

Frontier Issues of Antitrust Law Seminar Explores the Evolving Landscape of Competition Regulation

On September 12, 2025, the School of Law Research Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law (CCCL), City University of Hong Kong, hosted a stimulating academic seminar titled *Frontier Issues of Antitrust Law*. The event brought together leading scholars and practitioners to discuss the latest developments, theoretical challenges, and enforcement practices in antitrust and competition law — areas increasingly significant to fair markets and economic governance in China and beyond.

The seminar was moderated by **Professor Martin Lai** from CityUHK School of Law, who opened the discussion by emphasizing the importance of cross-jurisdictional understanding in competition regulation and policy. He noted that as market structures evolve rapidly in the digital economy, antitrust law must keep pace with emerging forms of economic concentration and new enforcement dilemmas.

The first presentation was delivered by **Professor Zhang Ya** from Zhengzhou University Law School, titled *Improvement of Discretionary Factors for Fines in China's Anti-Monopoly Law*. Professor Zhang shared empirical research findings drawn from 42 antitrust cases in China since the 2022 amendment of the Anti-Monopoly Law. Her analysis revealed gaps in how discretionary factors are applied when determining fines for illegal monopoly conduct. She argued for a more transparent and rational framework that distinguishes between *basic*, *policy*, and *case-specific* discretion in order to enhance fairness, predictability, and regulatory consistency in penalty decisions.

Following that, **Mr. Liu Chang** from the University of Hong Kong presented his work on *Balancing Incommensurable Value in Antitrust Analysis*. He explored the theoretical complexities of balancing conflicting social and economic values, such as innovation incentives and consumer welfare, within antitrust decisions. Liu suggested adopting a structured analytical approach to avoid arbitrary or intuitive judgments often resulting from value incommensurability. He called for clearer judicial reasoning and the establishment of measurable criteria in competition policy enforcement, aligning legal analysis with realistic economic outcomes.

The discussion session, joined by **Professor Wang Yuhui**, Dean and Professor at Zhengzhou University, and **Ms. Li Sheng** from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, added further depth to the conversation. Professor Wang reflected on the comparative perspectives between China's enforcement practices and international standards, while Ms. Li highlighted the practical implications for compliance and corporate governance. Both discussants agreed that value-based reasoning and transparency in decision-making are essential to achieving substantive justice in antitrust law.

In closing the seminar, **Professor Martin Lai** summarized key takeaways, stressing that antitrust scholarship should continually engage with real-world enforcement to provide robust theoretical support for reform. He underscored the seminar's contribution to advancing academic dialogue and policy insights at a time when competition law faces complex challenges amid globalization and digital transformation.

This seminar reaffirmed CCCL's ongoing commitment to promoting rigorous academic exchange on cutting-edge legal issues. By facilitating discussions on competition law reforms

and theoretical innovations, CCCL continues to build bridges between legal research and policy development, enhancing City University of Hong Kong's standing as a hub for advanced comparative law scholarship and international legal dialogue.



Professor Martin Lai, Dean Wang Yuhui



Professor Zhang Ya



Ms. Li Sheng



Mr. Liu Chang