

The Chairmen of the Councils of the UGC Funded Universities issue the following statement:

1. The common mission of universities is to advance knowledge and promote understanding. All members in university communities are expected to uphold free speech and to respect the views held by all other members of the community. In this sense, universities cherish a diversity of views and promote robust, yet civilized, and respectful discussion of such views. Universities are, however, not battlegrounds for the resolution of political issues and should not be drawn into supporting any particular political position.
2. An overriding duty of a university is to provide a safe environment for every one of its stakeholders to learn and exchange views. No one should feel bullied or threatened. Views can be expressed strongly, but any form of violent conduct, vulgar language or disrespectful behaviour has no place on a university campus, or indeed anywhere. It is a primary duty of all university stakeholders to respect university property. Defacing and damaging property is a criminal act, and cannot be tolerated.
3. In keeping with the core mission of a university to advance knowledge, classes must be run as planned to adhere to the academic requirements of the respective courses. Class boycotts on the part of students are a matter for each individual student, and no one should compel any others to join a boycott by interrupting scheduled academic activities such as lectures. In any event, it is for the individual student to keep abreast of academic progress and course requirements. Universities may as a matter of discretion, for good cause, give some accommodation or additional time to students to complete course requirements but students should not expect this as of right.
4. Universities cherish the well-being of all staff and students. Within its capability, a university will provide assistance and advice but all staff and students must be personally responsible for the consequences of their actions. All stakeholders are expected to observe all legal parameters at all times. Any assistance or advice rendered is in keeping with the pastoral care of its stakeholders, and does not represent any support for the political view of any stakeholder.
5. Universities have standing mechanisms and procedures to deal with those who are held accountable in a court of law or have infringed university regulations. All staff and students with conduct issues can expect to be subject to such mechanisms and procedures, the outcome of which can include reprimands, suspension, or even course discontinuation and termination of employment. We reiterate that all persons must be responsible for the actions they take.
6. Finally, we call on all members of the community to exercise restraint and tolerance as Hong Kong strives for a resolution to the current difficulties.

Mr Lester Huang, Chairman of the Council of City University of Hong Kong
Dr Clement Chen, Chairman of the Council of Hong Kong Baptist University

Mr Simon Ip Shing Hing, Acting Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Lingnan University

Dr Norman Leung Nai-pang, Chairman of the Council of the Chinese University of Hong Kong

Professor Frederick Ma Si-hang, Chairman of the Council of the Education University of Hong Kong

Dr Lam Tai-fai, Chairman of the Council of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Mr Andrew Liao, Chairman of the Council of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Professor Arthur Li, Chairman of the Council of the University of Hong Kong

(Listed in alphabetical order of universities)

For media enquiry, please contact Professor Arthur Li, Chairman of the Council of the University of Hong Kong at 2801 6337.

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