perspectives on General Education (All Year 1 Students are required to take this interdisciplinary module)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE Core Electives in 5 clusters</td>
<td></td>
<td>24-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Aesthetic and Appreciation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Moral Reasoning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Science and Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Capstone Seminar (Students with cumulative GPA 3.3 or above may apply)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

It is important to point out the supplementarity and complementarity of the General Education core program with each and every single academic area of study (the major): the GE core as a whole and individual GE module should help students from all academic departments to learn more efficiently and effectively as the GE core program and modules are designed to help students to integrate different academic disciplines of knowledge in a rational way, reducing disciplinary fragmentation and increasing academic coherence.
References

Transformative Curriculums: Chinese General Education and the Liberal Arts

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Theme: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

Introduction
While I listened to the croaking of frogs in the pond at Haiyiwanban in Zhuhai I was reminded of a Buddhist tale in which one isolated frog who suddenly saw the ocean exploded from the shock. Like the moral of this story, educational institutions can no longer remain isolated in outdated models. General education and liberal arts initiatives can be daunting in the mainland Chinese context, where test-measured training is the norm. Having taught as a Fulbrighter at City University of Hong Kong and as a GE professor of philosophy at a liberal arts college in Zhuhai as well as conducted research in China for many years, I have been exposed to various educational changes in Chinese society. One major consideration is how much education is playing in the economics debate of mainland China. Recent studies have shown that college graduates do not have preparation for the economic demands of society. In order to move from a developing to a developed economy, Chinese employees must satisfy employers who are saying “they need more flexibility…more interdisciplinary savvy” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, February 6, 2012). What has occurred is a drive toward liberal arts education in the PRC. An educational model that is more philosophical than vocational is actually paving the way to a vocation, or at least, a hope for one. Another consideration is the impact of an educational system on another culture. This essay addresses adoption and adaptation of a Western liberal arts with a General Education model contributing to a hybrid system of education in Mainland China. Particular attention is given to the impact at United International College in Zhuhai as a lens to assess the “transformative” aspects of such a model, and prospects on leadership and faculty development.

A Liberal Arts College, A View Inward and Outward
Liberal arts education is not new to Mainland China. St. John’s College in Shanghai in the 19th century (later St. John’s University, the first institution in China to grant bachelor’s degrees) and others like Jincheng University in Beijing were pioneers in their day. In the current context,
Shanghai’s Fudan University’s Oxbridge-style residential-college structure allows students to decide on majors in their second year while Guangzhou's Sun Yat-sen University has a separate liberal-arts college where a test group studies the Chinese classics, Greek, Latin, science, and economics with the hope of “creat[ing] socially engaged thinkers” instead of “instant billionaires” (Hewitt, 2010). Founded in 2005 by Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) and Beijing Normal University (BNU), United International College (UIC), located in Zhuhai in Guangdong Province is the first full-scale cooperation in higher education between Mainland China and Hong Kong and is the only free-standing liberal arts college in the Mainland. It is a school that looks in three directions for guidance: the Mainland, Hong Kong, and the “West”. The school was founded by Western- and Chinese-educated individuals who dreamed of establishing a Western-style and Chinese educational institution.

**Administrative Structure and Academics**
Structurally, the school promotes itself as a cutting-edge liberal arts institution with General Education as its foundation and outcome-based education as its method providing a student-centered experience. The college is divided into three academic divisions (business and management, humanities and social sciences, science and technology) with a language center, a General Education office, and research centers. Its experiential Whole Person Education Model addresses emotional, social, physical, spiritual, and intellectual needs. There are collaborative study abroad and exchange initiatives with colleges in Minnesota. The school boasts having 40 student societies and interest groups (My Days at UIC, 2011: 16). In addition, students are required to attend a summer English as a Foreign Language institute and a year of English language courses with stringent exam schedules and weekly assignments. At the time of my tenure in 2010-11, courses were taught mostly in English by primarily Western-trained, Western academics with the exception of language courses, Chinese-only courses, computer courses, and the Whole Person Education experiential component.

The General Education Office (GEO), now the General Education Centre, promotes the liberal arts for the entire college, providing required and elective courses. In 2010-11, GEO provided most of the GE courses including the required “Applied Ethics” (AE) course (listed in 2011-12 under “Values and the Meaning of Life”) and electives in philosophy, sociology, and music or...
art appreciation. “History and Civilization” was a new requirement in 2011-12. In 2012, GE courses were distributed among GEO, academic divisions, and the foreign language faculty.

Clash of Values & Hybridity

However much lip service the terms ‘liberal arts’ and ‘General Education’ are given in the Mainland, there is a lack of uniformity and commitment to their wholesale implementation. Despite its European origin, a liberal arts college usually denotes an American model; teaching is Socratic, teaching-centered rather than research-centered, and with small classes, lower student-to-teacher ratio. The UIC case study presents a hybrid model with its concomitant liminality (Bhabha, 1994), advertising itself as promoting liberal arts values with a “practical” goal yet, reflecting anxiety and power struggles on the structural, curricular, and administrative levels. It offers courses that promote Western values applied in a Chinese test-based, vocation-driven, bureaucratic model within a massive factory-style structure. Class sizes are large with no less than 40 students with the exception of language classes and the Whole Person Education Component. In 2010-2011, for example, the AE course averaged 75 to 100 students. Such sizes challenged the adoption of critical thinking skills, communication, writing, and creativity.

As the only faculty member at UIC who taught AE and Asian Philosophy courses, I had my own unique experiences exposing students to Western values as well as enabling them to reflect on their own cultural traditions. I promoted small group interaction within the larger class around such topics as Plato’s cave analogy, Aristotle’s *eaudemonia*, and Augustine’s *Confessions* in addition to the historical coverage of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. Learning took place in many ways; even the weakest of my students still email me with the comment, ‘I will never forget Plato or Augustine.’ One even said he converted to Catholicism, an unintended consequence. In my Asian philosophy courses I often received comments by students that they could not believe they were learning such topics from a Western woman *in English* and ‘Why didn’t we learn these things before?’ Due to the interactive environment and East-West topics, there was appreciation of cross-cultural values and renewed knowledge of Chinese culture.

However, this was not the typical experience at the school. For the most part, students were still test-driven, lectured to, funneled by faculty to take and perform better at more “vocationally-driven or professional” courses. GE courses had the reputation of being “easy” and impractical.
Overall, the thrust of the curriculum often rests not on General Education per se (although students came to appreciate these courses privately) but on such courses as cinema and television, public relations and advertising, social work, teaching English in schools, and journalism that led, they were told or believed, to more practical ends like jobs or graduate school. Note a SIPE Project CTV student ZhenZhu Bao quoted as saying, “Knowledge acquired from books might be superficial. How far is the distance from textbooks to the real world?” with an added caveat “Through experiential learning we can reach our dreams step by step” (My Days at UIC, 2011: 24). It was not a love for the expansion of the mind, diversity, or critical thinking skills that the liberal arts promote, but to land that high level job. Just a different skill set was used, GE and liberal arts. A liberal arts education in GE courses clashed with current Chinese values of being practical. This reminds me of an encounter with a student who was highly stressed from taking eight courses in one semester. After suggesting that she do some extracurricular activity like dance or aerobics, she answered, “in China, [that] is not practical.” This impracticality was also expressed in other ways. At UIC, many students expressed that there was no way one could be a journalist in China as Western faculty described the career; in China a person basically works for the government and reports on others. Exposure to the classics and literature, and specifically being rewarded for creativity, created in students a schizophrenic (or hybridic) set of values and expectations.

Faculty Development, The Grading Rubric, Faculty Governance: Keeping the Status Quo

UIC’s hybridity was also reflected in faculty OBTL development sessions and grade implementation. Outcome-based teaching and learning training workshops under the auspices of Hong Kong Baptist University potentially benefit most Mainland Chinese faculty who were not trained at Western institutions. At UIC, OBTL outcomes have to be clearly stated on syllabi and cross-checked by fellow colleagues. However, rather than an in-depth understanding, OBTL values stated on syllabi often did not connect to the way the course was taught—the regular lecture-based, test-based formats.

A particular example of maintaining the top-down Chinese structure is evident in the implementation of the grading rubric. At UIC and HKBU, rubric workshops are commonplace to structure and assess educational outcomes. At UIC, a required grading rubric was implemented
as a corrective to grade inflation during the early years of the college. Students at UIC received both HKBU and UIC degrees so final grades must align with grades with the mother university, HKBU. The criteria of the rubric based on a marking system shifted, being more stringent in 2010 with only a small percentage of students receiving a B and even less an A grade. On the surface this seems like a fair system preventing abuses of grade inflation but in reality, it presented a challenge to liberal arts philosophy. For instance, often when a faculty member clearly demonstrated that two students deserved a “B” grade, since the rubric restricted the numbers, the administration still enforced the rubric with the dean even changing grades for faculty. In a typical Western-style liberal arts environment, this would have led to heated discussions by faculty and administrators, and possible adjustments, but not here. Open faculty discussions were not just discouraged by the higher administration but prohibited in some cases, this included the prohibition of disclosure of the grading rubric itself to students. Although there is an appeal process in place, it mostly operated for incorrectly calculated grades by instructors.

**Liberal Arts Education With ‘Broken’ English**

The hybridic nature of education at UIC is reflected in the lack of fluency in the English language. English is believed to be the ticket out of factory jobs that litter China and provide a chance to live in Hong Kong or abroad. Unlike other more elitist liberal arts institutions in China, few students at UIC master English and many students are academically weaker. The only opportunity to progress at UIC was an intensive English as a Foreign Language year (and summer prior to admission) with grueling course schedules and an examination system with an inflexible rubric. Witnessing students struggle to grasp the English language while still pressured to perform in 8 to 9 courses a semester was daunting. During my tenure, when all else seemed to fail, many Hong Kong and mainland colleagues often taught in Chinese to ease the difficulties of language immersion and cultural translation. This drive to continue with the familiar points again to the maintenance of Chinese educational styles at UIC.

**Conclusion?**

With the establishment of elite liberal arts institutions and the growing concern about losing top students to foreign universities (see Yongfang Chen and Lin Nie, 2009), there is a continuous debate in China about how universities should structure their curriculum. Some voices reject standards-based instruction and testing in return for recognizing the value of liberal-arts training
to deal with increasingly complex new realities. Liu Chang, a history professor at East China Normal University in Shanghai, noted that “Every citizen needs liberal arts…. To be a good citizen you have to get this education” (Hewitt, 2010). Scholars like Professor Edmund Kwok noted that “[l]iberal education can match the human-resources needs of China and of the multinational corporations coming in, which need people with wider horizons” (Hewitt, 2010). For many, the country needs a workforce to help move away from low-cost manufacturing. In 2010, the Chinese government passed a 10-year reform plan that loosened state control of education and allowed for more experimenting with Western educational styles including putting “moral education” as a priority (Kristof, 2012). Today, however, there is evidence of growing anxiety on the government level over Western influences in the Mainland with worried officials implementing measures to address what they see as the deterioration of Chinese culture. Perhaps as a related consequence, UIC today is now recruiting mostly Western-trained Chinese educators, a move away from Westerners teaching at the school.

Ironically today, the educational systems in China and the United States are not only headed in opposite directions, but are aiming at exactly what the other system is trying to dispose of (Coppola and Zhao, 2012). I am reminded of the danger of the Chinese notion of *gaofen dineng* (high scores low ability) as a possible outcome with unintended consequences in the Mainland. Is Mainland China heading toward the formation of a two-tiered or three-tiered system with the promotion of elitist schools? Future prospects in Hong Kong certainly may impact Mainland perspectives with the formation of institutes like the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine at the University of Hong Kong and Li Ka Shing Medical School, and the Centre on Behavioral Health showing a demand in the private sector for skills that many of us who have taught General Education strive for: a well-rounded education that values critical thinking skills, diversity, multidisciplinarity, and creativity. With the growth of digital humanities in the West, will there be a bridge built between technology and the liberal arts? With the new government in the PRC today, will there be increasing isolation or a reaching outward? At the GE 2012 conference, the question was proposed: ‘What does a developing country expect of its universities?’ As this paper has shown, the public and private sectors have a duty to work together in order to make this GE initiative an easier transition, transparent and sensitive to cultural values and needs, and practical in terms of ends of diverse sorts.
References


The Challenges and Opportunities of Sub-degree General Education Development under the New Academic Structure

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Theme: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses

Introduction

Higher education institutions all over Hong Kong are bracing up to meet the challenge of the New Academic Structure (NAS) where undergraduate programs will generally be changed to four years from three years (Education Bureau 2011). In September 2012, the last batch of students graduating from Form 7 and taking the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination will be admitted to the three-year undergraduate degree programs while the first batch of NAS students graduating from Secondary 6 and taking the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) examination will be admitted to the new four-year programs. Several years ago local universities started to review their existing degree curricula and design the new ones.

The needs of the 21st century brought forth the demand for graduates to have a solid foundation of languages and communication skills, quantitative and analytical skills, planning and investigative skills, critical thinking, and problem solving skills. Knowledge in a single discipline is no longer sufficient, or desirable, in the fast-changing environment of the Internet and globalization. It is not a surprise to see that in the design of new undergraduate degree programs, significant importance is placed on ensuring that graduates will develop the above generic skills. General Education (GE) is identified as an essential component of the curricula in achieving this objective.

The extra year under the new degree curricula perfectly allows room for more and better GE development. Four cohorts of Fulbright scholars, under the sponsorship of the Fulbright Hong Kong General Education Program, were invited to stay in Hong Kong and work with the local academics who were preparing the new degree curricula. Each cohort of visiting scholars worked in Hong Kong for six to nine months. Members of each cohort were assigned to attach to one of the institutions funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC).

Since 2000, the self-financing tertiary education sector in Hong Kong has undergone substantial growth. The post-secondary participation rate has increased from about 33% in 2000/01 to over 60% in 2010/11 (LegCo Secretariat 2012, page 1). The expanded participation is largely through
the proliferated development of self-financing Associate Degree (AD) and Higher Diploma (HD) programs. In particular, the AD programs were newly developed in Hong Kong in 2000. In 2010/11, enrolment in full-time self-financing sub-degrees, a collective term for AD and HD programs, was more than double that in full-time publicly-funded sub-degree programs (52,200 self-financing vs. 24,700 publicly-funded) (Education Bureau 2012).

**Challenges and Opportunities**

Under the NAS, sub-degree institutions are facing many challenges and opportunities in trying to reform and enhance the design and delivery of GE courses in their curricula. There are several major issues in such reform:

a. Diversity in the undergraduate sector;
b. Diversity in the sub-degree sector;
c. Intra- and inter-sector communication and collaboration;
d. Quality assurance of GE.

The local undergraduate sector consists of publicly-funded institutions and self-financing institutions. There has been a tradition for these institutions to admit sub-degree graduates into the senior year of their undergraduate degree programs or tailor-made top-up degree programs. The Government has set up publicly-funded senior year intake places (2,000 in 2010/11 and gradually increased to 4,000 in 2014/15) for sub-degree graduates (HKSAR Government 2011, page 141). The large demand (7,303 AD graduates and 8,097 HD graduates in 2010) (iPASS 2012) drives the growth of self-financing undergraduate degree institutions.

In the transition to the NAS, all existing articulation arrangements have to be established again almost from scratch. In particular, the credit transfer of GE courses is something new to many undergraduate and sub-degree institutions.

To encourage information and ideas sharing among institutions, the UGC and Heads of Universities Committee organized 12 UGC-sponsored symposia for the eight UGC-funded institutions and other relevant organizations from 2008 to 2011. It appears that the eight institutions have designed their new GE curricula in rather different forms.

The variation of GE management and curriculum structures in the sub-degree sector is immense as well. It is found that a few institutions have a separate GE department or GE Director, some have specific GE structures, while others offer GE as a collection of generic electives. There is also significant difference in the (often brief) description of GE courses in websites and official publications of sub-degree providers.

There is a lack of sharing between the staff members of the degree and sub-degree sectors, e.g., senior management, teaching staff, even for some of the affiliated undergraduate and sub-degree program providers. The diversity among undergraduate and sub-degree programs implies that articulation arrangements can be a multilateral and complex problem.
The UGC report “Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong” (2010) recommended that “A transparent and trustworthy Credit Accumulation and Transfer System [CATS] should be developed for the whole post-secondary system”. In order to facilitate articulation and credit transfer, a trust in the comparability as well as the quality standard of the courses under a CATS has to be built. A sector-wide quality assurance system for sub-degree institutions may offer a solution to the multilateral problem described above.

**FSTE Project on GE Curriculum**

With the first cohort of students under the NAS being admitted to university in September 2012, it is a good opportunity for the sub-degree sector to work together in seeking credit transfer of GE courses to undergraduate programs.

As an organization formed by the major self-financing higher education providers, the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education (FSTE) has formed a Working Group to look at development of sub-degree GE courses. They successfully bid for funding support from the Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme (QEGS). The project has two main objectives:

a. To enhance the quality of sub-degree GE through the collective wisdom and sharing of good practices among the participating institutions;

b. To facilitate the credit transfer of GE courses between sub-degree programs and degree programs through a common sub-degree GE framework that is mutually recognized and adopted by sub-degree institutions.

With the help of the visiting Fulbright scholars, an analysis of the GE courses offered by UGC-funded institutions was conducted. Subsequently, a survey questionnaire was designed to gather comprehensive information about the design and implementation of GE. Representatives of the institutions were then interviewed. Similar surveys and interviews are to be carried out for self-financing institutions offering sub-degree and undergraduate degree programs.

Staff development events are organized for staff of FSTE member institutions. Through the funding support and the sponsorship of the Hong Kong America Center, more Fulbright visiting scholars are invited to feature in seminars and talks, sharing their views on GE and US experience with the self-financing higher education sector.

One deliverable from the project will be a Guide Book incorporating material on exemplary GE courses. This Guide Book is expected to benefit the whole sub-degree sector in their design of GE courses as well as to form a base to facilitate the development of a CATS.

**Preliminary Results – GE courses of UGC-funded institutions**

From the Graduate Attributes and GE Learning Outcomes of the eight UGC-funded institutions, the following key terms could be identified (Table 1):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Knowledge – academic specialty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills – trilingual, biliterate, critical and creative thinking, problem-solving</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes – moral values</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lifelong learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Ethical</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible citizenship</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service to community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>International outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For comparison, the following are ‘The Essential Learning Outcomes’ listed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007) as ‘needed goals for student learning’ in preparing themselves for twenty-first-century challenges:

a. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world;
b. Intellectual and practical skills;
c. Personal and social responsibility;
d. Integrative and applied learning.

To provide breadth in GE courses, UGC-funded institutions have specified breadth or distribution requirements for their students. While there is variation in the GE requirements (e.g., number of credits for core and electives), the following major areas are identified (Table 2):

a. Arts and Humanities
b. Social Sciences
c. Natural Sciences
Table 2
*Main GE Distribution Areas*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Arts and Humanities</th>
<th>Social Sciences</th>
<th>Natural Sciences</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I1</td>
<td>Arts and Humanities</td>
<td>Study of Societies, Social and Business Organizations</td>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I2</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Business; Social Sciences</td>
<td>Science / Chinese Medicine</td>
<td>Communication /Visual Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I3</td>
<td>Humanities and the Arts</td>
<td>Management and Society; Values, Cultures and Societies</td>
<td>Science, Technology and Society</td>
<td>Creativity and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I4</td>
<td>Self and Humanity</td>
<td>Society and Culture</td>
<td>Nature, Technology and the Environment</td>
<td>Chinese Cultural Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I5</td>
<td>Persons, Interpretations, Perspectives</td>
<td>Community, Society, Culture</td>
<td>Nature, Science, Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I6</td>
<td>Human nature, relations and development</td>
<td>Community, organization and globalization; History, culture and world views</td>
<td>Science, technology and environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I7</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Social Analysis</td>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I8</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>China: Culture, State and Society; Global Issues</td>
<td>Scientific and Technological Literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: websites of UGC-funded institutions

The following table provides a summary of GE requirements and credits allowed for sub-degree graduates for some of the UGC-funded institutions, at the time of the GE Conference presentation (June 2012) (Table 3):
Some of the UGC-funded institutions award 60% or more of the GE credits to sub-degree graduates. Course providers in the sub-degree sector may work with these more promising prospects in securing articulation for their graduates.

**Way Forward**

There are a number of tasks and activities to be carried out under the FSTE Project:

- Information on the GE courses offered by providers of sub-degree (2 years), self-financing degree (4 years) and local top-up degree (2 years) programs are to be gathered from websites and other public channels. Surveys of and interviews with providers of sub-degree, degree and local top-up degree programs are planned.
- A framework for sub-degree GE courses, based on data collected from UGC-funded and self-financing institutions, will be developed.
- Collaborating with Hong Kong America Center and Fulbright visiting scholars, the FSTE GE project will continue to organize staff development activities for administrative and academic staff of FSTE member institutions.
- Exemplary GE courses will be gathered for reference by sub-degree providers.
- A Guide Book (printed and online version) will be compiled as a culminating deliverable of this project.

Ultimately, this project aims to contribute to the development of high quality sub-degree GE courses and establishment of a credit transfer mechanism between the sub-degree sector and the undergraduate sector.
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Within a Broad Policy Theme on ‘Progress and Development’: General Education for ‘Transport and Society’

Dr. Robert Ian CHAPLIN, University of Macau, Macau SAR

Theme: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses

Introduction

According to the mission statement of the recently established General Education programme at the University of Macau, “One key feature of a good GE model is the focus on the commonality of human experiences, issues that are of prime importance to human beings, and the core intellectual skills and values that we believe all undergraduates should acquire” (UM, 2011). It has been proposed by this author that another theme be added to those of the General Education areas for study: ‘Progress and Development’. This would include courses that focus on human initiatives and the agents of economic, social, and cultural development. Courses would prepare students to understand, appreciate, and deal with the complexity of innovation and change from a human dimension.

One key area identified which encompasses the concept of ‘commonality of human experiences’ is the study of ‘Transport and Society’ and its role in the progress and development of society. The concept of ‘sustainable mobility’ needs to be advocated for future generations who will increasingly engage in travel for work and leisure. The term can be defined as “satisfying current transport and mobility needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet these needs” (Black, 1996). Within society, travel can be an independent or shared experience offering opportunities for communication and reflection on the human condition.

The proposal is based on an analysis of specialized transport studies programmes and courses offered by educational institutions and research conducted by transport professionals and academics. The focus of this analysis is on interdisciplinary approaches to the field of study, the integrated content of courses, and key issues affecting professional and vocational training, academic teaching and research, for the management, operation, research and development of the transport sector.
GE Course: Transport and Society

Course Aims
This course aims to familiarize students with major and current issues affecting transportation in local and international contexts. The significance of transport to the economic, social, and cultural development of society is analyzed with particular emphasis on the concept of sustainability (Black, and Nijkamp, 2002). Students will acquire knowledge of the different forms of transportation, infrastructure, and logistics analyzing their significance to society and communities. Case studies of transportation modes and systems that have positive and negative impacts on the progress of society will be discussed (Wong, Hau, Wang, Chau, and Ho, 2006).

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. understand and appreciate the role of transport in the development of society;
2. demonstrate knowledge of the different forms of transportation and analyze their significance to society and community development;
3. critically analyze and discuss the positive and negative impacts of forms of transportation on society;
4. critically analyze and discuss the concepts and issues affecting the planning and implementation of transportation systems;
5. present arguments for public consultation in transport planning and policy making;
6. conduct research on local and regional travel activity using social analysis instruments;
7. conduct research on local, regional, and national transport providers;
8. analyze their contribution to the economic, social, and cultural development of society.

Teaching and Learning
The course is delivered through a series of structured lectures, tutorial and workshops; these comprise group/individual presentations, videos, discussions, computer lab sessions and guided reading.

Course Content

Travel Activity and Social Analysis: Concept of mobility; local, regional and long-distance passenger transport analysis; transport provision and shortfalls; mode choices and preferences.
Transport Modes: Road transport, rail transport, air transport, river and sea transport.

Transport and the Environment: Transport and environmental management; land use and development; conservation of natural resources; transport architecture; heritage preservation.

Transport Policy: Transport planning and policy making; public and private sectors; public consultation and involvement.

Transport and Work: Transport occupations; profiles of transport managers and workers.

Transport and the Commuter Society: Urban public transport modes: bus, train, mass transit, taxi, hire car; school transport; park and ride; carpooling; cycling to work.

Transport and the Consumer Society: Commercial transport modes and infrastructures: road transport and supply/distribution planning, rail freight transport; aviation and airport planning and management for cargo transport; river and sea cargo transport; port planning and management.

Transport for Leisure and Recreation: Forms of transport used in recreational and leisure activities; rural and urban land use and development of transport for recreation and leisure; transport policy for conservation of the environment.

Transport for Tourism: Forms of tourism transport; tourism operators; managing tourism transport capacity.

Students will also be required to conduct research locally and on transport in other cities and regions in the world. Special topics might include China’s contribution to progress and development through investment in transport projects in the Asia region and beyond, e.g., Africa.

Conclusions
The younger generation today is experiencing unprecedented progress and development of society, especially in China. There have been significant advances in the provision of passenger and freight transport systems and networks throughout the country most notably in the improvements to railway connections between major cities. Investment in transport is also a major factor in China’s spending on military defense and space exploration. As stakeholders in the future of society, it is the responsibility of young citizens to appreciate and understand the
role that transport plays in new avenues for progress and development. It is argued here that a General Education course in Transport and Society should be mandatory for all students whichever disciplines they pursue in higher education institutions.
References


Barriers to Change: 
General Education in Hong Kong

Professor A. Reza HOSHMAND, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong SAR

Theme: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

Introduction
Hong Kong has taken a remarkable step in the way it wants to educate its students. Moving from a 3-year degree to a 4-year education has meant rethinking the curriculum and introducing changes that may require a substantial long-term commitment.

Today, I would like to discuss with you some critical factors that play a role in how this change is taking place and the sources of resistance to change. Achieving the sophisticated goals of a programme requires an intentional approach to all aspects of the programme, from planning, to connections with departmental goals, implementation, and finally to assessment. As Carol Schneider (2011) has aptly put it “Good designs for General Education can challenge the widespread view of General Education as a set of courses to “get out of the way.” Some Hong Kong institutions in the design of their GE Programme have attempted to clarify the role that their GE courses will play in the entire academic career of their student, and how purposeful it is. Hopefully, this will minimize this notion that GE courses are a set of courses that should “get out of the way” to courses in the majors.

Curricular reforms of this nature, under the best of circumstances, face many challenges from within as well from the outside communities. In this paper, I will discuss the major barriers to achieving the “intentional” goals of GE in Hong Kong but first let me address the notion of “change” and the sources of resistance to change and where it comes from, as this will set the stage for my discussion about barriers to change in Hong Kong. I will discuss resistance to change at both the formulation and implementation stage.

According to Leana and Barry (2000), the general aim of change is an adaptation to the environment, or what (Boeker, 1997) has called an improvement in performance. In the case of Hong Kong, it is difficult to determine whether this is an adaptation to the environment or improvement in performance. From my point of view change can be defined along a continuum starting in low scope or evolutionary changes to high-scope or strategic ones. Let me discuss the low scope change which is evolutionary, incremental, or first order change. These are small changes that alter certain small aspects, looking for an improvement in the present situation, but keeping the general working framework as before (Blumenthal and Haspeslagh, 1994; Mezias and Glynn, 1993; Nadler and Tushman, 1990). The second type of change is strategic, transformational, revolutionary, or second order ones. They are radical transformations, where the organization totally changes its essential framework (Blumenthal and Haspeslagh, 1994; Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1996; Marshak, 1993; Nadler and Tushman, 1990). In this context, I believe that it would be easier to say that the changes introduced in Hong Kong are of the second
order. Given the ideas of the nature of change, let me discuss about the source of resistance to change, and how the reality of Hong Kong fits into the theoretical frameworks of change.

Sources of Resistance to Change in the Formulation Stage
As most of you know, there will be resistance to change if the need for change is perceived incorrectly. This distorted perception and interpretation have an impact on the strategic priorities of the institution. This distorted perception may come from the inability to look into the future with clarity (Rumelt, 1995, Krüger, 1996), or communication barriers that lead to information distortion or misinterpretations (Hutt et al., 1995).

Another source of resistance comes from a low motivation for change. I will highlight those that particularly apply to the case of Hong Kong. These are: (a) different interests among faculty and the university, (b) lack of a creative response, (c) inadequate strategic vision or lack of clear commitment of top management to changes (Rumelt, 1995). These were some of the sources of resistance to change at the formulation stage. Institutions in Hong Kong have done their best to overcome some of these barriers. Most have designed, and developed the GE curriculum which may not be completely aligned with the goals of GE. Let us now also take a look at those sources of resistance or barriers to change that may come at the implementation stage.

Sources of Resistance at the Implementation Stage
In this stage, the literature points out that the following bring about barriers to change. The first of them deals with political and cultural deadlocks to change. It consists of: (a) implementation climate and relation between change values and organizational values (Klein and Sorra, 1996; Schalk et al., 1998); (b) departmental politics or resistance from those departments that will suffer with the change implementation (Beer and Eisenstat, 1996; Rumelt, 1995; Beer et al., 1990); (c) and deep rooted values and emotional loyalty to status quo (Krüger, 1996; Nemeth, 1997; Strebel, 1994).

In addition one can also see resistance to change from (a) leadership inaction, sometimes because leaders are afraid of uncertainty, sometimes for fear of changing the status quo (Beer and Eisenstat, 1996; Burdett, 1999; Hutt et al., 1995; Krüger, 1996; Maurer, 1996; Rumelt, 1995); and (b) lack of the necessary capabilities to implement change – capabilities gap – (Rumelt, 1995).

Let me now turn to the barriers I see in the context of Hong Kong. From my perspective, I see the success of GE to depend on three different, yet inter-linked, constituencies. These are the university administrators, the faculty, and the students. Each has a significant role to play in achieving the goals of a solid programme.

First and foremost is how the leadership of a university sees the role of General Education in the academic life of its students. I wish I could say that all universities have bought into the idea of General Education wholeheartedly. However, that is not the case. As we have seen in the US,
some universities and colleges have understood the basic mission well enough to do an exceptional job with their GE, and we have seen how their students are benefiting from it. On the other hand, there are institutions that are still struggling to define the role of GE in the overall undergraduate education. One may ask as to why there is a lack of commitment from some top administrators to the cause of GE in Hong Kong? It is often the case that some of these administrators have never experienced liberal or General Education in their undergraduate education, and they perceive that if they are successful in their careers without exposure to the liberal arts or General Education so would be their students. The posture often taken is that they all support the ideas of General Education; however, when one looks deeply, it is easy to see that the type of support for this effort is at best minimal. I am not talking only about the adequate financial support that should be provided, but rather the moral support and leadership needed to successfully move GE forward. If this is important, the university leadership should take initiatives to speak on the subject, give interviews, speak at community forums, and engage the public in a discussion about the role of GE. They should serve as the cheerleaders for their institution’s GE programme. After all, leadership in higher education has to bring forth new ideas for educating its constituencies.

There is also a societal pressure that puts the top administrators in a defensive position when it comes to GE. Parents often ask, for all the wrong reasons, as to why an additional year has been added to the schooling of their children when they expect their sons/daughters to be only doctors, lawyers, engineers, and business people. What they do not understand is that the courses in GE are to be the foundations for the courses in the majors, be it medicine, law, engineering, or business. What is disheartening is that sometimes an apologetic answer is given to the parents, that this was mandated by the UGC and therefore the universities are doing their best to accomplish the policy goals of higher education in Hong Kong. On the other side are some academic administrators who passionately believe that this reform is for the benefit of the students and society as a whole, and they strongly believe the added value that comes from the integration of knowledge from the courses.

What is rather perplexing and sad is that a society that for millennia has believed in the notion of a well-rounded educated person starts to question those values that are so much a part of the fabric of its culture. One can point out that the compartmentalization of education that permeated the West in the mid-19th century has found its way throughout the world. Such compartmentalization has led to narrowly educating students for a particular field of study and sometimes the education community has not provided a convincing argument of the value of a broadly educated person. Let me just point out, from my perspective, as to why senior administrators should be more convincing when they confront the issue. Here is an example of a survey that was done by an Engineering Professor (Vivek Wadhwa, 2011) at Duke University that shows the value of liberal education in the hiring process of some of the CEO’s of technology companies:
Professor Wadhwa found the following:
652 US-born CEO’s and heads of product engineering at 502 technology companies were interviewed. He found that 92% held bachelor’s degrees, 47% held higher degrees. Only 37% held degrees in engineering and computer technology. The rest had degrees in business, arts, humanities, health care, and accounting (Wadhwa, 2011). Additionally, he interviewed the founders of more than 200 Silicon Valley start-ups. The most common traits he observed are a passion to change the world and the confidence to defy the odds and succeed. Such a passion to change the world is often associated with a liberal arts education that allows for a broad view of the world, and prepares students for life.

A significant component for the success of GE depends on the faculty. Given that most of them are not completely familiar with the ideals of GE, this leads to resistance to change. Most of the faculty in Hong Kong had done their undergraduate education in Hong Kong. They completed their graduate work in the US, UK, or Australia. As we all know, graduate education is a very specialized education that narrowly focuses on a field of study. Hence, the faculty has not experienced General Education in their undergraduate studies and has difficulty stepping out of their comfort zone to offer the courses that integrate knowledge across the disciplines. They also have a wrong assumption about the nature of the General Education courses. Often they think that a GE course is similar to an introductory course in a discipline. This alone is a major barrier to change. It is observed that there is apprehension on the part of the academic colleagues who simply see their primary role as researchers that often conflict with their role in teaching and service. They also see that tenure and promotion decisions are made heavily on the research output of the faculty. Some faculty have expressed the opinion that the amount of time required to develop a GE course and the pedagogy associated with it are too time consuming and is not worth getting involved. Institutions in Hong Kong have to look for ways to engage the faculty better if General Education is to achieve its goals. This problem has to be remedied with effective institutional leadership. To overcome these hindrances requires an intentional approach by administrators (Morrison, and Milliken, 2000) in dealing with the institutionalization of the General Education Programme. There has to be a significant effort in making sure that the teaching faculty have internalized the philosophy of GE, and are up to date with the new approaches in General Education.

The third source of challenge comes from the students who will enter these universities. Although the notion of Liberal Studies has been introduced in Hong Kong at the secondary schools for a few years, it is still at an early stage of adoption. Educators need to help students become “intentional learners” who focus, across ascending levels of study and diverse academic programs, to achieve the essential learning outcomes. But to help students do this, educational communities will also have to become far more intentional themselves—both about the kinds of learning students need, and about effective educational practices that help students learn to integrate and apply their learning to their lives. In a system that has depended heavily on examination as a tool to determine the future academic careers of the students, the students have
learnt to become very good at memorization without much thought to understanding what is being learnt. General Education pedagogy demands that students be engaged in their learning and contribute to their own understanding of what is being taught. This is a major challenge for a number of reasons. First, cultural factors have silenced students to participate in discussions. In a society that considers the teacher to be the sage and who should not be questioned, it is difficult for the students to question authority and feel a level of comfort in asking questions or being a part of a discussion that allows for exchange of ideas. Second, in a test driven society, students are happy to focus only on the grade rather than the learning that should take place. In one GE course at a campus in Hong Kong the faculty member, who was well adept at the pedagogy of GE, was criticized for her teaching. Students’ teaching evaluation of this faculty contained the following: “This professor did not teach, but made us do the work.” This was a typical response to several GE courses that were piloted. Students are not fully aware of the philosophy of General Education courses and they feel that a professor should teach rather than serve as a facilitator in the classroom. Third, the students are very rigid in their thinking and have become accustomed to only looking at issues through a narrow prism. Finally, the students are not completely aware of the philosophy of GE or how it will help them with their academic life at a university and later in life.

To overcome these barriers will require a strong commitment from the leadership of the universities in support of the GE programme. Faculty development will have to be envisioned differently and fully with incentives that are tied with the rank and promotion of the faculty. To educate our students, the collective effort of the academic and student affairs has to come together. In one institution GE staff have been assigned responsibility to work with the various academic units to guide the students in taking their GE courses, and to provide advising when necessary.

In conclusion, there is significant progress in the work of GE, and more must be done to ensure a successful transition from a three-year degree to a four-year degree programme.
References


Critical Reading and Discovery in General Education

Dr Shing Yue SHEUNG, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR

Theme: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula

Introduction: GE for more than “Colonial Needs”

The full implementation of General Education (GE) curricula at all eight universities in Hong Kong has been planned for the fall semester of 2012, apparently to mark the formal completion in the same year of the long anticipated 3-3-4 educational reform. The full integration of these GE curricula with the now lengthened four-year undergraduate degree programs should effectively preclude the scenario of, for example, using the “extra” year to reinforce the latter’s “disciplinary” content. According to a General Education Fulbright scholar closely involved with the Hong Kong General Education Initiative (HKGEI), the reform of the local education system inherited from colonial times to “strike the right balance between the breadth and the depth” has been facilitated by “the end of British control”, but it is still fraught with “contradictions” and “tensions”, many of which are attributable to the “culture of teaching and learning” (Jaffee, 2011). It goes without saying that no teaching and learning culture of Hong Kong is entirely separable from its colonial history. The following statement by HKGEI of its “rationale” is more explicit about our colonial legacy, and may as well serve as a moot point for discussion in my own GE class on the reading of colonialism and self-discovery.

While the current three-year undergraduate degree programs might have met British Colonial needs by providing students with top-notch education in an academic specialty or profession, or prepared them for places in the colonial civil service, today’s graduates need much, much more. They need a curriculum that will strengthen their identity and sense of efficacy, while providing them with ability to be participating members of Hong Kong’s evolving civil society. (HKGEI, 2007, Our Rationale)

A GE curriculum that promises strengthened “identity” and “participation” is understandably superfluous to “colonial needs”. But there is no question of a clean break with the colonial past either, in terms of the “evolution” of Hong Kong as a “civil society”. In any case there is the precise need for us to investigate why the colonial system has limited the educational experience of our students to the acquisition of specialized knowledge and professional competence. Rather than glamorizing colonialism or otherwise tabooing any mention of it, it is necessary for us to engage with its complexities so that we can move on.

My GE course “Reading Colonialism and The Modern Experience” is designed precisely to enable students to engage with the politics of these “colonial needs”, through a critical reading of selected literary and nonliterary writings in and about colonial Hong Kong by locals, expatriates, and visitors dating back to 1911. In the following sections I review my strategies in teaching this
course, when it was offered for the first time in the fall semester of 2011, and the ways in which the spirit of discovery through critical reading is vital for undergraduate research and General Education for the postcolonial.

**Researching and Critiquing an Inherited Identity**

The University of Hong Kong was founded in the eventful year of 1911, which saw the first Republican Revolution in mainland China. As the centenary celebrations for both events were in full swing in the fall of 2011, the coinciding launch of my GE course could not have been better timed, beginning as we did with the reading of an article about the founding of the University by the “visionary” Governor Frederick Lugard (Reproduced in full in Mellor, 1992, pp. 1-5). There was no shortage of articles in the media on the two centenaries separately, but symptomatically, those connecting them were rare. None was as informative and useful for my course as the famous essay “The Imperial University” which Fung Ho-keung published in the student union magazine *Undergrad* back in 1972. He asserted that his alma mater was a British imperial project not so much to serve the local community as to further British imperial interests by providing technocratic training for the aspiring mainland youths of Late Qing China. The Qing Dynasty ironically did not survive the opening of the University, but according to Fung, the University nonetheless was developed as an instrument of “cultural invasion”, becoming “the training ground for a comprador class (the ‘little Englishmen’)” (Fung, 1982, p. 207, English translation mine), now presumably serving the colonial government.

Fung’s critique of the “Imperial University”, not entirely flawless, was ably supported by his liberal use of the British colonial archives, which distinguished him from the other, predominantly Sinocentric, writers writing in Chinese on Hong Kong. It is a fact however that even to this day, the British agenda behind the founding of the University is little known, and her whole colonial enterprise in Hong Kong is apparently of little interest to anyone but a few intellectuals like Fung. Is this indicative of the proverbial Chinese political apathy, or rather, the absence, before (and indeed after) the political handover, of Hong Kong’s colonial history as a subject in the school curriculum, which was the cause of ignorance and apathy in the first place? Is the exposure to Western learning more conducive to the nurturing of “radicals” like Fung, or the “little Englishmen” whom he ridicules? What are the limitations of Sinocentricism on one’s outlook, or “general” education, when the world has been dominated by Western hegemony since the beginning of “modern” times? These were the questions which I asked my students to keep in mind at the beginning of class.

It was not difficult for my students reading Lugard alongside Fung to discover that the founder of the “Imperial University” was more astute than Fung gave him credit for. Lugard was promoting in his article the advantage of British Hong Kong as a far cheaper but no less authentic destination than Europe and Japan for Western learning. But more importantly, he promised the Chinese authorities that the Chinese students studying at the University would be free of the influence of revolutionary ideas incompatible with the political realities in China, or indeed the
colony itself. While it may sound logical that the colonial government should be keen to make “little Englishmen” of Chinese students studying in Hong Kong, this was clearly not the British intention, as Lugard writes:

“Many foreign-educated youths returned completely denationalized, with a contempt for the institutions of their fatherland, and wholly out of touch with their parents and families … It was a hard price to pay for Western education that the student himself should live for eight to ten years in isolation as an exile in an alien land … and that he should return rather as a hybrid European than a Chinaman.” (Mellor, 1992, p. 2)

The contrastive reading highlighted the contradiction between Fung and Lugard, and led to an animated discussion, which was not a bad start for my GE class. It is not a matter of Fung being disingenuous but rather that his subjective belief, which was also shared by the majority of my students, might have impaired his otherwise critical judgment as a researcher. Not all students were convinced on the basis of one article by Lugard that Anglicization was not on the agenda of the colonial government, and quite rightly too. Their skepticism was the reflection of a critical mind with which I was hoping all of my students could tackle the other readings subsequently. They were free to come to their conclusions, but must be critical researchers able to identify and account for both the common themes and the disparate voices in the course readings, and in terms of researching for their term essay, any primary or secondary texts which they would like to use to make their case.

It must be said however that the greatest difficulty for my students in tackling the colonial texts was still their complete lack of background knowledge about the power politics that was going on behind the facade of benign British colonialism. My lectures were devoted for the most part to supplying that information as gleaned from current research, but my students were reminded at the same time that much as my sources could fill in the knowledge gaps, they formed part of the course readings and must be critiqued with the same rigor.

It was therefore in the spirit of critical inquiry that my students read and discovered that Lugard’s concern over the “hybridization” of Chinese and their loss of traditional Chinese values was historically part of the British colonial policy to counter the rising revolutionary Chinese nationalism with Chinese culturalism (Law, 2009). The sinologist governor Cecil Clementi was the most famous champion of this policy. The classical scholars displaced by the Republican Revolution were hosted and hired by him to design an ultraconservative Chinese curriculum for the schools to shield the native Chinese population against the foreign radical ideas (See Luk 1991; Pennycook, 1998). This colonial Chinese curriculum was reinforced to counter the impact of the Communist victory in the civil war in 1949, the Cultural Revolution from 1967-1977, and “was still held in place in the 1990’s” (Pennycook, 1998, p. 124).

Meanwhile, the colonial government was just as keen to control the teaching of English strictly according to economic need, as the British were determined not to repeat their mistake in India
of Anglicizing the natives to become their severest critics (Pennycook, 1998, p112). This utilitarian principle, enshrined in the “watershed” Burney Report of 1936 (Pennycook, 1998, p. 124), was fully implemented with the approach officially adopted since the 1970’s to teach English as a second language. The result, as one local professor of English puts it, is that “the English language taught is a language which gives minimal exposure to British/ Western culture,” and “‘English for Hong Kong’ is primarily performance-oriented and culturally free from British colonialism” (Tam, 2002, p.122).

Conclusion: GE as de-ghettoization

If my students ended up discovering a Hong Kong quite different from the cosmopolitan Hong Kong that many had taken for granted, they must also begin to wonder what had caused their limited perspectives, and how they might overcome their limitations. The education scholar Bernard Luk has famously observed that Chinese culturalism has inadvertently engendered a “patriotism of the emigre” (Luk, 1998, p. 74) that is divorced from the political realities. It is a matter of concern that this can easily develop into reckless nationalism, as evidenced by some Hongkongers taking an even more belligerent stance than the Chinese government on any territorial dispute between China and her neighbors. Meanwhile, postcolonial Hong Kong has the cultural critic Leo Lee worried about her prospects as international city, citing the evidence of her “comfortable parochialism”, falling English standards and accelerating Cantonese monolingualism (Lee, 2007, p. 502). His solution is for us to resort to our “colonial heritage” as a “cultural asset” so that we can be cosmopolitan again (Lee, 2007, p. 508).

No reinvention of cosmopolitanism can happen however without the postcolonial first recognizing the separatism and its consequences inherent in any colonial system, advanced economy and social achievement notwithstanding. The colonial needs of Hong Kong might have been served with everyone just “getting the job done,” and minding their own businesses, while the running of the colony was left to its elite corps of generalist administrators supplied by Great Britain. But we must transcend any more separatism based on race, culture, sector or discipline, if only for the economic fact that we are already in a globalized world of transnational ventures and cross-disciplinary collaboration. In this regard the promotion of General Education is without doubt the right move to usher local education into the twenty first century. The hardest part here is actually reversing the unwitting self-ghettoization of many. Our colonial past must be critically read in order for us to rediscover and free ourselves as we reconnect with China and the world.
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Re-embedding Literacy in the General Education Classroom

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Theme: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

The Question
This is the second of two papers dealing with embedded pedagogy emphasizing effective study habits in the General Education classroom. The first one dealt with learning to learn in general while this one focuses on re-embedding literacy. General Education deals with “big questions” which to be addressed properly, reflecting real world problems, often need to be approached through fundamentals, in an interdisciplinary manner, requiring an in-depth examination of the issues involved. How do you get your students to do this without engaging in both extensive and intensive reading and writing? Answer, you don’t! Yet the typical Hong Kong student enters the university expecting to not have to do much reading. Worse yet, the academic culture virtually mandates assessment that is heavily weighted on comprehensive essays written under exam conditions by students who cannot write because in no small part in practice they do not read! This has been demonstrated in the General Education Centre (GEC) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) to be not so much a matter of a language barrier as it is an attitudinal barrier. Basically we have found the same pattern regardless of the language of assessment. This is a fundamental failure of the contemporary secondary school experience. How can you turn this around? We argue that it can be addressed in the General Education classroom through the re-introduction of embedded literacy and this paper will outline our experiences in doing so. It will begin by describing the efforts of one general science lecturer (Babson) over the past decade acting alone and conclude with a brief description of an institutional approach (Lughmani, Smith, and Babson) being developed at PolyU as we move to “3+3+4”.

Embedding Reading
To get away with reintroducing fundamental literacy in the classroom, you need to make it relevant to students. In other words, they need to be placed in a situation that in order to succeed they need to think their way out and discover that a major supportive tool is reading (and later writing). Further, in order to overcome resistance, you need to supply support for such efforts. Probably the best way to make something relevant in the student’s experience is to make sure that there is strong alignment among the various components making up the class experience (e.g. lecture / tutorial → reading → assessment, etc.), that things are seen from the student’s point of
view as reinforcing one another, not somehow ad hoc or extra. In implementation an integrated approach to literacy supporting deep learning has been adopted as shown in the cycle in figure 1:

![Figure 1. Cyclic alignment of student behaviors](image)

The approach taken has been to begin with reading. It is assigned in advance of lecture. Assessment is entirely continuous and the first of three multiple choice midterm quizzes is given to students early in the semester for early feedback. Students are informed that only the best two out of three quizzes will be counted so should they have difficulty, especially with the first one, their attention is riveted as to how to manage the remaining two. Both the lectures and the quizzes are closely aligned with the required reading. Students who engage in the reading discover success, those who do not, discover something else. Thus the message of needing to engage in reading is communicated. Understandably there is a need to support students in their struggle to accept reading as useful. One starts by telling students that in coming to lecture they have a choice to come either confused or confused. Are you confused?

“Good” confusion occurs when a student makes one or two “quick” reads of the assigned material before attending lecture. It is very hard to teach something of any substance if the student expectation is to only engage the material while physically in the classroom with little or no advanced preparation. This is all too often the case tending to make General Education superficial. Some mandatory reading needs to be central to the class. Lectures adhere closely to this material but one should not shoot for coverage. Instead, focus on the fundamental parts and what experience and student feedback over the years has made you, the teacher, aware of as the perceived hard parts with the rest of the material left for students to pick up on their own and in peer discussion (i.e. group study as discussed in the preceding paper).

Reluctant readers need some scaffolding. This is done by consciously modeling in class the process of doing a “quick” read and not get bogged down. For most Hong Kong students English is a second language so reading is an extra challenge at first, especially if they are not accustomed to substantive reading in Chinese. So we need to practice it. Practice is accomplished by having something substantial to read which they know will be a major part of what is to be accessed. It gives them a means by which to study at their own pace. The approach is simple. Tell them to experiment as to the amount of time they need to devote to a “quick” read so that it
will not be unending, perhaps 45 minutes or an hour. What does not work is a detailed read where the student spends a huge amount of time looking up words in a dictionary and writing tiny little Chinese characters between the lines. Often, especially for technical words, the dictionary will mislead. Books with a built in glossary are particularly good. Otherwise supply a glossary as a handout in advance of the lecture. In this approach the student reads the first sentence of every paragraph then jumps to the next paragraph to do the same. Careful note is made of all subtopic headings as well as table and figure captions. This way they are introduced to the flow of the text, the most important ideas, and much of the specific vocabulary. Time permitting, this is all repeated the night before a lecture only this time adding the last sentence of every paragraph.

Now pose the question “In coming to lecture with such preparation, will you be an expert on the material?” “Of course not, but you will have some idea as to what the lecture is about and how it fits in with everything else.” Thus, when you are lecturing the student will be in a position to gain something meaningful from the lecture because unconsiously and occasionally consciously there are liable to be many unanswered questions in mind that will begin to be answered by the lecture. While perhaps appearing passive, the lecture, for students who engage in this behavior, will become quite active. Shortly after lecture, the student should now do a detailed reading which will be much easier because of the exposure. Gradually meaning is constructed. Contrast this with the “bad” kind of confusion in which the students do not do any of this simple preparation work and finds themselves instead trying to follow a lecture on material they have no idea what it is about presented by a lecturer probably talking too fast in a foreign language! After three weeks they are overwhelmed and give up. That is not a recipe for success. All of this is further enhanced through the use of a Personal Response System where each student can respond with a “clicker” to a multiple choice question projected in the middle of a lecture and all can see the statistical breakout of the responses. Used artfully, this stimulates peer discussion and provides feedback on understanding to all.

Writing
As pointed out above, real reading is a very active exercise in which information is taken in and needs to be digested (through listening, questioning, and discussion all centered on thinking) so that knowledge is constructed. Writing allows one to communicate that understanding. Given the above noted obstacles to effective student writing in Hong Kong, there is a serious question as how one might grade final exam essays. Generally they lack structure or meaningful coherence. Often time they are mere laundry lists of material memorized just before the exam. Little is relevant and that which is tends to be superficial. It is easy to conclude that this sort of assessment exercise is a waste of time and that students are not really learning much. What to do?

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3 For example, see http://www.gtcocalcomp.com
The first approach taken was to reword questions providing some basic structure so responses would not be wandering all over the place (Babson and Csete, 2001). Still this was requiring students with low trust in literacy to write under the pressures of examination conditions. Later, as noted above, final exams were dropped in preference to continuous assessment supported by continuous feedback and dialog (including study habits). Moving writing away from the exam proved less stressful and created space for multiple drafts enhancing dialog. Depending upon the subject, short essays, book reports, term papers, and (especially in human ecology) reflection journals have all been used. To help students gauge their work, the SOLO Taxonomy (Structure of Observed Learning Outcome) of John Biggs (1999) was adopted which makes a major distinction between quality and quantity. Quantity deals with the listing of relevant material as “unrelated details”, typical of a student engaged in surface learning. Quality deals in relationships and the construction of knowledge, i.e. deep learning. With this sort of feedback students have a sense of focus and so do better.

Institutional Support
In planning for educational reform through General Education in PolyU, among other requirements, students will have to take at least four three-credit hour subjects, one from each of four clusters. Two of these, one English and one Chinese, will be required to be intensive reading and writing subjects. At least 40% of the grade will be devoted to writing alone. To this end, the English Language Centre (ELC) and the Chinese Language Centre (CLC) will be working closely with the relevant subject lecturers. Beginning with semester two of academic year 2010-11, the ELC has been actively piloting and refining its implementation model, which we briefly describe here.

The process begins with a meeting between the subject lecturer and the coordinator for the ELC to understand the particular genre involved. Also, the subject lecturer identifies two hours out of the tutorial schedule that will be devoted to language instead of content. Students are subsequently organized through their tutorials into small study groups. The writing challenge is presented to the students and a first draft completed towards the middle of the semester. This is submitted to the appropriate ELC tutor via a computer network arrangement and assessed in terms of its language components. Students are further supported with a series of canned (video) tutorials on writing which they are to view on their own time over the campus computer network so that they can better understand writing issues that their ELC tutor may bring up. A feedback report on areas needing improvement is generated and students attend their first ELC tutorial. Students are then given instructions on preparing a subsequent revision. This is again submitted, assessed for language improvement, and students again meet with their language tutor. Finally the student submits the finished product to the content lecturer. Ten percent of the total marks come from the ELC indicating the extent of improvement in the student’s work. The remaining 30% reflect the lecturer’s assessment of the content. Pilots have now been run for three semesters with adjustment based upon lessons learned. Assessment of these pilot classes definitely shows improvement in student writing. The challenge now is to scale this up for the whole university.
Reading is less directly supported and mostly left to the subject lecturer. However, in support, the ELC has generated a series of five handouts to help students reflect upon the challenge.
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Reading the Word to Reading the World(s):
Teaching Literature in GE Curriculum

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Theme: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

Literature. The very word itself inspires fear and anxiety for the average Hong Kong student. Literature has always been perceived as something that is reserved for elitist students of Band One schools. The subject is regarded as a form of esoteric specialization for the privileged few and has for a long time remained a kind of class marker. Only 0.6% of A-Level students took Literature in English and 0.7% of DSE students took Literature in English (HKEAA, 2012). At the tertiary level, literature is seldom offered except for English majors.

The two most common concerns and worries that local curriculum designers and teachers have on having literature in the curriculum remain that of relevance and accessibility. The study of literature is seen as narrowly Anglo-centric. The worlds of Shakespeare, Austen, Fitzgerald or Faulkner are far too foreign, too remote, and irrelevant for Hong Kong students. But if students can identify with the heroes of Japanese anime fantasy and sci-fi, there is no reason why they cannot identify with the struggles of Hamlet and the dreams of Jay Gatsby. The majority of Hong Kong educators and teachers also argue that literature is particularly complex and inaccessible for English as a Second Language (ESL) or Second Language (L2) learners and can even be detrimental to the process of language learning (Or, 1995). Hong Kong ESL students would be much better off sticking to functional, communicative and practical approaches in language learning.

Having taught literature as a General Education (GE) course at the Associate Degree level for 10 years, I found it difficult to see the validity of these arguments against literature for ESL students. Hong Kong ESL students are perfectly able to read literature like non-ESL students. They come into the classroom with their own prior experience, accumulated knowledge, sensitivities, and insights which they have developed as reader of texts in their first language. And they are perfectly capable of inferring and creating meaning as they encounter textual “gaps” and “ambiguities”. With a carefully selected range of literary texts, well-designed reading load and schedule, and innovative pedagogies, ESL students can enjoy and benefit tremendously from the subject as a GE course.

Literature by its very nature is a “General Education” discipline that connects a variety of disciplines and which recognizes that we now live in a time of cultural and disciplinary hybridization where boundaries between East and West, arts and science, regional and global, are getting porous and blurry. Literature, when taught as a GE course, can help HK students in their understanding of the self in this new era and in their dealing with very complex yet fundamental
human issues in their communities, through understanding the interconnectedness of seemingly opposing concepts. We need to move our students from basic functional literacy to a higher form of literacy that goes beyond mere language skills and acquisition - from reading the word to reading the worlds - a literacy that empowers them to understand the changing world and envisage their relationship with this society so as to lead what Willinsky describes as “fruitful, democratic living” (Willinsky, 1991, p. 123).

Currently, there are two extreme models in approaching literature in Hong Kong. On one hand, we have the Language-based Model (Carter & Long, 1991, p.2-3). Carter and Long are probably amongst the first to advocate the role of literature teaching in a second language environment and the relationship between language and literature teaching. Literature is seen as an instrument to focus on linguistic features such as literal and figurative language, symbolism, irony and ambiguities etc. Formal elements are scrutinized, an approach that is heavily influenced by the New Criticism (or Practical Criticism). Literary texts are seen as models of English usage. The approach is seen as valuable especially for ESL students in the enhancement of the English language. However, this model does not recognize the connection that literature has to other disciplines and the “intrinsic” benefits that reading literature could give students, which are important for a GE literature course.

On the other extreme end of the pole where teaching literature is concerned, there is the Philosophical Model so often found in comparative literature departments or cultural studies in Hong Kong tertiary institutions. Reading literature became a branch of philosophical inquiry about deconstruction, post-structuralism, etc. Critical theories reign supreme in this model. The study of Dickens is being made secondary to the study of French philosophers like Derrida and Foucault. This model, evidently, is much more appropriate for senior year English majors than for students in a GE classroom.

To deliver a GE literature course, it is essential for the teacher to draw from a variety of models. The Personal Growth Model is one of many that are worth considering for generating a GE approach in literature. Carter & Long described the Model as engaging students to respond to the texts as individuals and to grow as individuals (1991, p. 3). This model orients towards the whole person and focuses on both the affective and cognitive side of students where critical “sense” and “sensibility” go hand in hand. This approach is closely related to the transactional reader-response theory where the text is used as a stimulus for feelings, associations, and memories (Tyson, 2006, p. 173). The text is like a mirror – we are in fact reading ourselves, reading our own reactions as we read the text.

While the Personal Growth Model emphasizes the development of the “self”, another model worth considering is the Cultural Model which, as explained by Carter & Long, emphasizes on the students’ understanding and appreciation of cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space (1991, p. 2). This model has been used by a number of scholars in their argument to integrate literature into ESL contexts. The literary text here is seen as a cultural
artifact (Savvidou, 2004). This model can in fact be further expanded, where the text can serve as a collective mirror – as we read about other communities, we are also reading our own communities. Students can de-familiarize themselves as they perceive their own cultures and communities based on the insights they gained by reading other cultures. In the Hong Kong GE classroom, reading literature in this model could raise the awareness of the connectedness between the students’ own Chinese cultural heritage and the different cultural heritages that speak to us in the literary texts.

To teach literature in a GE classroom, the teacher must first abandon all assumptions and biases against ESL students and be ready to see literature as a fertile GE soil to help Hong Kong students understand the self and the relationship between the self and the community. The teacher must be ready to move away from the traditionally privileged teacher-oriented, theory-dominated classroom to a more transactional, non-hierarchical and democratic classroom. Teachers and students alike, who prefer a single view and perspective, must be willing to mediate. Reading literature should be encouraged as a social experience rather than a solely solitary isolated experience. It is only when students are comfortable and confident to express and articulate their feelings and views (sometimes in less than perfect English) in the classroom, would they be able to develop a readiness to reconcile differences in views and responses and achieve, as Rosenblatt explained, a clarification or reinforcement of values and beliefs (1976, xii-xiii). With careful selection of texts from different times and space, students can benefit from the variety of voices that speak to us and which can serve, as what Rosenblatt described, “an educationally liberating force” to counter “the necessarily limited influence of their environment” (quoted in Pradl, 1996).

Below is a sample of the reflections and discussions triggered in a Hong Kong GE classroom after analyzing the themes in Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”. ESL students have no difficulty identifying the different struggles that characters are facing in the changing world of Emily Grierson created by Faulkner and relate them to their own communities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues embedded in literary text</th>
<th>Personal Reflection</th>
<th>Local Current Issues</th>
<th>Historical and Global issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of perceptions between civil war generation and post-civil war generations</td>
<td>Student reflects on how she sees things differently from her parents.</td>
<td>The post-war generation of status quo and the radical post-1980s</td>
<td>Baby boomers v. Generation X &amp; Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic boundaries between North and South, between black and white races</td>
<td>Student re-evaluates her own perceptions of minorities in Hong Kong</td>
<td>Prevalence of ethnic stereotypes in Hong Kong e.g. Mainlanders, South Asians, etc.</td>
<td>Traditional suspicions between different Chinese ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The power of collective memory of the pre-civil war world on the Jefferson community</td>
<td>Selectiveness of one’s memory</td>
<td>The memory of colonial days from resistance to nostalgia</td>
<td>How the memory of June 4th changes from generation to generation and from region to region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading literature, like the democratic process, is for everyone, whether teacher or student, ESL or non-ESL. Together they read “works of the imagination over which all humankind can weep, laugh, shudder and be titillated; communal dreams, shared hallucinations – which in a time when everything else tends to divide us from each other, join us together, men and women, adults and children, educated and uneducated, black and white, yellow and brown – even perhaps, teachers and students” (Fiedler, 1980).
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Teaching ESP in University of Science and Technology

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Theme: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

Introduction

In the past decades, there have been increasing demands and interests in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a major reform of English education. An ESP course is usually taught based on the specific needs of learners of a particular discipline. In contrast with General English which aims to develop a basic foundation of English that can be used in any field, the goals of ESP are to target students’ future needs, facilitate future learning, maintain or increase student motivation, and to promote effective communication in the field.

Recently, ESP has also gained more and more emphases in tertiary education in Taiwan. To broaden the horizon of language teaching in the curricula of General Education (GE), this paper aims to examine ESP teaching in the universities of science and technology in Taiwan. Literature on ESP curriculum and pedagogy is reviewed first, including absolute and variable characteristics of ESP, difficulties faced in promoting ESP, challenges in designing ESP courses, and features to include in an ESP program. In addition, the ESP curriculum in the universities of science and technology in Taiwan is briefly introduced. Finally, one case of an ESP course offered in a university of science and technology is presented.

Literature Review

In terms of ESP features, Strevens (1988, p.1-2) defined the absolute characteristics of ESP as being designed to meet specified needs of the learner; related in content to particular disciplines, occupations and activities; centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, and analysis of this discourse; and, in contrast with General English. Furthermore, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998, p. 4-5) offered the variable characteristics as follows. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.

With regard to ESP curriculum design, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) proposed that successful ESP courses should be designed by conducting needs analyses to ascertain the learners’ target needs and by integrating the required linguistic elements and skills into the syllabus. While conducting the formidable task of teaching ESP, non-specialist ESL/EFL teachers have encountered a great number of difficulties and challenges. According to Kubota and Tromovitch (2009), the reasons expressed by Japanese English teachers to avoid ESP include low proficiency of students, students’ lack of specific purposes of studying English, teachers’ lack of training in the specialized field, and non-ESP teachers’ lack of confidence in applying ESP. Wang (2007) also indicated that the challenges in designing ESP courses in the Chinese context include a
careful consideration of students’ English level, the need of self-improvement of ELT instructors, and the opening up of a policy that brings in cooperation with international counterparts.

To provide some input to ESP educators useful for curriculum design, Yoshida (1998) elicited recommendations for content and design of ESP curriculum by conducting an electronic survey of over 1100 computer science students at a Japanese university. On the one hand, features students preferred mainly include course instruction that is immediately applicable to current studies and daily activities; many out-of-class opportunities for students to use English in natural settings; the division of students according to skill level; a 10-15 student limit for speaking or discussion classes; broader ESP instruction the freshman year and progressively more discipline-specific ESP instruction in the sophomore, junior and senior year; three 30-minute courses per week rather than one 90-minute course; English-only dormitories or other English only territories; various exchange programs with universities abroad from which students can select; the use of TOEFL/IELTS/TOEIC scores to help determine student advancement, short, intensive ESP courses during spring or summer vacation; and more English writing assignment in all university courses.

On the other hand, features to avoid in an ESP program are the use of a student’s native language in an ESP course by students and professors; artificial English speaking activities instead of genuine conversation and discussion; mixing students of different language skills and levels of interests in the same class; homework and exams that are too difficult or too easy; course grades that are too harsh or too mild; large enrollments for speaking or discussion courses; course material that is not related to a student’s current academic life or field of study; professors with low academic or English language qualifications; too much time on drills and exercises rather than on authentic listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities; and decisions about ESP courses without input from students. Such recommendations, if implemented, will hopefully improve the situation of ESP teaching, an approach to language teaching which is characterized by prioritizing learner needs.

ESP Curriculum in University of Science and Technology in Taiwan

By 2012, there were about seventy universities of science and technology in Taiwan. These universities aim to teach their students practical knowledge and working skills that can be immediately applicable to their future jobs. As a result, the curriculum design of English education in universities of science and technology is quite different from that in the general universities, such as National Taiwan University or Tunghai University. The English education in these universities of science and technology is designed with the broader instruction of English for General Purposes (EGP) in the freshman year, and progressively more discipline-specific ESP instruction is conducted in the sophomore, junior, and senior year.

Table 1 shows examples of ESP courses offered in universities of science and technology in Taiwan based on the survey of English curriculum in ten universities, such as National Taiwan University of Science and Technology and National Taipei University of Technology. From
Table 1, we can see that most of the ESP courses are related to business, tourism, and journalism. There are comparatively few courses in the fields of law, medicine, nursing, science, and technology.

Table 1

*Examples of ESP Courses Offered in Universities of Science & Technology in Taiwan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Journalism</th>
<th>Tourism</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business English</td>
<td>Writing News English</td>
<td>Tourism English</td>
<td>Legal English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English for Business Administration</td>
<td>English News</td>
<td>Escorting English</td>
<td>English for Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English for Business Law</td>
<td>Journalistic English</td>
<td>Catering English</td>
<td>English for Biotech Terminology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business English Presentation Skills</td>
<td>English Through Current Events</td>
<td>English for Hospitality Industry</td>
<td>English for Medicine and Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Business English Communication</td>
<td>Commercial English</td>
<td>Aviation English</td>
<td>Conference English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial English</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flight Attendant English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Writing for Business Situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English for Marketing Management</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>English for Negotiation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Case of ESP Course

In the past decade, the author has taught several ESP courses in two universities of science and Technology in Taiwan. One is teaching *English for Science and Technology* to students in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Another course is *English Conference Presentation* offered to graduate students in the Department of Electrical Engineering. A third is teaching MBA (Master of Business Administration) students *English Speech and Presentation*. Since the graduate students from electrical engineering often have chances to present their research in international conferences, such as the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), the researcher was invited by the department chair to teach the students how to give English presentations in international conferences. *English Conference Presentation* as a one-semester course simulated the conference conventions. The instructor took the role of session chair, and the students played the roles of presenters, panelists, and audience. Through the course, the students were required to make both informative presentations and panel presentations (see Table 2).
Table 2
*Course Content of English Conference Presentation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Informative Presentation</th>
<th>Panel Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|        | • Qualities of a Good Engineer  
        | • My Career Objectives 
        | • What Makes Successful 
        | Teamwork 
        | • My Ideal Working Environment 
        | • The Prospects of My Company | • Automation and Human Resources 
        | • How Incentives Increase Productivity | • Environmental Protection and Industrial Development 
        | • A Better Prospect for the Science-Based Industrial Park. | • A Long-Term Plan for Technical People’s Continuing Education |
| Length | 5 minutes | 30 minutes |
| Purpose | to inform | to inspire |
| Audience | 10 industry professionals participating in a workshop | 50 members of the Association of Industrial Park Development |
| Special Focus | organization of an oral presentation | body language |

**Conclusion**

As indicated by Edwards (2000), an effective and flexible ESP course design should be derived from the teachers own practical experiential knowledge and students own target needs. By providing descriptive information, this paper has tried to shed some light on ESP instruction in General Education to English non-major students. Through more realistic and motivating teaching oriented to professional life, it is hoped that students, unlike the respondents in Taillefer’s study (2007, p. 150), will not experience “regretting the handicapping insistence on grammatical perfection to the detriment of oral fluency”, the “frustration at having spent nine years in secondary school and university studying a foreign language and being unable to communicate”, or even “losing out on a job because of insufficient language skills.”
References
Reinvigorating Liberal Arts

Despite the concern that the liberal arts model may be in decline in the West, partially displaced by economic-driven, vocational-based learning (Menand, 2010), the General Education reforms sweeping Hong Kong and other parts of Asia may be re-invigorating the paradigm in the Far East. In Japan, several top-ranked universities have embraced liberal learning and are promoting the benefits to society of a liberally educated population. At International Christian University (ICU), the first liberal arts university established in Japan, the institutional mission has always been to provide a liberal education alongside—or integrated with—English language instruction. Freshman spend one year in an all-English core program where they are introduced to liberal arts ideals and “habits of the mind” (Columbia College, Chapter 4, n.d.) intended to serve them not only during their academic study but throughout their lives. ICU graduates are noted for their civic engagement and their language skills. We are therefore encouraged to see that many Hong Kong universities now include a freshman English-language requirement in their General Education curriculum (e.g. 6 units both at Polytechnic University and City University), yet we would like to argue against the temptation to disassociate these courses from the larger mission and goals of a liberal General Education. Far too often English as a foreign language education (EFL) is thought of in terms of skills that can lead to “later learning” in an English-based curriculum, particularly by pedagogy and curricula reflecting communicative-based language teaching (CBLT) or English for academic purposes (EAP) paradigms. We would like to present the freshman core program at ICU (called “English for Liberal Arts”) as an example of how English education can be fully integrated into the liberal, General Education model, rather than function as a precursor to it.

What is English for Liberal Arts?
The English for Liberal Arts Program (ELA) at International Christian University (ICU) has defined its educational principles as based on the Western notion of liberal arts:

1. Recognize that students are curious, motivated, and already intelligent – they want to engage big issues and tackle significant problems.
2. Encourage writing, thinking, and research for discovery and exploration as part of the education of the whole person – not merely summarizing text and reproducing structure.

3. Emphasize the role of individual experience, including direct observation and thoughtful reflection, in analyzing problems, researching issues, and composing essays.

4. Teach forms but never formulas – a liberal education admits complexity and acknowledges that there is no one way to write an essay, a paragraph, or even a thesis statement (Wadden, Hale, Rush, Ditthayanan, Kleindl, Patterson, & Engler, 2011).

These principles, while not wholly at odds with the pure language acquisition aims of CBLT and EAP, redefine a foreign language curriculum not from the singular standpoint of how instruction can enhance language skills, but rather how the students will fundamentally transform themselves as human beings as a result of the education they receive. The focus, then, moves from the English language a learner produces to the “whole person” the learner becomes. These principles constitute a movement away from process learning, that is, decontextualized “tasks” whose successful completion is deemed the ultimate learning goal. In an English for liberal arts program, every element is part of a coherent curriculum whose purpose serves to ignite a transformational shift in the learner about what it means to be human and to be a functioning, active member of a democratic society in an increasingly globalized world; while learning language, an English for liberal arts student engages the major issues and problems of our time and seeks solutions to them. This type of engagement and the cognitive shift it requires is not something that happens during later study in the university, and it is not something that can be “practiced” and prepared for. It requires the cultivation of not only “university skills,” but also life skills. Therefore, a defining feature of an English for liberal arts model is a distinct philosophical shift away from notions associated with traditional language teaching—with its emphasis on assessable language reproduction prowess—in order to embrace the education of the whole person, as has been the mission of the liberal arts model for millennia.

Therefore, it is important for teachers in an English for liberal arts program to abandon the premise inherent to EAP that the students’ education is largely preparation or “skills training” for future academic work. Instead, the training the students receive focuses on skills, actions, and processes related to their own identity, the rest of their lives, and the society they hope to participate in: namely, the practice of critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving, and reasoning. In order to initiate this engagement, the content in an English for liberal arts program must be chosen carefully with this broader mission in mind.

**Contextualized Content**

In traditional CBLT programs, content theoretically can be anything deemed relevant to the students’ lives and interests (whatever captures their attention), and focus on the meaning of the content takes precedence over explicit, discrete language-form instruction. Topics are often decontextualized from one another (a lesson on immigration may follow one on modern
architecture), and it is only the language of instruction that serves to connect one topic with the next. In an English for liberal arts program, content must be interconnected not only with other content within the same course but also with content in other courses in the program. A reading on justice in a writing course, for example, will be augmented and enhanced by related texts in a reading course, the readings and topics will then serve as a basis for formal lectures, presentations, essays, and eventually written assessments. All of this content covering a given theme (or meta-topic) is taught in a multi-week unit, after which another theme is introduced with content to support it. Choosing content that supports a liberal arts mission, then, becomes of paramount importance in the type of program outlined here. While many language teachers may feel unqualified to make curricular choices to support an English for liberal arts program, the ELA at ICU has done so by looking to the three traditional areas of liberal arts inquiry: humanities (such as literature, ethics, and art) social sciences (such as education, gender, and race issues) and natural sciences (such as biology and environmental issues). Themes are created around a single topic, and all content introduced is interconnected and contextualized with the theme.

The ELA has chosen its content extremely well; in the first unit, for instance, students encounter *Educational Values*. The content studied introduces students to several paradigms of higher education and, in particular, the principles of a liberal arts approach, a model that is still relatively new outside of the West. This introduction is particularly important to students in East Asia who come from a Confucian-based primary and secondary school system where thinking critically and challenging established opinions is considered deviant (Cheung, Rudowicz, Yue, & Kwan, 2003; Niu & Sternberg, 2002; Saeki, Fan, & Van Dusen, 2001). It is, for instance, disconcerting and peculiar for students to be asked to formulate their own opinions, then support them with reasoned evidence in the form of Western argumentation when they have had little occasion (or encouragement) to do so previously.

**Qualified Teachers**

There are two orientations to teaching content: single teacher and team-taught. The team-taught method has been tried at other liberal arts universities in Japan (Sagliano & Greenfield, 1998); however, there are condescending overtones inherent to such an arrangement which assumes that language teachers are somehow unqualified to teach content and matters related to liberal arts. While it is perhaps true that a professor holding a graduate degree in history may be more knowledgeable about historical events, the trained language teacher knows how languages are learned and how to construct a history lesson appropriate for his or her group of learners. In fact, there is no greater qualified professional to teach content in such a context than a liberally educated, applied linguist. There is, however, a requisite mental shift necessary for linguists to take on liberal arts content, particularly if their prior experience has been exclusively in the traditional language-focus domain. In particular, it requires a commitment to reading and learning beyond one’s specialized field—to engage in and model liberal learning—and to merge
that knowledge with what they know about how languages are learned. It is in reality a commitment to the same active liberal learning that liberal arts students are invited to undertake.

Conclusion
At our home institution, all courses within the ELA are intended to enhance the goals of the university’s liberal arts mission rather than simply prepare students for their future liberal education at the university. In this way, not only are the content and curriculum of the ELA aligned with liberal arts ideals, but so too is the ELA itself. In other words, the ELA is not simply a preparatory program in the EAP mold, but it is the place where the students’ liberal arts education actually begins.

This analysis has shown how the ELA curriculum owes much to CBLT and EAP, but also how an “English for Liberal Arts” model breaks new ground and can serve as a model for other EFL programs seeking to adapt this decidedly Western pedagogical approach to language instruction in non-Western contexts. Of particular interest to curriculum designers in Hong Kong is how an English for liberal arts curriculum must be adapted to the dynamics of a particular demographic unfamiliar with that model, one whose students come from a secondary-school system where rote learning, high-stakes testing, and knowledge transference is the traditional curricular mode, normally considered anathema to liberal arts pedagogy. With the current General Education reforms sweeping Hong Kong higher education, and the inevitable need to linguistically prepare students for a curriculum delivered in English, the analysis proposed in this paper and the model of an established and successful freshman liberal arts English language program in East Asia may prove illustrative.
References


Internationalization of Liberal Arts Education at Washington & Jefferson College

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Theme: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curriculum for GE

Founded in 1781 and located about 30 miles south of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Washington & Jefferson (W&J) College is one of the oldest four-year liberal arts colleges for undergraduate students in the United States. We have about 1500 students and offer over 30 majors and many other academic programs. W&J’s pre-law and pre-health programs are internationally known. More than 90 percent of our students who apply to law or health-related schools are accepted.

As many colleges and universities in the US have done, W&J has made great efforts at internationalizing its liberal arts education as this old college moves forward in the 21st century. As someone who has been actively involved in these efforts, I would like to share with you our experiences in this regard in the hope of fostering more discussion on some of the common issues involved in global learning.

While we have always had professors and administrators who are dedicated to international education for many years, it is in the last 10 to 12 years that we have made substantial progress in expanding and institutionalizing global learning. Here are the major steps we have taken:

1. We instituted a foreign language requirement as a component of the general education requirements that all students must fulfill. We settled on a one year language requirement which was a compromise between those who wanted more and those who wanted less. The largest language program is Spanish, which is followed by French and German. We also offer Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian; but due to budget constraints, these less frequently taught language programs remain rather limited.

2. We established a study abroad office whose director is a study abroad professional and a full time administrator, rather than a professor or staffer who manages study abroad part time. This institutional commitment has proven to be a very good move in promoting study abroad. We now have nearly 40 approved study abroad programs in more than 20 countries, including formal exchange agreements with universities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. One of the universities is Lingnan University in Hong Kong. Every year about 80 W&J students study abroad and over 60 international exchange students come to study at W&J. It is still a small number, but a big step compared to what we had before.

3. We developed an interdisciplinary program in international studies which offers a major in international studies and a minor in East Asian studies. I coordinated the efforts at establishing the program and have been serving as the director of the program since its
inception 6 years ago. As with most of the small liberal arts colleges in the United States, we have limited resources in international studies both academically and financially, so we have to build a program that we could have on our limited resources rather than a program that we wish we could have. We took maximum advantage of the existing international studies related courses and included many faculty members who teach these courses in our initial conversations about the program. It took us three years to reach a consensus on the curriculum of the program and to build strong support on campus. But we prevailed. Both the international studies major and East Asian studies minor have become essential pieces of global learning at W&J; they are becoming quite popular with the students now.

4. We also adopted an international business program, which is a combination of a strong foreign language component and a strong business component.

5. We implemented an innovative summer global learning program called the Magellan Program in 2008. The program aims to foster global citizenship through internships, research projects, and study/travel opportunities. Any student can propose a Magellan project to engage in independent study, service, or research abroad. Working with a faculty advisor, students develop a project statement, a personal statement, and a budget. Projects must involve individual study and travel, not enrollment at a foreign university or participation in any kind of formal study abroad program. Students arrange their own itineraries, find their own housing, and solve their own problems. More than 100 Magellan projects have been funded in the past 4 years. Examples of the projects include studying child health in India, fortified churches of Transylvania, street children in Paraguay, art education in Japan, etc. By designing and completing their own projects, the students employ their knowledge and skills while learning civic responsibility and developing values as global citizens. These Magellan students leave college with a profound understanding of how they can make a difference in the world. They also serve to internationalize the campus by sharing their experiences with written reports and oral presentations.

6. We have hired a Director of International Recruitment in order to recruit more degree-seeking international students and therefore further internationalize our college campus.

7. W&J students also continue to have global learning opportunities through three long existing programs. First, we offer many study abroad courses during the intersession every January. In a typical intersession travel course, a faculty member would lead a group of 10 to 15 students to a foreign country for two to three weeks; the content of the course would depend on the expertise and disciplinary background of the faculty. For example, there will be about 15 intersession study abroad trips in January 2013; the titles of the trips include “London Theatre,” “Politics and Society of West Africa,” “The Scientific Wonders of a Caribbean Island: Puerto Rico,” etc., and my study abroad trip to China simply called “China!”

Second, we have a periodic program called the integrated semester, which consists of a set of
courses dealing with a common theme, an interdisciplinary project, and a number of extracurricular activities associated with these courses. Those of us who do international studies can utilize this program to offer more global learning opportunities on campus. For example, we offered an Integrated Semester on Asia this past spring. The program consisted of 16 Asia-related courses offered by many different departments and 12 students completed the program.

Third, our students can do a self-designed major called the “thematic major.” This option makes it possible for a student to pursue in-depth studies on a particular subject that is not covered by the regularly-offered programs. The thematic major is another opportunity to pursue global study. For example, a student can develop a thematic major in China Studies or East Asian Studies, neither of which is offered as a regular major.

In conclusion, I’d like to point out four key factors that have made the internationalization of the liberal arts education at Washington & Jefferson College quite successful. The first is leadership. The president of my college, Dr. Tori Haring-Smith, is a strong believer in global learning and that makes a huge difference. The second is a group of dedicated faculty. My colleagues and I have been very dedicated in expanding global learning opportunities on campus despite the obstacles and difficulties. The third is pragmatism. By pragmatism I mean this: you should do what you can, not what you wish you can, in developing global learning programs. Lastly, be patient. It will take a while for programs to bear fruits. It took Washington & Jefferson College at least five years to have nurtured a critical mass of students who are enthusiastic about global learning and to have developed a culture that fosters global citizenship and to have transformed itself from a rather parochial college to an increasingly international institution.
An Interdisciplinary GE Course: From Preparation to Execution to Formative Assessment

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Theme: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

Introduction

In this paper, we are going to share our experience in preparing and executing a newly designed interdisciplinary, team-taught General Education (GE) course named “Interactive Computing for Visual Communication.” The course idea was spawned from our belief that both visual literacy and computing literacy will be fundamental and critical for our students to stay competitive in the contemporary world no matter which discipline they are pursuing. However, these two literacy disciplines are usually taught as distinct and non-overlapping subjects. Besides, there is a general misunderstanding that computing literacy demands strong mathematical skills while visual literacy requests gifted artistic talents. We will demonstrate how we tackled these problems from the initial idea formulation to the final course delivery using a holistic pedagogy to integrate these two domains of knowledge under a common framework. We will first discuss the problems we foresaw and how we managed to shape our curriculum structure and course content in response to those challenges. We will then explain how we designed assessments to encourage multiple perspectives in problem solving and linking theory with practice. Finally, we will examine the assessments of our pedagogy with both quantitative and qualitative data collected through Formative Review Exercises.

Problems and Solutions

The GE course was run as a pilot test in 2011 at Hong Kong Baptist University and was open to all students with a wide diversity of backgrounds. There were 33 students enrolled, and their majors varied from Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences to Communication. The students’ prior knowledge varied substantially; proper alignment between the students’ expectations and learning outcomes is a decisive factor for the success of the course (Trigwell, Prosser & Taylor, 1994). Therefore, we adopted the outcomes-based teaching and learning approach and encouraged the mentality of learning-by-doing so that every student could have the opportunity to perform their best at their respective levels and standards. An outcome-based approach specifies in advance what the student will be able to learn and do at the culmination of the study. Our course starts with a holistic view of how individual lecture learning outcomes would lead to the overall course learning outcomes. This hierarchical roadmap offers a clear picture and direction from which students could plan their study schedule accordingly.
There are general stereotypes in believing that both visual and computing literacies are the skills of professionals. Visual literacy is coined with the concept that requires talent and special gifts whereas computing literacy is a daunting discipline that demands sophisticated mathematical skills and a bright scientific mind. Our course manages to break these misconceptions through vivid examples of how often and common we interact with a variety of interactive visual applications such as smartphone Apps, MS Office, and ATM machines. These pervasive usages exemplify that both visual and computing literacies do not belong to any particular group of professionals but are routines in our daily life. Most important, all these interactions have radically transformed how people communicate, connect, and work. Therefore, this GE course is necessary to equip our students with fundamental principles and basic techniques in both visual and computing literacies so as to meet the challenges imposed by ongoing social and cultural evolution. Defining the scope of study is a key for establishing a focal point of study for students. To prevent students from being overwhelmed by the breadth of knowledge and to help them to be able to digest and apply the essential principles necessary to complete all the assignments and projects, we organized the course content in a manageable form with the emphasis that the visual is for interface and computing is for interaction.

Training in visual and computing literacies requires not only the familiarity of all fundamental principles but also the capability of putting theories into practices. However, requiring students to develop full-fledged, interactive visual applications from scratch is difficult if not impossible, particularly in a GE course.

To alleviate the technical hurdle and ignite the learning momentum, working examples of lab exercises and assignments were provided to demonstrate the intended results. Students were able to first enjoy the fun of playing with the demonstrations from which they were able to build up their interest and confidence before starting the exercises and assignments. Working examples on the checklist served those students who may needed closer guidance whereas the other students could expand and extend these working examples and produce works with their own originality and novelty. We used the Processing environment as our practicing platform (Reas, Fry & Maeda, 2007). Processing was developed by the MIT Media Lab and is designed to free the user from general programming burdens and focus on the core of the logical development. Besides, Processing provides intuitive and direct connections among programming, graphics, and input modalities, which greatly facilitate the design of, and experimentation with interactive visual application ideas.

Interdisciplinary elements are not only seen in the course content and structure but also in the course delivery and assessment. We taught as a team in every lecture and motivated students to analyze problems and formulate solutions through the synthesis of knowledge from visual and computing perspectives: “The whole is bigger than the sum of its parts” is the motto of our teaching approach. The same principle was also applied to the course assessment, which demands the integration of knowledge and the synthesis of new application ideas. Students were encouraged to tackle the problems from multiple perspectives and devised solutions by applying
techniques from both visual and computing domains. Detailed grading criteria and rubrics addressing various areas of results were issued together with each lab exercise, assignment, and group project. This provided the students with a structural overview of how they could approach and break down the problem.

Results
After 12 weeks of lectures and a series of lab exercises and assignments, students managed to design interactive visual applications in their final group project. A group project setting facilitated the exchange of ideas from multiple perspectives by taking advantage of the diversity of the students’ backgrounds. Besides, a working project template which mimics the basic gameplay of the “Angry Bird,” was given to the students to minimize their reluctance towards coding and to offer them a common platform from the beginning. They delivered encouraging results with application ideas ranging from edutainment to storytelling. Most of the students demonstrated strong proficiencies in visual and computing literacies and were able to apply the skills and techniques they learned creatively.

Table 1  
**Samples of Students’ Final Group Projects**

| Title: Sticky Notes | Title: Crazy Bakery | Title: Naughty Boy |

We conducted Formative Review Exercises (Centre for Holistic Learning and Teaching, 2011) including a learning experience inventory (LEI-C), a study process questionnaire (SPQ), and focus group interviews to document the progress and evidence of teaching effectiveness and student achievement. Empirical data on the quality of teaching and learning were collected to get a deeper understanding of learning styles, approaches and experiences, and student motivation. Two SPQs were collected in week-2 (SPQ1) and week-12 (SPQ2) to study the changes in the students’ approach to learning attributes. This longitudinal study, as shown in Chart 1, indicates that students benefited from our pedagogical approach with assessments aligned to learning outcomes, and they were able to relate the course content to other areas of study as well as appreciate the lateral knowledge development of interdisciplinary GE.
Qualitative results were also collected through focus group interviews and an online teaching evaluation. On the one hand, positive comments were heard such as “the course is interesting” and “the assignments are fun to do.” On the other hand, complaints about workload and technical difficulties were spotted and should demand more of our attention.

**Conclusion**

Although this was our first attempt to run an interdisciplinary GE course in a team-taught mode, this proved to be a rewarding endeavor both from our personal experience and students’ feedback. We plan to refine the course content and introduce more hands-on lab exercises to address the needs of students who have difficulty in programming. In addition, we will break down the assessments into progressive units so that the workload can be reduced to a manageable size for students.
References
Self-Interpretation of Student Dreams as a Tool for Personal Growth in General Education Classes

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Theme: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

Twenty-seven times in the past twenty-five years I have taught a GE class on dream interpretation for personal growth. While various details have evolved, the main objective has always been to introduce students to several major psychological theorists who focus on dream interpretation as the major clue to the nature and development of the human psyche, and to guide students in applying these theories to their own lives, in a quest for increased self-understanding.

The tool enabling students to fulfill this objective has been the dream diary. A dream diary is a daily record of a person’s dreams over a period of time, followed by reflections on how the dream relates to his/her daily life situations, with a view toward gaining insight into one’s personal growth. Due to the length of the semester at my university, and to allow time at the beginning and end of the semester for the usual introductory and concluding tasks, I normally require students to keep their dream diary for a minimum period of ten consecutive weeks.

When I tell others about this assessment method, the most common response is something like: “What? A dream diary?! But that is so subjective, how can you assign fair grades?” That is far less problematic than most people think, provided the teacher clearly explains an objective set of grading criteria to the students, then follows them rigorously when grading. This lecture’s purpose is to share the ten criteria I introduce to students (each worth 10% of the grade) as a framework for open and clear learning outcomes. Within this framework students have total freedom to explore their own personal growth in a non-threatening environment. In short, I assess how well they comply with the framework, not whether they have found the correct “meaning” of each dream.

But before I share that framework, let me say a few words about the two psychologists whose theories are the main focus of the class: Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Carl Jung (1875-1961). I actually devote only a few lectures (four sections of the textbook) entirely to Freud, using him more as a sounding board for Jung than as a theorist of dreams whose approach could adequately fulfill the course objectives on its own. Freud is best known for his views on early childhood sexual development and the related theory of the triadic psyche (id, ego, and superego). Taken together, and with the help of a sophisticated theory of symbolism, these led Freud to propose his basic principle of dream interpretation: “When the work of interpretation has been completed the dream can be recognized as a wish fulfillment.” Freud’s theory comes across as being extremely negative: our dreams, these harbingers of the unconscious drives that are destined to control much of our lives, are essentially waste-products, and the therapist’s job is to help patients...
overcome their negative influences, rather than to provide lasting insights into the meaning of their lives.

Jung, by contrast, introduces a deceptively similar, yet far more constructive principle of dream interpretation, called compensation: our dreams appear each night for our own good, as part of our psyche’s natural tendency to seek balance. Our conscious thought naturally divides the world into opposites (e.g., good and evil, up and down, black and white); in our waking life, we all tend to focus on one side of such dichotomies, to the exclusion of the other. Our unconscious then employs one of several strategies to show us what the neglected alternative is like in our dreams. Whereas Freud divided the psyche into three basic components, Jung saw it as composed of many basic features, called “archetypes”, together constituting our psychic anatomy. The therapist’s job is to know this anatomy and discover characteristics of each part, just as a medical doctor must know how each part of the body works. For Jung, the goal of interpreting dreams is to detect how various dream images symbolize different archetypes, functioning as steps on the path to wholeness.

The first of ten items on my standard grade sheet assesses the “quantity” of dream material in the first part of each entry (i.e., the dream text). This refers to the total number of dreams recorded and the frequency of dreams throughout the ten-week period. I apply a scale that translates the total number into a numerical score (e.g., 20 dreams earns the full 10 marks); but points are deducted for each period of more than 7 days with no dream, and either added or deducted if most dream texts are unusually long or short. Aside from deciding what “short” and “long” mean here, this first item is entirely objective: different students earn the same mark if they produce the same result.

The second item, “quality”, refers to how well the student follows the formatting instructions given in the first chapter of the textbook. I assign one point for each of ten key formatting items. I keep a new dream diary of my own each time I teach the class, and use examples from my own dreams to illustrate the various theories. When presenting my own dreams, I state these formatting items clearly (e.g., the day and time of the dream); so any students who have read the textbook and pay attention in class can therefore easily recognize which items “count” for their grade.

Item three, the Glossary, requires students to identify each person who appears in their dream, either in notes at the end of each dream text, or gathered together at the end of the diary. (Most opt for the latter.) Students may use abbreviations to refer to people who appear in their dreams, to prevent classmates from knowing the identity of these persons. (Students share dreams in tutorial groups; I meet twice each semester with each group so I can directly assess each student’s ability to apply the theories taught in class to their dreams.) Students using abbreviations must provide the full name in the Glossary. I assess the Glossary on completeness (length alone cannot be used, because some students have fewer persons appearing in their dreams); and average length of the entry for each person named. While this item is also partly
subjective, the material being assessed is objective, enabling students to challenge this grade, if they think it is lower than they deserve.\textsuperscript{vi}

Item four has two components, each worth five points: (a) patterns between different dreams; and (b) orderly structuring of the dream text. The first assesses how well students describe thematic similarities between different dreams. Of all the graded items, this is the one that students most commonly forget to do. To minimize the number of low grades for this item, I therefore offer students the opportunity to add a special “dream series” section at the end, explicitly examining themes that appear in multiple dreams.\textsuperscript{vii} Item 4(b), text structure, refers to Jung’s theory that every complete dream text can be written out with a fourfold structure. I do not require students to imitate this structure for every dream text; doing so could be impossible for very short texts, while very long texts might merit considerably more section divisions. Instead, I apply a scale that requires a certain percentage of dream texts to use Jung’s structuring, with others having some type of divisions in most cases. Using the same scale for everyone insures fairness in grading.

Items six to ten all assess the content of the interpretations. I assess each attempt to employ a particular method of interpretation by using a scale from one to five that rewards innovation, yet does so in an objective way, without being judgmental. Merely mentioning a particular technique’s name (e.g., “the dream is obviously a compensation”) earns one point. Indicating the relevant part of the dream text increases this to two points. Including some vague or partial insight into the dream’s relation to personal growth earns three points, or four points, if the insight is clearly expressed but not explicitly linked to a potential change in the student’s waking life. A student earns a perfect five only when the interpretation includes such a direct reference to some type of personal transformation (at least a potential one). After grading all dreams and assigning an individual number for each attempt to employ each type of interpretation, I add up all the numbers and apply the total to a pre-determined, sliding scale, thereby translating the numerical total into a grade on the overall ten point scale. For example, earning a perfect ten requires a total of at least 40 points, including at least one interpretation that was rated with a five.

Item five, literal interpretations, is normally the one with the highest number of students earning full credit. One need not take a class on dream interpretation to be able to connect dream images to waking life events, and to decide what relation a given image might have to one’s waking life; we tend to do this naturally. So my lectures do not focus much on this item, except to distinguish clearly between “literal” and “symbolic” (and the closely related concepts, “objective” and “subjective”), so that students will be aware of which type of interpretation they are presenting.

Item six, symbolic interpretations, is also commonly used even by those who have not had specific training. Most students who have previously interpreted dream symbols, however, simply look up the image in a book (or on a website) that claims to know what various symbols means. But Freud and Jung both strongly opposed such a practice, and so do I. To elucidate the
nature of symbolism, I distinguish between analytic logic (mainly of use in our waking life) and synthetic logic (the logic of dreams; see note 4). The key factor to remember is that a particular interpretation of a given image is only genuinely symbolic if it regards the image as something other than itself. So, for example, the statement “when I get angry at my roommate in my dream, that symbolizes the fact that I really did get angry at her last night, in my waking life”, should not be called a symbolic interpretation at all, but a literal interpretation. (I deduct a small number of points in the factoring of the above-mentioned five point scale whenever students make clear-cut mistakes of this sort.)

Items seven and eight are “Freudian wish-fulfillment” and “Jungian compensation”. Students do not need to force the wish-fulfillment option to have a sexual meaning, though it is fine if they do see this as a meaningful option. These two items are quite straightforward and fit well into the five-point assessment method. At no point in grading these (or the other interpretation-based) items do I base my assessment of a specific interpretation on whether or not I agree with it; rather, I base it on the five-point scale mentioned above: if a student attempts to show how a perceived wish or a perceived compensation might lead them to modify their actions or shape their future personality in some way, they will be given full credit for that interpretation.

Item nine, “personality structure”, assesses any references to either Jung’s archetypes or Freud’s id, ego, and superego. Most students focus more on the former—a tendency I encourage by the fact that two whole chapters are devoted to the archetypes, whereas only part of one chapter is devoted to Freud’s triad. Of Jung’s many archetypes, the most important are the “shadow” and the “anima/animus”; when supplemented by the ego and the persona, they form a fourfold structure that provides the basis for what Jung calls the “Self” (i.e., the archetype of wholeness). An assessment method based on an expectation that certain specific growth goals were achieved would end up being inexorably subjective, because each student is at a different stage of personal development. Some students might never dream of their shadow, or might have already dealt with persona issues sufficiently so that they are quite properly not part of their dream diary. So instead of requiring students to cover everything, I assign equal credit (using the usual five point scale) to any reference to any of these personality structures arising out of a student’s dream. Provided they identify a few of these, and show how they are related to their dreams, they can earn full marks.

Item ten, “individuation”, is Jung’s technical term for personal growth: the process of becoming the individual you were meant to be. In this category I give some credit (e.g., two or three on the five-point scale) for insights or reflections relating to the student’s personality traits, reserving the higher marks (four and five) for comments that specifically identify a proposed (or accomplished) transformation from one character-trait to another. One week’s lectures (chapter 8 in the textbook) are devoted to Jung’s theory of personality types (the basis for the popular Myers-Briggs Test), so students are encouraged to comment on whether they are extravert or introvert, and whether their thinking or feeling (on the “judgment” side) and their sensation or intuition (on the “perceiving” side) are dominant. As usual, I do not assess whether they are
correct, but merely whether they have identified such traits and have attempted to see them as paths toward future growth.

When grading, I must continually remind myself not to base assessments on my personal judgment of whether the student’s proposed interpretation has hit upon the most fruitful way of viewing each dream image. A creative interpretation that seems odd or lacking in relevance receives the same “five” grade as one that resonates deeply with my own personality. This is the only way to prevent subjectivity from creeping in to the assessment process. As a result, the final grade each student receives often does not correlate directly to the depth of self-understanding or lasting practical value that the project has contributed to each student. This might seem like a weakness of this method, but I regard it as one of its greatest strengths; for it frees students to “be themselves” when identifying the best meaning for each dream image. (Of course, I do provide feedback as needed, especially to point out errors in applying certain interpretive concepts. But I never state that a particular interpretation is “wrong”. Over these many years, which are now drawing to a close, I have often felt a sense of deep satisfaction and even awe at the privilege of peering into a side of my students’ lives (and often into Chinese culture as well, since most of my students are Chinese), that few teachers ever experience.

Notes

1 When I first took over this course from a retiring colleague in 1988, it was named “Psychology and Christianity”. After a few years, when the department next revamped its General Education offerings, it was renamed “Religion, Psychology, and Personal Growth. After teaching the course approximately 10 times, I wrote a textbook entitled Dreams of Wholeness: A course of introductory lectures on religion, psychology and personal growth (Hong Kong: Philopsychy Press, 1997), which was revised and republished in 2008. References below are to the second edition.

1 Near the beginning of every semester, I offer students the option of designing an alternative project that would be aimed at achieving the same goal, personal growth. I even direct their attention to the ten alternatives to dream interpretation that are listed in the textbook (see Dreams of Wholeness, pp.20-21). But up to now, no student has ever taken up this offer. Even students who at first claim they do not remember any dreams discover that it is a habit and/or skill that anyone can develop.

1 Quoted in Dreams of Wholeness, p.66, from Freud’s The Interpretation of Dreams, p.207.

1 See my discussion of the distinction between analytic logic and synthetic logic, in The Tree of Philosophy: A course of introductory lectures for beginning students of philosophy (Hong Kong: Philopsychy Press, 2000), chapter 4.

1 Further details on designing a good Glossary (or Notes) are provided in the first chapter of Dreams of Wholeness.

1 One reason for the Glossary requirement is that the people in a dream almost always end up playing a key role in the symbolism; so the more careful one is in making a record of one’s associations to those people, the deeper one’s interpretations (see below) are likely to be.

1 I assess this first half of item four using the same method described for items five to ten, below.

1 Sometimes a student uses compensation and wish-fulfillment together, since they seem quite similar. In such cases, I assess the grade I would give the best usage, had it mentioned only one of the two, and then divide this into two smaller grades to reflect that the mark is being “shared” by two interpretations. To avoid this happening, I advise students advice to put wish-fulfillment interpretations in a separate paragraph from the compensation interpretations.

1 HKBU recently revamped its GE programme. During that exercise, I submitted a proposal for a revised version of my dream interpretation course, but it was rejected by the small sub-committee selecting submissions from my Department. This stands as a warning that in some circles dream interpretation may not be considered a topic worthy of serious academic pursuit.
Erikson, Vygotsky, and Illeris:
Implications/Challenges of
Hong Kong’s University Reforms

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Theme: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

Introduction
With the first batch of four year bachelor students under Hong Kong’s 3-3-4 education reform starting in September 2012, it is important to remember that these students are also the first batch under the New Senior Secondary (NSS) academic structure and curriculum and the first to take the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). How the NSS and the changes Hong Kong’s higher education gate-keeping examinations prepare, influence and affect the incoming (and subsequent) four year bachelor students’ needs to be studied and addressed. Furthermore, what will General Education do to enhance the students’ learning and personal development within the newly expanded undergraduate education programs in Hong Kong?

Although there are broader implications to Hong Kong’s university reforms, this paper looks at the micro-level learning processes through the lens of education psychology. Education psychology helps us understand psycho-social development related to learning and the influence of external factors, which includes the learning environment, in the learning processes. The different sections of this paper will introduce Erikson’s psycho-social developmental stages, Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development and Illeris comprehensive theory of learning and the conceptual framework of this paper. Recent education reforms in Hong Kong are then presented and analyzed using the paper’s conceptual framework, leading to the conclusions and recommendations which concludes this paper.

Conceptual Framework
Understanding Hong Kong’s recent education reforms implications to students’ learning requires a broader perspective which considers the learners, the facilitators of learning and their roles within society. As such, the combination of Erikson, Vygotsky and Illeris’ concepts constructs a conceptual framework that incorporates identity formation, the internal and external dimensions of learning, and the role of the social and learning environment.

Erikson (1980 cited in Craig-Bray, Adams & Dobson, 1988) considers interactions between psychology and social, historical, and developmental factors in his ego development theory. Erikson’s psycho-social developmental stages are based on the individual’s readiness and society’s pressures, which tend to be most severe near the end of adolescence (Erikson, 1980: 130 cited by Côté & Levine, 1989: 389). In fact, Côté & Levine (1989) stressed the importance
of the core concepts of identity crisis, the institutionalized moratoria, and the struggle between the ego and the superego for personality dominance, in Erikson’s concepts and theories.

Identity formation is developed within an institutionalized moratorium, a period of delay granted and institutionalized by society granting the individual time to develop a viable adult identity. Individuals struggle between the practical/technological ego and the moral/humanist superego and develop their identity through three value-oriented stages: the moral, ideological, and the ethical stages. Focusing on the undergraduate age group, this article will only focus on Erikson’s (1963) identity formation and social relation stages and their corresponding identity crises: identity formation vs. role confusion, and intimacy vs. isolation.

Vygotsky (1978, 2004:14-18) believes that an individual’s experience and their linkages to another’s experience (social experience) play an important role in the individual’s learning process, imagination and creativity. His social development theory uses the concepts of active internalization (proactive imitation of others), dialogic selves (self-authoring in relation to others), and the semiotics of behavior (the transitivity of the signs between self and the other) (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007). Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development defines the gap between a learner’s ability to perform a task independently and with the guidance of a more knowledgeable other (e.g. adult guidance or peer collaboration). This, however, should be seen in terms of the learner’s maturing functions (readiness) in relation to their next age period (adulthood in this paper’s case) (Chaiklin, 2003).

Illeris’ (2003) comprehensive learning theory considers both internal and external learning processes and sees the learning processes to involve all three dimensions - cognitive, emotive, and environment - in the development of the learner’s functionality, sensibility and sociality. The cognitive dimension focuses on content learning and enhancing the learner’s functionality to deal with the challenges of practical life while the emotive dimension is engaged psychodynamic processes to secure the learner’s mental balance and develop a personal sensibility. The environment dimension focuses on the interaction between the environment and the individual learners (sociality) leading to the personal integration in society and community.

Based on the three above-mentioned concepts, Hong Kong’s 3-3-4 reforms and the introduction of the General Education courses should be seen in terms of the learners’ cognitive and emotive readiness, the identity formation process, and the supporting environment.

**Recent Hong Kong Education Reforms**

Recent Hong Kong education reforms could be seen in terms of structure, curriculum, and assessments. Education structural reforms are primarily based on Hong Kong’s 3-3-4 education reform, which changed the previous seven year secondary and a three year bachelor structure to a three year junior secondary, three year senior secondary, and a four year bachelor structure. The implementation of the NSS structure and curriculum started in 2009, while the new four year bachelors will have its first intake in September 2012.
Curriculum reforms should be seen not only in terms of the introduction of General Education to the new four year undergraduate curriculum, but also in the NSS curriculum which introduced liberal studies’ focus on self and personal development; society and culture; and science, technology, and environment. This is supposed to facilitate a broadening of knowledge, facilitate self-reflection in terms of identity formation, and help ignite a passion for learning and knowledge. The introduction of General Education at the undergraduate level further enhances identity formation, understanding multiple roles as individuals and citizens of a nation and of the world. Furthermore, it is supposed to equip the students with a culture of lifelong learning and a broad range of competencies necessary in a world characterized by change and uncertainty.

From the various UGC-funded universities’ websites, however, we can infer that the new General Education courses have been developed at the institutional level and differ between institutions and even between intra-institutional departments. To fill the extra year of undergraduate education, 6-12 credits of Chinese and English are made part of the 30 credit General Education requirements. Furthermore, increased internship, service learning and expanded foreign exchange studies are also contemplated by the various universities in Hong Kong. The focus, however, remains the same: whole person development, equip students with skills, competencies to face the ever changing global environment, embody a culture of lifelong learning, and to help them grow into responsible citizens of the world.

Lastly, the introduction and use of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) in lieu of the former Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) as a gate-keeping mechanism allocates students to multiple post-secondary programs (e.g. university, vocational and sub-degree programs). HKCEE and HKALE used to be administered at Forms (grades) 5 and 7, while the HKDSE is administered at the end of the NSS structure. Furthermore, the HKDSE assesses four core subjects: Chinese, English, mathematics and liberal studies, and/or a selection of one or two elective subjects covering a range of topics from applied learning subjects to foreign languages (HKEAA, n.d.). This represents a shift from assessing content-related subjects in the previous examinations (HKCEE and HKALE) to subjects introduced in the NSS curriculum including mathematics and liberal studies, which were formerly not assessed.

Implications/Challenges to Hong Kong University Reforms

Implications/Challenges to Hong Kong university reforms can be seen in terms of cognitive and emotive readiness, identity formation, and the supporting environment. In terms of cognitive and emotive readiness, Hong Kong’s new undergraduate students under 3-3-4 will be cognitively and emotionally less mature and ready for undergraduate education. The fact remains that the new entrants will start a year earlier than the previous cohorts, and their senior secondary curriculum actually only focus on four core subjects (including mathematics and liberal studies). The use and introduction of the HKDSE simply reduces exam related stress by reducing the number of
exams taken from two to one, and shifted the core subjects assessed to be in line with the new senior secondary curriculum. Furthermore, Hong Kong universities’ General Education courses are designed based on the need to fill an extra year of the new undergraduate curriculum. Given the lack of expertise and resources, they are unlikely able to offer a wide range of General Education courses, which can provide whole person development and a broad set of competencies for lifelong learning in the near term. Lastly, the effectiveness of the NSS curriculum, the HKDSE, and the introduction of General Education into an expanded undergraduate education still needs to be assessed and eventually fine-tuned.

In terms of identity formation, the extra year of the new four year undergraduate program does not actually add a year in terms of identity formation as it was taken from the old secondary structure. The NSS curriculum and the use of HKDSE in assessments, however, facilitated a broader experience and knowledge base and delayed the planning of future post-secondary pathways for at least a year. Furthermore, the year shifted from secondary to undergraduate education, coupled with the introduction of General Education courses, does help facilitate identity formation. The institutional moratorium granted within the Hong Kong university sector provides a better environment to acquire a variety of experience, knowledge, and interest, than in secondary education where they are still concerned with the HKDSE or the previous gatekeeping examinations.

In terms of supporting environment, Hong Kong universities and their academic staff may not be ready to facilitate the learning and offer a variety of General Education courses to a cohort of less mature students. Their ability to support student choices (and even offering) of General Education courses is limited by the lack of experience, expertise and even resources, at least in the first few years. As such, the notion of a knowledgeable other may not even be present to support student learning, interest, and experience. Peer group support may provide the necessary support in terms of student choice, and broadening individual experiences; however, it remains to be empirically assessed in the near future.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Hong Kong government’s education reform to prepare their future citizens for an ever changing world, and the responsibilities of global citizenship is commendable. These reforms not only involve changing education structures, but a total change of the entire education system, from the introduction of general studies and liberal studies in primary and secondary education to General Education in higher education.

Hong Kong university reforms are challenged at least in three core aspects: cognitive and emotive readiness, the identity formation of the students, and the ability of the city state’s universities to provide the supporting environment necessary. Even with the earlier implementation of the NSS structure and curriculum in 2009 and the use of the HKDSE, its effectiveness is still not assessed and empirically proven. The universities’ ability to provide a
supporting environment to the identity formation of the students is challenged by the lack of expertise, experience, and resources in designing and providing General Education courses and dealing with less mature students.

In spite of the ambiguity of the earlier initiatives’ effectiveness to promote a broader knowledge base, this is easily rectified by assessing the cognitive and emotive maturity of the new cohort and following their development in their undergraduate education. Given enough space, experience, and time to develop expertise and recruit the right talents, Hong Kong universities can be the knowledgeable other to aid their students move within their zone of proximal development. With sustained political will, stakeholder support, and sustained effort by Hong Kong universities, the city state will have their global citizens, equipped with the right competencies to be lifelong learners in an ever changing world.
References
GE Integration into Groups of Mutually Related Majors

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Theme: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

Abstract
In support of General Education in general, the paper presents possible implementation pitfalls that could turn out to be major stumbling blocks for the long-term success and wide acceptance of the concept. It then suggests that a portion of the GE curriculum should be recommended as a package for students of related majors, with the remaining portion freely electable.

Introduction
It appears that a successful General Education (GE) program must be:

i) integrated,
ii) structured, and
iii) needed (for graduates to function in society).

These essential features of successful GE have been extracted from the following statement that defined GE as:

“INTEGRATED learning experiences STRUCTURED across subject disciplines to provide the set of skills and knowledge NEEDED to function in society.” [1] (Capitalisation added for emphasis.)

Implementation Can be a Problem
An important implementation question is WHO is to integrate, structure, and determine what is needed in GE. Students themselves? It is tempting to empower the students to do that and put them in control of their general education (in the process also pass to them the responsibility for it). After all, that is what happens when students are offered a list of hundreds of GE courses to choose from. They have to choose seven at one institution aspiring to high achievements. The following seven is a fictitious compilation by an engineering student named John of actual GE courses at that institution:

1. Everyday Physics: Its Impact on You and Society
2. Cinema: East and West
3. Madness and Literature
4. Sexuality, Culture and Diversity
5. Love, Sex, and Relationships: Psychological Perspectives
6. The Biochemistry of Attraction
7. Citizens and Justice
The first course on the list John chose because he is already taking a full physics course to satisfy requirements of his major. He reasoned this should then be easy for him.

The second course John selected simply because it was the very first on the list of GE courses on offer and sounded interesting (and easy) enough. He then opened (clicked on) a few more of the courses at the beginning of the list, read titles of the following few without opening them, and scanned through additional few. This he did while simultaneously SMS-ing and talking on the phone, when he impatiently jumped to the bottom of the list. There at number 154 was a course with a “cool” title, so he selected it: “madness and literature”.

John opted for selections number 4 and 5 by searching for what may become the most searched keyword: sex. “Sex sells” as it was said, so the two courses containing this word in the title will probably be well subscribed. Being attractive is undoubtedly high on students’ minds; hence the selection number 6 hoping it would help. John’s adviser may have recommended the seventh choice.

Blind picks from a list of 154 could have resulted in a GE curriculum integrated and structured to a similar degree. Integration and compatibility with John’s major was not even attempted.

Alternative Suggestion
It is suggested that a portion of the GE-curriculum should be developed and recommended as a package for students of related majors: one package for engineering students, another for business students, and etc. Each package would integrate predictably with the respective group of faculty/college/school majors (e.g., engineering). The reason for this suggestion may be illustrated by analysing John’s GE course-selection number 7 about criminal justice, powers of police, and etc. By itself, it is a fine course. For engineers, however, the emphasis of a law-course could be better placed on outlining issues of intellectual property protection and contract and tort laws – while equally achieving ILOs of self-directed learning, critical thinking, and etc. Yet, mercantile law would be of more interest for business students, implying a need for a small number of distinct GE "packages". As part of the GE curricular component, each package would promote purpose-integration into the overall curriculum (e.g. what an engineering graduate should know about law, business, etc.). Such integration might not happen when students select the entire GE-curriculum from a list of hundreds of competing courses.

Engineering associations and most likely other professional and statutory bodies have always placed high value on general education. However, they require specific topics to be covered in courses taken by virtually all students. This implies a requirement for predictability of the content students have mastered. None of the seven courses John has selected count for anything in this regard, necessitating that additional-ge courses be included in John’s major. The problem with this is that additional engineering courses would have to be crossed out from the curriculum, degrading the professional standing of the graduates. (The author’s students already
take a combined thermodynamics and fluid mechanics course, have just one basic mechanics course, do a reduced-scope final year project, and receive no credit at all for the core course “engineering practice”). This concept has merit where the student population as a hole is exceptionally gifted and intellectually endowed.

Conclusion
On the basis that there are issues all graduates of related professions should know, it is argued in this paper that the students be advised to take a package of GE courses aiming for predictability of at least a portion of the GE curriculum. This would still leave plenty of room for students to explore different topics of their personal interest. The recommended pre-packaged portion would account for four out of the seven-course GE curriculum (not counting language and cultural identity courses).
Reference
Programmatic Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education: Best Practices, Resources and Examples

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Theme: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

Introduction

Dr. Carol Geary Schneider’s keynote address (2012) on “Liberal Education and General Education: Educating 21st Century Students for a World Shared in Common” and her handouts on AAC&U’s LEAP outcomes provided the perfect springboard to launch this presentation. The purpose of our presentation is to show how LEAP outcomes can facilitate the programmatic assessment of interdisciplinary General Education.

Best Practices and some Resources for Assessment

Some examples of cutting-edge resources for assessment in the United States include the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Best practices discussed here include NILOA’s Transparency Framework, which highlights the importance of making assessment efforts transparent to all stakeholders (NILOA, 2011). New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability’s Committing to Quality: Guidelines for Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education has been endorsed by numerous professional organizations in the United States (2012). The AAC&U’s Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics have been well-studied and validated (2010).

Why do we need Assessment?

When the pinnacle of the decade-long effort to reform higher education in Hong Kong is reached in September 2012, the eight universities in Hong Kong will have changed their three-year bachelor programs to the four-year, American-style, liberal education curricula emphasizing integrative and interdisciplinary General Education. When that change takes place, implementation of student learning outcomes assessment will help improve teaching and learning and subsequently lead to improved quality of higher education and increase the value of the award. Higher education institutions are accountable to the public because of the use of government funding and society’s need for a high quality work force. Assessment demonstrates the continuous efforts to improve the quality of education and reveals strengths and weaknesses
and thus influences the allocation of resources, especially where development is needed. Furthermore, national accreditation organizations mandate assessment evidence for both SLOs and the degree to which a higher education institution lives up to its mission as re-accreditation criteria.

Building a Programmatic General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment System

The key to building a meaningful programmatic assessment system for General Education begins with worthwhile student learning outcomes (SLOs). If SLOs are not carefully selected, the effort to assess these outcomes may not be fruitful.

Belle Wheelan, the President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), succinctly summarized the importance of SLOs:

In recent years, national conversations about the value of higher education have led to renewed attention on the topic of General Education and those educational outcomes that should be expected for any student who completes a college degree. Further, from an accountability perspective, there has been considerable interest in evidence that postsecondary students are attaining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of them upon completion of a degree in a specific field. This has led to discussion of the importance of identifying effective ways of assessing student learning, both at the course and program level.

(as cited in Paton & Smith, 2011)

Effective assessment of SLOs at both course- and program-level is central to accountability and the value of higher education institutions. Program-level SLOs are usually broad and shared by many courses in the General Education Curriculum. For example, the program-level SLO of writing skills in a General Education program may be supported by the writing assignments in various courses in the curriculum. Course-level outcomes, on the other hand, are usually more specific and pertain to the content of the course. For example, students in an astronomy course learn about the universe and the solar system. The distinction between course- and program-level learning outcomes within a course facilitates the programmatic assessment of General Education. While specific course-level outcomes may differ from course to course, these courses may all share other general components that support the program-level outcomes. For example, while some specific course-level outcomes of a sociology course may be different from those of an astronomy course, both courses may require students to conduct presentations and thus support the communication program-level learning outcomes of the General Education program. Identifying the general components in individual General Education courses and aligning them with program-level outcomes will facilitate the programmatic assessment of General Education.

The careful selection of course- and program-level SLOs is essential to successful assessment. The AAC&U’s LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes is “a set of outcomes that are highly prized both by the academy and by employers” (p.1) and are grouped into four categories (AAC&U,
These categories include: 1) Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World; 2) Intellectual and Practical Skills; 3) Personal and Social Responsibility; and 4) Integrative and Applied Learning. The AAC&U LEAP outcomes would be a good starting place if educators are looking for useful SLOs for assessment. Our consideration comes from designating some LEAP outcomes as program-level learning outcomes in interdisciplinary General Education programs. This approach facilitates General Education outcome assessment of seniors who have taken a variety of courses.

It is also important to mention that program-level learning outcomes should be aligned with the mission and vision of the institution. Mission is the reason why institutions exist and describe who we are.

Saint Joseph’s College’s General Education: The Core Program

Saint Joseph’s College’s (SJC) Core program was founded in 1969 with its content updated every year. The Core program is a ten-course, interdisciplinary, team-taught, and integrative General Education curriculum shaped to fit the college’s mission. It consists of 45 semester hours evenly spread over the 8 semesters of our undergraduate program. The two senior-level courses, Cores 9 and 10, are considered capstone courses (J. Nichols, personal communication, September 13, 2011). Both courses have existing rubrics to assess major course projects. The 4-year Core curriculum is intended to articulate with majors providing a coherent and interdisciplinary undergraduate curriculum. Its “co-learner” model encourages teachers and students to learn together in an interdisciplinary environment. The Core experience is shared by all SJC students.

In the fall semesters, course offerings are: Core 1 (The Contemporary Situation – freshman year); Core 3 (The Roots of Western Civilization – sophomore year); Core 5 (Humanity in the Universe I – junior year); Core 7 (Intercultural Studies I – junior year); and Core 9 (Christian Humanism – senior year). In the spring semester, course offerings are: Core 2 (The Modern World – freshman year); Core 4 (Christian Impact on Western Civilization – sophomore year); Core 6 (Humanity in the Universe II – junior year); Core 8 (Intercultural Studies II – junior year) and Core 10 (Seminars in Christian Humanism – senior year).

Programmatic Assessment of the Core Program at SJC

One of the assumptions of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) model for assessment at SJC considers that failure has occurred when assessment results show that there is nothing to improve. The CQI model emphasizes the assessment of student learning outcomes rather than teaching objectives. Although both direct and indirect measures are used in the assessment of SLOs at SJC, our example below emphasizes direct measures which were based on students’ work or performance. This example entails the assessment of thirty-six senior capstone research projects in Core 10, which include a 20-page research paper and a presentation (M. Malone, personal communication, October 12, 2011). Core 10 rubrics were given to seniors as a “compass” for excellence (AAC&U, 2011). Consensus of evaluation was reached if two of the
three readers agreed on the rubric score for the research paper. Roughly 85% of our graduates submitted acceptable or excellent work with respect to the four targeted program-level outcomes (Communication, Research, Moral reasoning, and Interdisciplinary skills).

Our program-wide assessment of General Education at SJC is based on a 3-year assessment plan. Faculty from each Core course are required to conduct annual course-level outcomes assessment, except the third year of the cycle. During the third year, the Core faculty conduct assessment of program-level outcomes. Assessment reports submitted by each group of Core faculty are evaluated by the Assessment Committee using rubrics. Evaluation results are posted on a common computer drive on campus for all faculty to see.

Currently, our program-level outcomes for the Core program as stated in the senior-year capstone rubrics do not include critical thinking. Adding critical thinking as a learning outcome to our Core program will benefit all students at Saint Joseph’s College. As part of our on-going effort to improve the senior capstone rubrics, a critical thinking workshop was held in May 2012 for the SJC faculty. One of the activities of the workshop asked faculty from Cores 1 through 8 to select one major assignment from each Core course and analyze the assignment to see if it included elements of critical thinking. At the end of the activity, a General Education curriculum map revealing how critical thinking skills were honed by assignments from freshman through junior year at SJC was created. Weaknesses were found in some areas where critical thinking skills were not reinforced.

A Hypothetical Example from the Hong Kong Baptist University
The General Education Program of the Hong Kong Baptist University consists of Core and Distribution Requirements. The 26-credit Core Requirements cover eight areas including University English, University Chinese, Public speaking, Information management technology, Numeracy, Physical education, History and civilization, and Values and the meaning of life. The 12-credit Distribution Requirements cover five courses offered by seven areas of disciplines including Business, Communication or Visual arts, Science or Chinese medicine, Social Sciences, and Arts (HKBU, 2012).

The hypothetical assessment plan for the “Coping with life Challenges” course consists of formative assessment (e.g., six in-class learning activities account for 30 percent of the total marks) and summative assessment (e.g., a case study group project accounts for 30 percent and a reflection paper accounts for 40 percent) showing how well the students accomplish the seven program-level outcomes (similar to some LEAP outcomes) of the General Education Program. They are: (1) Communicate effectively as speakers and writers in both English and Chinese; (2) Access and manage complex information and problems using technologically appropriate means; (3) Apply appropriate mathematical reasoning to address problems in everyday life; (4) Acquire an active and healthy lifestyle; (5) Use historical and cultural perspectives to gain insight into contemporary issues; (6) Apply various value systems to decision-making in personal,
professional, and social/political situations; and (7) Make connections among a variety of disciplines to gain insight into contemporary personal, professional, and community situations.

According to this plan, only three (i.e., 1, 6, and 7) out of the seven program-level outcomes could be covered by this course. Due to the nature of disciplines, knowledge and skills, it is impossible for a single General Education course to cover all program-level outcomes. There is a need to develop a transparent, analytical, and vigorous curriculum framework for the General Education program to enable students and curriculum planners to analyze the program-level outcomes and plan how they can be covered by an individual course as well as to develop a holistic picture of how all these program-level outcomes can be covered by various courses.

**Conclusion**

Colleges and universities benefit from good assessment as evidence to show that graduates possess the expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon completion of a degree. Programmatic assessment of General Education SLOs can lead to continuous quality improvement of higher education. Alignment of General Education course outcomes with program-level outcomes can lead to effective programmatic assessment. Finally, LEAP outcomes can be used to facilitate program-level outcomes assessment.
References


98
The Study of Core Competency Learning and Outcome Assessment in General Education

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Theme: Assessment of GE Programmes

The Current Worldwide Trend in Higher Education: Strengthening Competency-oriented Learning and Learning Outcomes

In the wake of globalization, the knowledge-based economy is ushering in a new model of globally competitive work environments indicating the core competencies that undergraduate students must acquire and develop. This new model drives the current move in higher education toward higher level learning outcomes such as critical thinking, communication, problem solving, and the like. To provide a clearer picture of these changes, this study first illustrates how institutions of higher education around the world define the core competencies that undergraduate students should be equipped with, especially as regards their acquisition through general education.

(1) The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and core competency acquisition as requirement for graduation

To make European higher education more competitive, 47 European nations formally launched the Bologna Process (1999) in 2010 with the aim of creating a “European Higher Education Area” containing countries across the continent. Among the many European Union (EU) reform measures, the outcome-oriented learning emphasized in the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) highlights the importance of competency-oriented, outcome-oriented, and employment-oriented curriculum planning. Consequently, under the ECTS curriculum framework, 18 competency-oriented compulsory credits have been added. “Competency” (Kompetenzen), in this view, is not equivalent to the cultivation of pure knowledge but rather emphasizes knowledge and skill in integrating motivation, willpower, and social factors in specific situations, as well as the ability to apply problem solving successfully under variable conditions (Chen, 2011).

(2) The use of curriculum mapping in Taiwan

Curriculum mapping proceeds from competency cultivation to the expectation that students will obtain “lifelong competencies” rather than mere textbook knowledge that they simply parrot back to teachers during tests. Setting core competencies as the main axis of general education means realizing the fundamental objective of constructing a curriculum map. To aid in the construction of a curriculum map, a course quality assurance mechanism can be established to promote outcome-based learning and outcome-based assessments. Curriculum mapping provides
a roadmap for curriculum navigation that guides students in clarifying their career development and making further plans for their ideal learning map (Chen, 2012). Under the guidance of curriculum mapping, it is expected, by the end of a school year, that students’ learning autonomy and self-direction will be strengthened and that they will more fully grasp the knowledge learned in order to transform it into acquired competencies.

**Challenge of Core Competency Assessment**

General education, as a fundamental bedrock of Higher Education, define the proposition of core competency cultivation education, but the learning outcomes of such education cannot be assessed merely with written tests. Critical thinking, for example, involves a number of integrated literacy abilities composing a high level of adaptive capability. Accordingly, its outcomes cannot be arbitrarily assessed in a one-time evaluation or with quantitative criteria. Rather, such assessment requires long-term tracking with data collection and analysis. As such, general education and diversity assessment need to emphasize long-term data collection and development of diversity assessment tools in order to facilitate outcome-based assessments of high-level core competency learning.

Higher education objectives that used to focus on professional knowledge now have difficulty catering to workplace requirements in the real world. As such, universities need to value and promote “process competency,” which refers to the transformation of knowledge into competencies – in other words, to the development of talents involving “multiple competencies” such as learning, thinking, communication, livability, mobility, competitiveness, cooperation, sharing, and creativity competencies. Written tests that only adopt a single criterion have been questioned because they not only fail to completely evaluate students' learning achievements in various dimensions but also no longer meet the current demands of higher education, resulting in the neglect of performance, portfolio, and observation assessments. To improve teaching quality in university education, it is insufficient to consider teaching objectives, contents, or methods only. A simultaneous emphasis on research to improve assessment methods is necessary.

**Types of multiple assessments**

“Multiple assessments” is an omnibus concept that covers many new-style assessments, the considerable differences among which help define each of them. Some have equated this concept with performance assessment, while others consider the inclusion of performance, authentic, portfolio, and other assessments different from traditional assessment (Wiggins, 1989). The sections that follow focus on portfolio, performance, affective assessments, and E-portfolio and Campus Pack e-learning platform.
(1) **Portfolio assessment**

Portfolio assessment is also known as learning portfolio assessment, dossier assessment, and personal portfolio assessment according to different definitions. Yu Mingning (2002) first referred to “portfolio assessment” as the systematic collection of a series of students’ learning achievements (e.g., performances, works, and assessment results) and records of learning growth in one or several fields. A portfolio, in this sense, is not simply a folder for collecting a student’s work; it is also a meaningful collection of the student’s best work that is most representative of the student’s learning achievements and growth, providing evidence that the student possesses the skills and competencies indicated in the learning objectives. Because students participate in the preparation of these student files through content selection, choice standards, and grading standards, evidence of a given student’s self-reflection is also included in the folder. Paulson, Paulson, and Meyer (1991) defined “portfolios” as collections of students’ representative work intended to show the students’ efforts, progress, and achievements in one or several fields. The portfolios are used to collect students’ work in order to present their learning achievements. In addition to presenting students’ achievements, portfolios are also used to show students’ progress over time.

(2) **Performance assessment**

The rise of performance assessment began in the early 1990s in response to the weakness of traditional tests (e.g., tests using true-or-false and multiple-choice questions) that emphasize fragmented, discontinuous knowledge, skills, and cognition with a consequent lack in assessing the practical combination and application of overall knowledge. Traditional tests downplay the value of learning and are disconnected from daily lives. Traditional tests also prevent students from applying the knowledge they have learned to practical problems, which causes students to lack competencies in critical thinking and in analyzing, judging, and combining knowledge. Secondly, the rise of performance assessment has been influenced by cognitive psychology. Cognitive psychologists believe that students should pay attention to both content knowledge and process knowledge. However, process knowledge is best acquired by doing (Wu and Lin, 2006).

(3) **Affective assessment**

The purpose of education is not only to emphasize the improvement of students’ knowledge and skills but to focus on the cultivation of students’ personalities. According to Bloom’s classification (Bloom, 1956), teaching objectives cover three dimensions, namely, cognition, skill, and affect. The assessment of affective objectives is much most difficult because affective growth cannot be successfully assessed by evaluating cognition and achievement, and because affective assessment is much more time consuming (Kuo, 2004). Affect is not easily quantified and its learning outcomes cannot be truly assessed by written tests. Therefore, qualitative description is more appropriate for affective assessment when collecting data about learners' affective performance. Affective domain assessment mainly focuses on learners’ interests, attitudes, values, or appreciation competencies. Possible assessment methods include learning diaries, self-report scales, peer assessments, and anecdotal records.
(4) **E-portfolio and Campus Pack e-learning platform**

Social learning is now the focus of e-Learning, in which learners play the roles of not only information receiver but also information giver/provider. The Campus Pack is a program that makes learning more interesting and interactive by using Web 2.0 tools and by bringing in the concept of social learning. Campus Pack uses an interface similar to those of websites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google, that students have already become very familiar with. Also, Campus Pack can be integrated with existing e-learning platforms already in use on a campus. Students can complete teamwork or individual assignments by using Web 2.0 tools and can collaborate to build up course, club, and personal learning spaces. Campus Pack can effectively help instructors realize innovative teaching methods in terms of assigning homework, recording the teaching/learning process, and interacting inside and outside the classroom with students.

In short, multiple assessments diversify learning outcome assessment tools and, more importantly, allow the implementation of assessments for competency-oriented learning outcomes. In this era of major higher education reform, general education strives to enrich and diversify the dimensions of teaching objectives, curriculum design, and teaching methods. Therefore, methods for assessing learning achievements should also be innovative and flexible in response to general trends. However, the relationship between multiple assessments and traditional paper-and-pencil assessments is not an antagonistic one but rather a complementary one. Through the use of multiple assessments, the limitations and insufficiencies of traditional paper-and-pencil assessments can be supplemented.

**Conclusions: Multiple Assessments on Learning Outcomes and Core Competencies**

In summary, the assessment of core competencies involves clear definitions of the actual contents of core competencies and their operational definitions and descriptions. Furthermore, core competencies cannot be assessed by traditional written tests; therefore, it is necessary to combine the insights of multidimensional assessments and to implement these assessments with the spirit and methods of portfolio, performance, and affective assessments. Further data collection efforts are important steps in core competency assessment that allow for further analysis of factors that influence students’ learning. These data collection efforts can involve obtaining various forms of relevant information, including information on student backgrounds, learning environments, the utilization of various teaching resources, learning consultations, and student club activities. Moreover, other challenges are also waiting to be resolved. For example, how can institutions of higher learning set up a hierarchical structure, major concepts, and sub-concepts for core competencies? What are the appropriate design principles for starting-point questionnaires for university freshman? Can college entrance examination scores validly serve as starting points for basic knowledge? How can teachers integrate developed rubrics into teaching? How are the core competencies of general education taught and learned? How can institutions conquer the challenges in assessing high-level competencies that are nonetheless difficult to assess (e.g., liberal arts attitudes and problem solving competencies)? These are challenges that
higher education must currently meet in the hopes of carrying out the core values of liberal arts education.
References
Teaching China’s Civilization in a Chinese (Hong Kong) Environment: What to Teach and How to Teach it

Professor David Pong, University of Delaware, USA

Theme: Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes

Preamble: These are exciting times in Hong Kong as it launches a four-year curriculum in its universities this September. As I understand it, the main objectives of this educational reform are (1) to increase the students’ critical thinking skills and at the same time (2) broaden their education so that they will become intellectually nimble and professionally adaptable as they enter society. In short, students who graduate under this new curriculum should be skilled not only in their field of studies, be it engineering or sociology, but also socially concerned, politically aware, and intellectually inquisitive – attributes that promote life-long learning and good citizenry. [The “big questions” in Carol Schneider’s keynote address yesterday].

In designing this new curriculum, the institutions of higher education in Hong Kong come up with different plans or programmes, reflecting their individual character, history, culture, philosophy and mission. This said, most if not all agree that the students of Hong Kong, predominantly Chinese, should, as part of their General Education, study something about China or Hong Kong. [Again, Carol Schneider calls for “intercultural knowledge and competence” which, I submit, cannot be realized without the students having first a knowledge of themselves in their own historical and cultural contexts]. (For the sake of simplicity and stylistic considerations, I shall henceforth simply use “China” to represent both China and Hong Kong).

If it is General Education that, in this cultural context, calls for the study of China, what can a course on China contribute to fulfilling the goals of General Education? This paper, then, is about the design and teaching of a course on China or Hong Kong, including its history, culture, civilization, and contemporary society. However, as an historian, I will draw most of my examples from history without at any time losing sight of what other disciplines can bring into the study of China or Hong Kong. It has been suggested that history is the queen of social studies. Whether one agrees with this assertion or not, history as an academic discipline is by nature multi-disciplinary. This is why we have political history, economic history, social history, art history, history of science and technology, history of medicine, and the like. No human activity lies outside the realm of history. To put it in another way, history, good history, must draw upon the wealth of knowledge and methods provided by a broad array of disciplines and approaches.
The Challenge

1. To design and offer a course on China and its history or culture to a broad spectrum of students, most of whom may not be interested in history or cultural studies, and many may not even know what history or cultural studies is about.

2. Many students will enter university with an understanding of history as nothing more than names and dates, or sociology as just for social work, or archaeology as the study of old artifacts with little or no bearing on contemporary life.

3. While practically all students will have some knowledge about China, much of it could be characterized as half-truths, myths, misconceptions, or a bundle of ill-digested, unrelated “facts”. A lot is taken for granted.

4. There certainly is a prevailing perception about China’s civilization as high culture – philosophy such as Confucianism or Daoism, poetry, calligraphy, or court painting. True? False? This topic is related to No. 3 above, but deserves separate discussion.

5. Hong Kong students are famous for their ability to do well in set examinations on well-defined curricula. It is nonetheless alleged that most students will not have the ability to tie their bits and pieces of knowledge into a coherent picture and read their meanings or implications. Assuming this is the case, how shall we tackle this issue?

6. One of the great challenges, then, is to find ways to encourage students to think outside the box, for example, to see connections, relationships, or relevance where such connections or relevance are not immediately apparent.

The Human Elements

1. **The Students.** The students entering university at present may embody some of the characteristics I have just described. However, students coming up in the years to come might be quite different as they, too, have experienced a new, General Education curriculum in high schools. What the future students might be like remains to be seen. Those of us engaged in teaching had better keep our eyes open and keep an open mind. [According to a recent survey, students who take the school-leaving exams – DSE or Diploma of Secondary Education – only 6% choose the science option, some 60% the business or economics options. This reflects sharp drop in academic aspirations and a shift towards more vocational-type education].

2. **The Professors.** In some universities, General Education courses are largely (if not exclusively) taught by a dedicated faculty housed in a particular department or programme. In other universities, Gen Ed courses are left to existing professors in well-established departments; they design or revise existing courses to meet their university’s Gen Ed goals. Either approach could work, but there are inherent dangers. In the first case, where Gen Ed is left to a dedicated department or programme, there is risk in the bifurcation of the teaching staff. Those not in the Gen Ed programme may not buy into the overall purpose or goals of General Education, thus subverting the objectives of Gen Ed curriculum reform.

In the latter case, where existing teaching staff offer Gen Ed courses, there is the risk of some not pursuing their mission with enough vision or rigour. These are not issues directly related to my topic but, if Gen Ed courses are well designed and purposefully delivered, these risks can be
averted. They are therefore very much on my mind as I go about designing a course on China’s history, culture, and society.

A Course on China’s History, Culture, Civilization, and Society for Chinese Students

Organizing Principles – a course designed to meet the challenges stated above

1. Such a course is important, relevant, and alive! In Hong Kong, Chinese culture is practised and experienced. Its history is being lived and made at the same time! It is a “work in progress”.

2. It follows that the course should be designed for everyone, as the culture and its heritage are shared by practically everyone. It should represent everyone’s interests.

3. Such a course should be approached from a broad range of perspectives … multi-disciplinary.

4. It should be:

   Democratic/balanced
   Open-minded/honest
   All-inclusive/sensitive
   Open-ended/inquiring
   Humane/loberating
   Meaningful/relevant

For those studying or teaching it, it should be seen or experienced from as many perspectives as possible.

Elements of the course

How does one teach a course about China’s history or culture in a single semester or an academic year? Can a single instructor deliver such a course, given its breadth and multi-disciplinarity? And, in the course of all this, can one handle the added charge of General Education – to teach the students critical thinking, analytical skills, creativity, as well as good oral and written presentation?

One useful approach is to compile a list of common perceptions (or misconceptions) about China and its civilization, and organize the course around it. This should help capture the students’ interests, challenge their assumptions, alert them to the pitfalls of cultural short-hands (stereotypes), and let them research or at least debate the issues [dialogue among themselves].

For example, here is a plausible laundry list of common assumptions about China and its history [they are not consistent, and are sometimes contradictory] – China is… or has…

- Unified country; it has always been there (Continuity, an “unbroken” history)
- Monolithic/Unvariegated (its geography and people)
- Isolated/Isolationist (pacific/non-expansionist)
- Tradition-bound
- Male dominated/Patriarchal
- High level of cultural achievements
• People who value harmony, collectivity
  • Backward in science and technology
  • A poor country (emiseration since 1800 until 1949)

Further, Modern China is … or has …

• Failed in its attempt at self-strengthening since the Opium War (1839-1842)
  • Rising (since the reforms and opening of 1978)

What can one say about these assumptions? Do they have validity? Are they true or false?

• Actually, there is an element of truth in each (some more than others)
  • Do we need to debate whether they are true or false; if they are not true, should we not engage in a battle to demolish them?

My ultimate defence is to appeal to the students’ power of critical thinking and analysis, invite them to examine the evidence. Or, better still, let them do the searching and pass judgment on the evidence. The hope is that they will, through their own effort, come to the conclusion that in a study of this nature, there is often no final word on a given topic or a definitive answer to many questions. (If time permits, I shall examine some of the common assumptions and explore the possibilities in coming to an understanding of them).

_Examples of Topics for the Course_

I pick several examples to illustrate how to handle misconceptions and/or common assumptions about China and its history, and use them to pursue some of the goals of General Education in the course of teaching about China.

1. “China is a unified country; it has always been there”. Behind this generalization is the assumption that there is a continuous, unbroken history of the country; the changes in dynasty was simply a changing of the guard. As one scholar puts it, “It is just one damn dynasty after another”. Let’s begin by looking at the map of China over the centuries. One will notice that, first, there was territorial expansion from Xia/Shang to Qin/Han. Second, China’s footprint on the map remained more or less the same from Qin/Han to Ming, with the exception of the Mongol Empire. All the Han Chinese dynasties looked somewhat similar in size and geographical extent. The extension of Tang deep into Central Asia was temporary, and there was no serious attempt to incorporate that part into the administrative system. Then, suddenly, under the Qing, China expanded by more than twice its size in the course of the 18th century, and this was achieved by conquest. This story line, which in itself may be revealing to the students, raises important questions:
(a) If all the Han Chinese dynasties since Qin/Han remain more or less the same in shape and size, does this mean that the Han Chinese are by nature pacific? Lei Haizong has argued that Chinese culture is amilitaristic. Is there some truth in this claim? Has Chinese culture been consistently the same from Han through Ming? If so, what happens to the counter argument that Chinese society from Qin through Tang was more aristocratic and militaristic, and that it was only from Song onwards that the status of the military had reached a really low status?

(b) There is no question that the largest empires in China’s history had been the creation of nomadic conquerors. But then, why China today (after the collapse of the Qing in 1912) does not revert to the shape and size of the Ming, the last Han Chinese dynasty? This is especially puzzling if we recall that much of the anti-Manchu momentum was generated by a desire to restore the Ming in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Why? This would be a great opportunity to introduce to our students the concept of nationhood in the modern history of humankind (not just of China).

(c) Given present-day China is much larger than the traditional Han Chinese empire, what kind of China do we have? Have our students been thinking of China in terms of it being a multi-ethnic state? Recall for our students that in 1912, when Sun Yat-sen established the Republic, he chose for his national flag the emblem of five horizontal bars of red, yellow, blue, white and black. Respectively they represent the Han, the Manchus, the Mongols, the Moslems, and the Tibetans—the five major ethnic groups of China. This was a public admission that China was no longer a Han Chinese state. Even today, the Chinese have still not come to terms with this 100 per cent! [Yesterday, Tu Wei-ming talks about a 5-religion civilization, the 三教 plus Christianity and Islam, but the days of mutuality among the 5, as it exists among the 3, are many, many years away.]

(d) In fact, has the Chinese state always been Han before the Manchu conquest? Have our students ever questioned that even their ancestors before the Mongol conquest may have “barbarian blood” in them? Remember, the Qin/Han empires had already incorporated large areas that were not parts of Shang and Zhou. The Qin/Han expansion, especially into the south, was initially accomplished by military conquests (so much for the myth of an amilitaristic Chinese people, who had set up military colonies in present-day North Korea and North Vietnam). While many local natives were driven into the mountains, there had been much ethnic mixing. Following the collapse of the Han dynasty, waves of nomadic invasions occurred, some resulting in fairly long-lasting dynasties in north China. These nomadic conquests significantly changed the Han people, not only their blood, but also their culture and even language. So, what does it mean to be a Han Chinese, then and now?

2. Modern China, from at least 1800 if not earlier until 1949 or even thereafter, perhaps until the “economic opening” of the Deng Xiaoping era (post 1978), had been a week and poor country. Unrelenting population growth, mounting pressure on land, had contributed much to the
emiseration of modern China. The image of China as “The Sick Man of Asia” has been burned deeply into the Chinese psyche in the early part of the 20th century. Western and Japanese depiction – in serious as well as popular literature – reinforce the image and the idea that there is something inherently wrong with China’s culture. The May Fourth Movement as well as the New Life Movement (launched by Chiang kai-shek in 1934) were, in a very real sense, both an admission of China’s cultural shortcomings and a response to them.

So, were the Chinese, because of their cultural shortcomings, doomed to progressive emiseration in late imperial times? The findings of James Lee (UST) and his colleagues – discussed below – may not fully answer this question, but they surely shed a great deal of light on it.

(a) Chinese population grew at a relatively slow rate between 1700 and 1950, especially in the 19th century, when the population increased only by about 100 million (from around 400 million in 1800 to about 500 million in 1900), a growth rate of around 0.7 per cent! By contrast, the population doubled between 1950 and 2000 (from 500 million to 1 billion), a mere 50 years (i.e. a growth rate of 1.4%). If 19th-century China is characterized as one of impoverishment, then population growth may not have been the major reason. Further, thanks to massive “internal migration” or “colonization”, when peopled moved into Western and Southwestern China in significant numbers, pressure on land had been somewhat mitigated.

(b) This raises the question: in a land of large families and one where polygamy is believed to have been widely practised, why the Chinese population in the 19th century did not increase as rapidly as one might suspect? Once more, James Lee’s studies offer some interesting insights, which can be briefly summarized here:

(i) Chinese married couples were able to control the level of passion within marriage (an inconceivable option to European couples). Chinese couples stopped having children earlier. Between 1660 and 1860, the mean age at last birth declined 7 years for polygamous fathers (from 48 to 41) and five years for monogamous fathers (from 42 to 37). In the same period, birth intervals increased from slightly more than two years – the European norm – to 4 and even 5 years apart.

(ii) Polygamous marriages declined from 75% in late 17th C. to 10% in late 19th C.

(iii) Polygamous men did not produce significantly more children than monogamous couples. Their connubial relations tended to be more sequential than simultaneous. Profligacy, let alone promiscuity, within marriage was discouraged. “Raising the red lantern” was not as common an occurrence as one is often led to believe!

(iv) Chinese had numerous means to check fertility. For Europeans in pre-modern times, delayed marriage was practically the only means to reduce fertility. Among Chinese (Manchu) imperial daughters, as James Lee reveals, the average marriage age increased from 19 in 1760 to 21 in 1830.

(v) Finally, the Chinese had a range of options for controlling the number of children. The most notorious of these was infanticide, particularly female infanticide, which was
practised among the upper as well as the lower classes. Still, there is almost certain correlation between the incidence of infanticide with period of food shortages. Yet, the late imperial period witnessed a dramatic improvement in the quality of child care. The gradual spread of some primitive methods of inoculation against smallpox had a noticeable impact. Life expectancy increased.

All of this begs the questions: what were the causes of China’s immiseration in the centuries before 1950? Or, perhaps, the impoverishment was only impressionistic or episodic, and had no reality in fact? And if there was no real impoverishment, then why did China become so weak?

The above examples comprise big questions. They are open-ended, and invite students to think creatively about all possible angles, employing knowledge and skills from various disciplines in analyzing them. Many questions are suitable for group discussions, debates, and further research.

An Exercise in Multi-Disciplinary, Experiential Learning:
Recently, faculty and students, but mainly faculty at the University of Delaware produced a multi-media presentation that shows potentials for a student project. The U of Delaware project involved participants from Music, Asian Studies, English (creative writing), Theatre, History, Art History, Museum Studies/Art Conservation, and Martial Art. In hindsight, we could have involved people from Textile and Fashion as well. Entitled “Encounters”, the project revolved around the theme of cultural, economic, and political interactions between China and the West. Making use of the history of the modern era, starting from c. 1600, the team wrote a script that brought into focus the role of each of the participating disciplines.

The end product was a script about two young persons, an American Chinese man, Josh, who was making a small fortune in the venture capital business, and a female Caucasian PhD student in art conservation, Kate. The story begins with Josh bringing to Kate for evaluation a box his deceased father had given him. Kate quickly discovered that there was a secret compartment in the box. After months of research she managed to open it. The secret compartment contained two pieces of paper – a manuscript of a Violin Sonata by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), and a bill of sale indicating Josh’s grandfather had bought the freedom of a Chinese women in San Francisco in the 1870s and took her as his wife. These documents led to two separate but related stories in Josh’s family life.

The Corelli manuscript is particularly puzzling. This much is known: Josh’s father had wanted him to be a violinist while Josh resisted and attended business school. But how did Josh’s father, a Chinese born in San Francisco of an immigrant who came to the US in the 1860s, come by a Corelli manuscript? As it turned out, he (Josh’s grandfather) had once served at the court of the Chinese emperor (Xianfeng, r. 1851-1861), and when the British and the French forces
ransacked, looted and burned the Summer Palace in Peking (Yuanmingyuan) during the Second Opium War (1856-1860), Josh’s father managed to take with him a Corelli manuscript as he fled for his life. But why a Corelli manuscript in the Peking Summer Palace? Built by successive emperors, from Kangxi (r. 1662-1722) through Qianlong (r. 1736-1795), sections of the Summer Palace were designed by Jesuit architects and artists, and among them was a musician who introduced Corelli’s music to China. Corelli, as it turned out, was popular among several high churchmen, including cardinals, c. 1700 in Europe. The Jesuits introduced his music to the Chinese imperial court.

The sale of Josh’s grandmother reveals the other half of Josh’s family history as immigrants in the US, including all the travails of the successive generations until present times. Though the story ends happily with Josh and Kate professing their love for each other, the eventual union materializes only after much heart-wrenching debates about inter-racial marriages in contemporary America. The production is characterized by theatrical sketches with musical interludes; the music was carefully chosen to reflect the tastes of the various periods in the two cultures. By means of this production, the various academic disciplines were joined, with each learning much from the other. It is offered here as a sample only, with the hope that it will inspire other, even more interesting and efficacious projects.

**Conclusion**

Clark Kerr, former president of University of California, Berkeley, once describes the university as “a series of individual faculty entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance over parking” (a function of the “multiversity” full of competing interests – a “community” that is essentially at war with itself). It therefore follows that professors need not agree on specifics when it comes to teaching – how one designs and teaches one’s courses is nobody’s business, but there ought to be broad agreement as to goals.

The idealistic view: Cardinal Newman insists that a liberal education is not about what students learn or what skills they acquire, but “the perspective they have on the place of their knowledge in a wider map of human understanding.” Great, but in the real world, tangible, material objectives are necessary. Students need to graduate with certain skills, and universities should be able to justify the high cost of education. [Review of Stefan Collini’s *What are Universities for?* Penguin, 2011, in *The Economist*, February 4th, 2012]

It is in the spirit of trying to combine these two objectives, (1) to enable the students to acquire a perspective on the place of their knowledge in a wider map of human understanding – an understanding of the self in a humanity that is still quintessentially Chinese, and (2) to empower them with the critical and analytical skills to not only succeed in this world but also to see themselves from the outside – the power of self-evaluation, criticism, and improvement, that I offer my ideas for discussion.
Conference Programme at a Glance

Day 1: June 12, 2012

Opening Plenary
9:00 – 11:00 Venue: CMC M3017 [LT-1]

9:00 – 9:15 Welcome Speech
Professor Arthur B. ELLIS, Provost and Acting President, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, China

9:15 – 9:25 Opening Address
Dr. Richard ARMOUR, Secretary-General, University Grants Committee, Hong Kong SAR, China

9:25 – 10:15 Keynote
Liberal Education and General Education: Educating 21st Century Students for a World Shared in Common
Dr. Carol Geary SCHNEIDER, President, Association of American Colleges and Universities, United States

10:15 – 10:40 Keynote
Some Trends in General Education: A Personal Perspective
Dr. George IWAMA, President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Northern British Columbia, Canada

10:40 – 11:00 Movie: Fulbrighters on GE in Hong Kong

Concurrent Sessions

11:00 – 1:30 Presidents’ Session and Lunch (By Invitation)
Facilitator: Dr. Jerry Gaff, Senior Scholar, Association of American Colleges and Universities, United States

11:30 – 12:00

Theme 9: Assessment of GE Programmes
Evaluating Students’ Learning Experiences in a Pilot General Education Program in Hong Kong
Venue: M3017 in the CMC Building

Theme 2: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses
Promotion of Holistic Development of University Students via the Formal Curriculum
Venue: Shun Hing Lecture Theatre (M3090) in the CMC Building

Themes 3; 1: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development
From Foundation to Consolidation: An Innovative Model for General Education at HKIEd
Venue: M5050 in the CMC Building
Themes 3; 10: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Authentic Assessment of Experiential Learning Aspects of GE

**Impacts of Lingnan Service-Learning Model: Five Years Outcome Measurement**
Venue: M4001 in the CMC Building

Themes 6; 2: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

**Gateway Education at City University**
Venue: M4003 in the CMC Building

Themes 6; 3: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE; Whole Person Development and Learning Communities

**From World Civilizations to Dialogues: The Genesis of General Education Foundation in CUHK**
Venue: M4004 in the CMC Building

**Theme 9: Assessment of GE Programmes**

**Trust: A Missing Ingredient in University Curriculum and Assessment Reform?**
Venue: M4023 in the CMC Building

**Theme 7: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy**

**Common Core Course Development — An Extraordinary Wholesale Migration of Existing GE Courses at HKUST and Development of New Studio Arts Courses**
Venue: M4053 in the CMC Building

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**Lunch**
12:00 – 1:30
Venue: CMC

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**Presidents’ Plenary**
1:30 – 2:25

**Facilitator:** Dr. Jerry Gaff, Senior Scholar, Association of American Colleges and Universities
Venue: CMC M3017 [LT-1]

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**Concurrent Sessions**
2:30 – 2:55

**Theme 2: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses**

**A Battle with Academic Capitalism — The Lesson Learnt from the General Education Reform in the Two Universities**
Venue: M3017 in the CMC Building

**Theme 3: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities**

**Creative Community and Whole Person Development: Envisioning West Kowloon Cultural District**
Venue: M5050 in the CMC Building

**Themes 4; 5: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula; Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula**

**Critical Reading and Discovery in General Education**
Venue: M4024 in the CMC Building

**Theme 6: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE**

**An Interdisciplinary GE Course from Preparation to Execution to Formative Assessment**
Venue: M4003 in the CMC Building

**Themes 6; 3: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE; Whole Person Development and Learning Communities**

**Teaching Death: A Case Study**
Venue: M4004 in the CMC Building
Themes 7; 3: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy; Whole Person Development and Learning Communities

**Education Reform: Incorporating Creative Thinking Methods in Higher Education**
Venue: M4053 in the CMC Building

Themes 4; 6: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

**Promotion of Problem-Based Learning Approach to GE Courses**
Venue: M4023 in the CMC Building

Themes 1; 2: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

**Alternative Broadening Experience for Full-time Students of Non-local Degree Programmes under 3-3-4 System**
Venue: Shun Hing Lecture Theatre (M3090) in the CMC Building

Concurrent Sessions

3:15 – 3:40

Themes 1; 2: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

**Embedded Learning to Learn in the General Education Classroom**
Venue: M3017 in the CMC Building

Themes 1; 2; 5: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses; Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

**A Higher Status for Writing in the Four-year Curriculum: The Enhanced General Education Model at PolyU**
Venue: Shun Hing Lecture Theatre (M3090) in the CMC Building

Themes 2; 7: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

**General Education in Hong Kong: Contradictions, Tensions, and Strategies of Implementation**
Venue: M5050 in the CMC Building

Theme 5: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

**Academic Literacy Levels: What do our Students Need to Access General Education?**
Venue: M4001 in the CMC Building

Theme 5: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

**Developing any Area of Academic Literacy via Corpus Consultation & Concordancing: The Example of LegalEasy**
Venue: M4023 in the CMC Building

Theme 1: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

**The Fulbright General Education Program in Hong Kong: Lessons Learned**
Venue: M4003 in the CMC Building

Theme 1: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

**Barriers to Change: General Education in Hong Kong**
Venue: M4004 in the CMC Building

Themes 10; 6: Authentic Assessment of Experiential Learning Aspects of GE; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

**Self-Interpretation of Student Dreams as a Tool for Personal Growth in General Education Classes**
Venue: M4053 in the CMC Building
Concurrent Sessions

3:45 – 4:10

Theme 3: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities
Embracing the Whole Person Development by General Education
Venue: M5050 in the CMC Building

Theme 3: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities
Creating a Whole Person — Positioning Creative Education in Tertiary General Education Curriculum in Hong Kong
Venue: M4023 in the CMC Building

Theme 5: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula
How to “Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning” Through Peer Collaboration and Writing
Venue: Shun Hing Lecture Theatre (M3090) in the CMC Building

Themes 7; 1: Students and general education in the 21st century economy; leadership in curriculum reform and faculty development

Erikson, Vygotsky, and Illeris: Implications/Challenges of Hong Kong’s University Reforms
Venue: M4024 in the CMC Building

Themes 10; 12: Authentic Assessment of Experiential Learning Aspects of GE; Service and Community Based Learning

The Importance of Incorporating Reflectivity into Authentic Assessment of Experiential Learning: A Case Study of Service-Learning
Venue: M4053 in the CMC Building

Themes 12; 2: Service and Community Based Learning; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

Development of Credit-bearing Courses on Service Learning for University Students
Venue: M4001 in the CMC Building

Themes 5; 11: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in the GE Curriculum; Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes

Reading the Word to Reading the World(s): Teaching Literature in GE Curriculum
Venue: M4003 in the CMC Building

Themes 1; 2: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

General University Requirements at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University: The Underlying Educational Principles and Process of Development
Venue: M4004 in the CMC Building

Plenary

4:15 – 5:05 Venue: CMC M3017 [LT-1]

Keynote: Dr. Tu Weiming, Lifetime Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies, Peking University; Research Professor and Senior Fellow of Asia Center at Harvard University

Implications of the Confucian Revival for General Education in East Asia

Reception

5:15 Venue: CMC 9th Floor
Day 2: June 13, 2012

Plenary
9:00 – 10:00 Venue: Wei Hing Theatre in the Amenities Building

Panel Discussion
Opening Remarks: Dr. Nancy CHAPMAN President, United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia
Challenges and Prospects for Whole Person Development in the GE context in Asia

V.I.P. Sessions
10:10 – 11:10 Liberal Arts Learning and Soft/Smart Power
Venue: Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

10:10 – 11:10 Developing Passionate Faculty in the Pursuit of Excellence
Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

10:10 – 11:10 SWU PLUS: The Advancement of College Education in Seoul Women’s University
Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

11:15 – 12:15 Change and Continuity: Reflections on Globalisation at Yonsei University and the Expansion of Underwood International College
Venue: Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

11:15 – 12:15 Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development
Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Lunch
12:30 – 1:45 Venue: Amenities Building 9th Floor

Plenary
1:45 – 2:40 Venue: Wei Hing Theatre in the Amenities Building

Keynote: Professor Deborah DAVIS, Professor of Sociology and Director of Graduate Studies in East Asian Studies, Yale University
Co-designing a Liberal Arts Curriculum in Singapore
Concurrent Sessions

2:45 – 4:05

Theme 1: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

Workshop: Leadership that Works: Developing a Campus Action Plan for Creating and Sustaining General Education Curriculum Reform

Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Themes 1; 2: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

Workshop: Change Management in Undergraduate Curriculum Reform: Process and Product

Venue: LT-4 in Academic Building 1

Themes 1; 6: Leadership in Curriculum Reform; Casestudies in developing interdisciplinary curricula for GE

Roundtable Discussion: From Specialized to General and Liberal: General Education and University Curriculum Reform in China

Venue: Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

Theme 2: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

Roundtable Discussion: Transferability of General Education Credits between the Sub-degree and Degree Sectors

Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

Themes 3; 6: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curriculum for GE

Workshop: Big History: Foundational General Education for the Twenty-First Century

Venue: Y4302 in Academic Building 1

Themes 4; 5; 6: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula; Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

Integrating Undergraduate Research into the Course of Educational Psychology – A Case Study of EFL Teacher Students

Venue: Y4701 in Academic Building 1

Theme 5: Enhancement of students’ English language and communication skills in GE curricula

Workshop: Beyond the Standard Research Paper: Reconsidering Writing Assignments in the Context of General Education

Venue: Y4702 in Academic Building 1

Themes 6; 7: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

Workshop: GE That Grows with the Time and the Student: Rationale and Design of GE Courses for the Junior and Senior Year(s)

Venue: Y5302 in Academic Building 1

Theme 11: Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes

Roundtable: Designing and Teaching Courses about One’s Native Culture, History and Society in a General Education Curriculum

Venue: Y5303 in Academic Building 1

Concurrent Sessions

4:30 – 4:55

Themes 1; 2: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses

General Education Reform in Taiwan – 2007-2015

Venue: Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1
Themes 1; 8: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Use of Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning in Large-Scale Courses

**Developing and Using Faculty Learning Communities for Curriculum Reform**
*Venue:* Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

Themes 2; 6: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

**Within a Broad Policy Theme on ‘Progress and Development’: General Education for ‘Transport and Society’**
*Venue:* C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Theme 2: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

**The Challenges and Opportunities of Sub-degree General Education Development under the New Academic Structure**
*Venue:* Y4302 in Academic Building 1

Themes 3; 5: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

**Language Teaching and Learning for General Education: Moving Beyond the Communicative Paradigm to “English for Liberal Arts”**
*Venue:* Y4701 in Academic Building 1

Theme 1: Leadership in Curriculum Reform

**A Model of “Student Learning Outcomes Space” and Mobilization of International Exchange Programs — With Reference to Recent Reforms in Japanese Higher Education**
*Venue:* Y4702 in Academic Building 1

Theme 3; 12: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Service and Community Based Learning

**Enhancing Whole Personal Development Through Student-Centered Co-Curricular Activities**
*Venue:* Y5302 in Academic Building 1

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**Concurrent Sessions**

5:00 – 5:25

Themes 1; 2: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

**Leadership in General Education (3 presentations): 1) Learning to Swim: Directing a Master’s Program in Liberal Arts; 2) The Circus Arts: Administrative Leadership in General Education Programs; 3) Advising as Leadership: Gen Ed from the Ground Up**
*Venue:* Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

Themes 1; 2: Leadership in Curriculum Reform; Policy lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses

**Moving a Mountain: Transforming Temple University’s Intellectual Heritage (IH) Program Curriculum (Great Books/Ideas Courses) and Moving the Faculty to the New Mosaic Course Paradigm**
*Venue:* Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

Themes 4; 11: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula; Integrating the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes

**“Out of the Cultural Ghetto” — An Integrated Approach To Enhance Cross-Cultural Understanding in the GE Course “Appreciating Masterpieces of Western Culture”**
*Venue:* C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Theme 5: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula

**Teaching ESP in University of Science and Technology**
Day 3: June 14, 2012

Plenary

9:00 – 9:30

**Venue:** Wei Hing Theatre in the Amenities Building

**Keynote:** Professor Edward K. Y. CHEN, Distinguished Fellow, Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong.

**Liberal Arts Education: Rationale, Practice, and Prospect**

V.I.P. Sessions

9:35 – 10:25

**Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses**

**Venue:** Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

**Developing Anti-corruption Education at Satya Wacana Christian University**

**Venue:** Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

**Curriculum and Learning Reform: Harmonization of Context, Competence, and Content**

**Venue:** C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Concurrent Sessions

10:40 – 11:05

**Themes 1; 6: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE**

**Interdisciplinary Education in the Transnational Context: Creating an Innovative GE Curriculum at Duke Kunshan University**

**Venue:** Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

**Themes 2; 7: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy**

**General Education and Integrative Learning Reform at a Major Research University**

**Venue:** Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

**Theme 3: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities**

**General Education and Whole Person Development: Questions for Learning Communities**

**Venue:** C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1
Themes 7; 1: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy; Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development

**Three Cornerstones for General Education Teaching: Content, Engagement, and Transparency**
Venue: LT-4 in Academic Building 1

Themes 7: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

**Zayed University's Brand: Negotiating the Liberal Arts in General Education**
Venue: Y4302 in Academic Building 1

Themes 7: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

**Programmatic Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education: Best Practices, Resources and Examples**
Venue: Y4701 in Academic Building 1

Themes 1; 2: Use of Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning in Large-Scale Course; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy

**Small Learning Devices for Important Questions**
Venue: Y4702 in Academic Building 1

Themes 1; 7: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy.

**Roundtable Discussion: Exploration and Practice of Construction Assurance System of General Education**
Venue: Y5302 in Academic Building 1

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**Plenary**

11:10 – 12:00

Venue: Wei Hing Theatre in the Amenities Building

**Keynote: Dr. Terrel RHODES, Vice President for Quality, Curriculum and Assessment Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)**

**Authentic Assessment and the VALUE of Learning**

**Lunch**

12:15 – 1:30

Venue: Amenities Building 9th Floor

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**Concurrent Sessions**

1:30 – 2:50

Themes 4; 6: Integrating Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curriculum; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curriculum for GE

**Roundtable: Innovations in Undergraduate Education at American Liberal Arts Colleges (Sponsored by ASIANetwork)**
Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

1:30 – 1:55

Theme 1: Leadership in Curriculum Reform

**Designing a General Education Program in a Private Management College in Hong Kong: Opportunities and Challenges**
Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1
Themes 6; 4: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE: Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programs

**Teaching Cultural Tourism in General Education: A Module for Cultural Heritage Studies**
Venue: LT-4 in Academic Building 1

1:30 – 1:55

**Theme 8: Use of Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning in Large-Scale Courses**
**Augmented Teaching — the Internet Prosthetic**
Venue: Y4302 in Academic Building 16

1:30 – 1:55

**Theme 6: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula in GE**
**General Education Curriculum Reform: Two Recent Case Studies**
Venue: Y4701 in Academic Building 1

1:30 – 1:55

**Themes 6; 3; 5: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE curricula**
**Harmony and Homer on the Pearl River Delta: The Foundations of a New Liberal Arts Education in China**
Venue: Y4702 in Academic Building 1

1:30 – 1:55

**Theme 9: Assessment of GE Programmes**
**Workshop: Some “Dos and Don’ts” for General Education Programme Assessment**
Venue: Y5302 in Academic Building 1

**Concurrent Sessions**

3:00 – 3:25

**Theme 2; 7: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy**
**Developing a General Education Curriculum for Vocational-oriented Undergraduate Programmes**
Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

Themes 5;6: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE

**Effective English Learning and its Comprehensive Evaluation Model Supported by Empirical Studies**
Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

**Theme 6: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE; Service and Community Based Learning**
**Community Service-Learning 2.0: “Paying it Forward” Through Reciprocal Pedagogy**
Venue: LT-4 in Academic Building 1

Themes 7; 6: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for General Education

**Preparing Students for a Global Economy: Integrating General Education and International Business**
Venue: Y4302 in Academic Building 1

Themes 1; 2: Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy; Assessment of GE Programmes

**The Study on Outcome-based Assessment of Core Competencies in General Education**
Venue: Y4701 in Academic Building 1

123
Concurrent Sessions

3:30 – 3:55  Theme 3; 7: Whole Person Development and Learning Communities; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy
- GE Integration into Groups of Mutually Related Majors
  Venue: Y4702 in Academic Building 1
- Themes 5; 9: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Assessment of GE Programmes
  Re-embedding Literacy in the General Education Classroom
  Venue: Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1

Themes 5, 9: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Assessment of GE Programmes
- Understanding the Current Students’ English Learning Situation in Basic Education Institutions in Tangshan, China
  Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1
- Theme 6: Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE
  The I-Series Courses: New General Education Courses Focused on Big Ideas
  Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Themes 7; 2; 3: Students and GE in the 21st Century Economy; Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses; Whole Person Development and Learning Communities
- Exploring New Stakeholder Opportunities to “Connect the Dots”: Addressing Liberal Education Needs and Disconnects across the Globe
  Venue: LT-4 in Academic Building 1
- Themes 1; 11: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development; Integration of the Study of Asian Cultural Heritages into GE Programmes
  Transformative Curriculums: Chinese General Education and the Liberal Arts
  Venue: Y4302 in Academic Building 1
- Theme 10: Authentic Assessment of Experiential Learning Aspects of GE
  An Interdisciplinary Study on the Evaluation of the Effectiveness of UIC’s Whole Person Education Experiential Learning Practices
  Venue: Y4701 in Academic Building 1

Concurrent Sessions

4:00 – 4:25  Themes 5; 6: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE
- Continuity and Adaptation: The University of Iowa Experience with General Education
  Venue: Tin Ka Ping Lecture Theatre (LT-1) in Academic Building 1
- Theme 1: Leadership in Curriculum Reform and Faculty Development
  Workshop: Breaking Down Silos through General Education Reform
  Venue: Mr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Lecture Theatre (LT-2) in Academic Building 1

Themes 2; 7: Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programs and Courses; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy
- Policy Lessons for Planning and Launching New Academic Programmes and Courses; Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy
  Venue: LT-4 in Academic Building 1

Themes 5; 6: Enhancement of Students’ English Language and Communication Skills in GE Curricula; Case Studies in Developing Interdisciplinary Curricula for GE
- Workshop: Teaching Writing and Culture in General Education
  Venue: Y4302 in Academic Building 1
Themes 11; 12: Integration of Undergraduate Research and Discovery into GE Curricula; Service and Community-Based Learning

Workshop: Models for Integrating Undergraduate Research into the Curriculum
Venue: Y4701 in Academic Building 1

Theme 9: Assessment of GE Programmes
Student and Staff Experiences of General Education: A Cross-Cultural Comparison
Venue: C Y Sun Lecture Theatre (LT-3) in Academic Building 1

Closing Plenary
4:30 – 5:15
Plenary Facilitators: Dr. Jerry Gaff, Professor S. Han Cheng, Dr. Glenn Shive
Liberal Arts Curriculum and Teaching in Asian Universities: Reflection on the Conference
Venue: Wei Hing Theatre in the Amenities Building