University News

Vice-Chancellor Honoured by Soka University

Prof. Charles K. Kao was recently awarded an honorary doctorate by the Soka University, Japan in recognition of his achievements in the field of electrical engineering, his significant contributions to the development of higher education, and the promotion of academic exchange between Soka University and CUHK.

The conferment ceremony took place on 5th April during Prof. Kao’s visit to Soka University. During the same visit, the vice-chancellor signed a new agreement for academic exchange between Soka University and CUHK.

The agreement will provide for the exchange of one academic staff/graduate student and up to eight undergraduate students each year for three years from 1992. Other cooperative programmes include joint research projects and conferences and the exchange of academic publications.

The first exchange agreement between Soka University and CUHK was signed in 1975.

Wei Lun Lecture by Prof. Wang Yuan

Prof. Wang Yuan, a leading authority on mathematics in China, delivered a public lecture entitled 'Mathematics in China - present situation and development' on 27th April as the University’s Wei Lun Visiting Professor.

In his lecture, Prof. Wang compared the numbers of mathematicians, mathematical publications, and library facilities in China during different periods over the past 40 years, and discussed the achievements and influence of eminent Chinese mathematicians. He pointed out that to promote the development of mathematics in China, the Chinese government must continue to implement the open door policy, increase grants for mathematical studies, and pay special attention to the nurturing of budding mathematicians.

Prof. Wang Yuan is at present president of the Chinese Mathematical Society. He was director of the Institute of Mathematics, Academia Sinica from 1984 to 1987. His research on the famous mathematical problems 'the Goldbach Conjecture' and 'Diophantine Equations' has won international acclaim.

UPGC Appointments

A Research Grants Council was established under the aegis of the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) on 1st January 1991. Prof. Thomas Mak of the University has been appointed a member of the council and four other members of the University have been appointed to serve on three different subject panels under the council: Prof. Ambrose King, on the Humanities...
Prof. George J. Fan, professor of information engineering, gave his professorial inaugural lecture on 'Information, Communication and Computers' on 19th April.

In his lecture, Prof. Fan pointed out that the development of the computer has had a profound impact on the generation and categorization of information and facilitated its dissemination. He reviewed the overall development of the computer, focusing on its use in supporting human endeavors and its impact on society. He also discussed related issues such as privacy, application evolution, artificial intelligence and artificial environment.

Prof. Ezra Vogel, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences at Harvard University, was invited by the University's MBA Programmes as the speaker of the fifth Li and Fung Lecture on Commerce and Industry, which took place on 4th April in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Prof. Vogel spoke on 'The Reintegration of Hong Kong and the Guangdong Economy'. He believes that the political barriers to open markets between Guangdong and Hong Kong will continue to fall, and that Hong Kong's knowledge of international markets, trading and management skills and capital resources will combine with Guangdong's supply of labour to present a formidable force in world markets. He also highlighted the issues facing the region: how to negotiate with Beijing on important issues, how to upgrade skills, how to phase down state enterprises, and how to finance imported materials and capital works.

Prof. Vogel is a specialist on modern China and Japan. At Harvard, he is director of the East Asian Research Center and director of the Program on US-Japan Relations at the Center for International Affairs.

The Li and Fung Lecture Programme was established in 1981 under the auspices of the MBA Programmes and has been financed by an endowment fund set up by the Li and Fung Group of Companies.

HKIB/Syntex Ltd. Established

The Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology (HKIB) recently signed an agreement with the Syntex Pharmaceuticals International Limited to establish a joint company to conduct pharmaceutical research.

The new company, HKIB/Syntex Limited, will set up a research facility in Hong Kong to screen synthetic and natural compounds for their potential as novel pharmaceutical products. Two research institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences are also key participants in this programme.

The project represents the first tripartite collaboration on pharmaceutical research between Hong Kong, mainland China and the USA, and is a significant step in the development of a pharmaceutical industry in Hong Kong.

Syntex is one of the world's major pharmaceutical companies, with more than 40 years of experience in the discovery, development, manufacture and marketing of novel pharmaceuticals.
Executive MBA Asia Advanced Management Programme

The Asia Pacific Institute of Business and the Faculty of Business Administration of the University jointly organized an Asia Advanced Management Programme from 22nd to 26th April for 39 executive MBA students from the University of Pittsburgh.

The programme was intended to familiarize these executives with business opportunities and developments within the Asia-Pacific region. Opportunities were also provided for examining the financial, marketing and management practices in Hong Kong and China.

New Asia S.Y. Chung Visiting Fellow Programme

Prof. C. N. Liu, a world renowned anatomist from the United States, visited New Asia College as its S.Y. Chung Visiting Fellow from 4th to 26th April, and on 16th April conducted a public lecture entitled 'Adjustments of the Central Nervous System Following Damage'.

Prof. Liu received his BS degree from the Peking Normal University in 1938 and his Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1949. He was appointed professor of anatomy of the University of Pennsylvania in 1960 and was honoured as professor emeritus when he retired in 1983. Prof. Liu is a fellow of the Academia Sinica, Taiwan, and has been an honorary visiting professor of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences since 1982.

At The Chinese University of Hong Kong

On curiously abrupt slopes foliage sharp with cicadas hides the famous bird, its dragon wings become ferns pike blade claws twigs.

Feng with eagle beak and tongue build the nest of flames in minds old and young beacon above the sea at To Lo and signal nine angels of wisdom.

Andrew Parkin
Department of English

VOICES

Note from the Editor:

We've been inspired by Prof. Parkin's contribution to set up this new column for those who have something original and interesting to say about the University.

You can choose any topic and use any style. We welcome sketches, poems, short stories, critiques, or general observations and comments. Please limit your contribution to 800 words.

Contributions should bear the writer's name and contact telephone number. All information will be kept confidential and articles may be published under pseudonyms.

As a gesture of appreciation, a small fee will be paid for each article published.
In 1986, 16 members of staff from various units in the University volunteered to set up a non-profit-making cooperative, which would exist solely to invest the savings of its members, and to provide them with a source of credit when necessary. Although its credit facilities and services are not comparable to those of a bank, the CUECU has still proved to be an invaluable organization on the campus, with many colleagues availing themselves of its services at one time or another, to tide them over the odd financial difficulty which may arise from time to time. To date, the CUECU has over 530 members.

What Are the Criteria for Membership?

All full-time employees of the University are eligible to join, as long as they pay a joining fee of HK$1, and deposit a fixed amount of money in the credit union every month. It is completely up to the individual to decide how much to deposit, and this amount can be changed at any time. Because the credit union is run as a cooperative, it must abide by the rule which states that deposits must be calculated in terms of shares, each of which is currently valued at HK$5. Members should deposit a minimum of one share every month.

At the end of each financial year, the credit union will distribute dividends to its members from the net amount of profit it has made during the year. However, the regulations governing the credit union state that the dividend rate should not be higher than six per cent per annum.

Members can withdraw their share holdings at any time they wish to during the working week. They can withdraw part or all of their savings, with the proviso that if they will forfeit their dividend if they withdraw their money before the end of the financial year.

How Does One Apply for a Loan?

The application procedure for a loan is simplicity itself – no mortgage is required, just the completion of an application form which is then submitted to the credit committee via the treasurer of the CUECU. Most applications for loans are approved, as long as they are not to be used for gambling. The credit union offers loans under more advantageous terms than a bank would offer, such as a lower rate of interest (currently 10 per cent per annum). The amount of interest will also decrease as the amount of loan-repayment increases. All information about the debtor is kept strictly confidential.

The credit committee usually meets twice a month, on the second and sixteenth days, to consider applications for loans. Urgent cases are dealt with at the discretion of the committee chairman, who will examine the application and perhaps give approval in advance. This will be confirmed retrospectively at the next meetings.

Occasionally, if there is a sudden influx of applications for loans, members may have to wait for a while before receiving any credit, because one must remember that the CUECU’s scale of operation is limited, and there may not be sufficient capital to satisfy the needs of all applicants at the same time.

What Is the Maximum Credit Limit?

At the moment, the maximum amount that a member may borrow is HK$50,000, but the CUECU board of directors has just recently approved an amendment to the credit policy. Under this new policy, the maximum credit limit is dependent on both the applicants’ length of service at the University, and the terms of service under which they are employed. No guarantor is required when applying for loans.

How Is the Maximum Credit Limit Determined?

A simple formula has been drawn up to calculate the maximum credit limit allowed to any one member, based on three factors:

Maximum Credit Limit = HK$50,000; or
Monthly salary x Factor related to length of service + Balance of deposit, whichever is the lower of the two figures.

Factor Table

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<th>Number of years of service</th>
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<td>A &amp; B</td>
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<td>4 &amp; below</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
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<td>7-8</td>
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<td>13-14</td>
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<td>15 &amp; above</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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For example, if a member of staff earning HK$15,000 a month has been employed by the University for seven years under Terms of Service B, and has deposited HK$6,000 with the credit union, then the maximum credit limit that he will be eligible for is $15,000 x 2.5 + $6,000 = $43,500.
Is It Possible to Apply for Additional Loans, or for More Than the Maximum Credit Limit?

The answer is yes. If a member applies to borrow an amount which exceeds his maximum credit limit, the credit committee will take various factors into consideration, such as reasons for the loan, financial credibility and the savings history of that member, before coming to a decision. Should a member require further financial assistance whilst still repaying an existing loan, he may apply for an additional one as long as he has repaid at least half of the previous loan. The value of the second loan will be the maximum credit limit minus the unpaid balance of the previous loan.

What Are the Terms of Repayment?

The borrower can decide on the repayment period, provided that this does not exceed 36 months. There is no problem if the borrower wishes to pay back the loan prior to the date of maturity, and in cases of financial difficulty, an extension of the repayment period may be applied for. All loans made by the credit union have been insured against default, and in the unfortunate circumstance of the death of a member, the insurance company will pay their outstanding liabilities, releasing the family from the responsibility of repaying the loan.

Are There Any Other Benefits to Joining the Credit Union?

Firstly, the credit union has purchased life insurance policies for every member, so that in the event of the death of a member, their beneficiary would receive compensation from the life insurance company. The amount of compensation awarded will be equivalent to the deposit balance of the deceased at the credit union, subject to the following conditions:

1. The maximum compensation is HK$18,000 for any member who dies at the age of 54 or below.
2. The amount will decrease as the age increases. No compensation will be given for those who die at the age of 70 or above.

Secondly, even after a member has retired or resigned from office at the University, they may still retain their membership of the credit union, and enjoy all of the same benefits as long as they continue to fulfil their membership obligations.

Case Histories

Member A

A Terms of Service B staff member joined the credit union when it was first established. He applied for two loans, both of which were approved. The first loan was for HK$20,000, which he used to cover the funeral expenses of one of his parents, and which he managed to repay within one year. The second loan was also for $20,000, and with this money, he purchased a flat. Because Member A finds that the credit facilities which the CUECU offers are very helpful in times of financial difficulty, and the terms of repayment are also very favourable, he would like to encourage more of his colleagues to join the credit union.

Member B

This staff member, who is employed by the University under Terms of Service C, lives on campus, and has no family or relatives in Hong Kong. He makes a point of depositing HK$1,000 a month in the credit union, and also receives a loan from them, although there is no real need for it. However, he feels that no great harm can come from borrowing money from the credit union since he will not be responsible for repaying it in the event of his death.

Further Useful Information about the CUECU

- CUHK is the only local tertiary institution with a credit union for staff members.
- The CUECU is registered with the government’s Agriculture and Fisheries Department. Although at first sight this may appear to be a completely irrelevant link, the justification for including it under the jurisdiction of that department is that the credit union is managed in a manner similar to an agricultural cooperative.
- When it was first set up, the CUECU was housed in a small room beneath the staircase on the first floor of the Sui-Loong Pao Building. It was not until the completion of the John Fulton Centre that it was able to secure a presentable office in the centre.
- Loans are usually secured for the purposes of getting married, purchasing new flats, fitting out one’s home, as well as meeting urgent needs.
- Since its inception, the credit union has granted loans totalling over HK$9,800,000, and has so far no record of bad debt.
- To secure a loan, an ordinary member of the credit union needs only obtain the approval of the credit committee. But as a director or a member of the supervisory committee of the CUECU, his application has to be vetted by a combined meeting of the board of directors, the supervisory committee and the credit committee.
- The credit union sets aside 20 per cent of the net annual profits as a reserve fund, and distributes the remainder to members as dividends. In the past three years, the net profit has increased remarkably, but the dividend rate is restricted by law not to exceed six per cent per annum. How is it possible then for the credit union to return all 80 per cent of the net profit to the members? Last year the board of directors resolved this problem by buying cake coupons for members with the rest of the profits, to make up for the shortfall created by the six per cent restriction. Suggestions for this year’s profit-sharing are welcome!
For the first time ever the Arts team captured the overall title in the Vice-Chancellor’s Cup staff tournament held on Sunday, 21st April at the University Sports Centre.

This year the tournament featured three events - basketball, soccer and tennis with six participating teams representing the five faculties and the administrative units.

As the Administration team won the overall title for two consecutive years in 1989 and 1990, they had a chance to keep the VC’s Cup permanently if they won again this year. For that reason, the Administration team spared no effort in any of the events.

The tournament began in rainy weather at the muddy sports field where the soccer matches were held. The Arts team got their first taste of victory by edging out the Administration team 4:1 in the soccer final.

The Arts team also won much applause in the basketball matches. Their brilliant performance brought them another championship trophy.

The tennis games started around noon when the sky began to clear. The Administration team, last year’s tennis champion, entered the final without much difficulty, but their dream of winning the overall championship again this year was shattered by the Medicine team, who beat them 3:0 in the tennis final.

The prize-giving ceremony took place immediately after all matches had been concluded. Leaders of participating teams and winners in individual events received trophies and medals from Prof. S. W. Tam, the pro-vice-chancellor. Souvenir banners were then presented to team leaders, team coordinators and the director of physical education by Prof. Ambrose King. The Administration team, which got the second highest total score, received the first runner-up trophy from Mrs. Charles K. Kao. The Arts team, winning the overall championship for the first time since the tournament was launched in 1981, was then presented the VC’s Cup by the vice-chancellor himself.
Annual Health Campaign

The University Health Service (UHS) held its annual health campaign in the Health Centre from 8th to 12th April. Programmes included an exhibition, a survey on students’ eating habits, seminars, diet consultation, and cholesterol screening tests on the spot. Booklets on diet-related topics were also distributed to participants.

The UHS also organized a series of slimming and sporting classes with the Physical Education Unit, and these were enthusiastically received.

At the request of colleagues and students the cholesterol screening tests will be conducted again from 27th to 31st May for those who missed the chance in the first round.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Professorial Inaugural Lecture

Prof. Patrick Y. D. Wong, professor of physiology, will deliver his inaugural lecture on ‘The Challenge of Male Contraception’ in Lecture Theatre 1, Lady Shaw Building on 31st May at 5.00 p.m. All are welcome.

Forthcoming Lecture

Dr. Norman H. Freeman, reader in psychology at the University of Bristol, will visit this university at the end of May and deliver a public lecture on ‘Theory of Mind: New Psychological Research’ at 2.45 p.m. on 23rd May at Room B6, Ho Tim Building. All are welcome.

ACU Development Fellowship

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) now invites nominations for the ACU Development Fellowship tenable for 1991-92. The fellowship scheme will sponsor attachment for three to six months to a university, or to the industrial, commercial or the public sector in any other Commonwealth country, preferably in one of the following fields: agriculture, forestry and food sciences, biotechnology, development strategies, earth and marine sciences, engineering, health and related social sciences, information technology, management for change, professional education and training, and social and cultural development. Studies for degree courses, postdoctoral programmes, or a series of short visits to a large number of institutions will not be supported.

Applicants should be University staff of high calibre, aged between 28 and 45. The award may be worth up to £5,000 to cover economy return airfare, medical and travel insurance, board and lodging, and local transportation.

Nominations/applications must be submitted together with supporting documents including a curriculum vitae; relevant publication lists; a programme proposal (300-800 words) on the length, nature and objective of the attachment; an itemized cost estimate; and letters of acceptance from the receiving institution(s). They should be sent through the department chairman and faculty dean concerned, and in the case of administrative staff, through the unit heads concerned, to Mr. H. K. Cheung, administrative assistant (personnel) on or before 7th June 1991 for consideration by the ASRC/AAC and AAPC. Please call Ext. 2249 for further information.

Mandarin and Cantonese Courses for Staff and Spouses

The New Asia-Yale-in-China Chinese Language Centre will again offer Mandarin and Cantonese courses to the University’s academic and administrative staff and their spouses.

From 4th June to 6th August 1991, the following courses have been tentatively scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday from 2.30 to 4.15 p.m. at the Fong Shu Chuen Building:

(1) Beginner’s courses in Mandarin and Cantonese for foreigners;
(2) Beginner’s course in Mandarin for non-Mandarin speakers of Chinese origin;
(3) Beginner’s course in Cantonese for non-Cantonese
speakers of Chinese origin. The size of each class will be limited and participants will be enrolled on a first-come-first-served basis. Basic tuition fee for each course is HK$1,860. The University will subsidize 40 per cent of the tuition fee for all full-time academic and administrative staff as well as their spouses who are expected to be with the University for at least two years, and who are not receiving a language study subsidy from any other source. For enrolment, please contact the Chinese Language Centre at Ext. 6727-9 before 28th May 1991.

Resident Tutor for Postgraduate Hall Complex

Applications are invited from male, single, full-time university academic/administrative staff or Ph.D. students for a vacancy of resident tutor in the academic year 1991-92. Successful applicants are expected to assist the wardens in organizing and promoting hostel activities. Application forms are obtainable from the general office of the Graduate School (Room 101, Fung King Hey Building). Completed forms should be returned to the same office together with a stamped self-addressed envelope before 30th May 1991.

Library Summer Hours

The University Library System, including the University Library, college libraries and Li Ping Medical Library, will revise its opening hours during the period 27th May to 31st August 1991. For details please read notices put up at the respective libraries. During the same period all the libraries will be closed on public holidays, i.e. 15th, 17th and 18th June, and 24th and 26th August. Library hours will be back to normal from 2nd September.

University Swimming Pool Reopened

The University Swimming Pool at the Benjamin Franklin Centre reopened on 17th April. The pool is open seven days a week including public holidays. Opening hours are from 10.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., with a half-hour break from 2.00 to 2.30 p.m. Admission charges have been revised as follows:

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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff and immediate family members over 18</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff family members aged 18 or under</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni (after payment of annual subscription of HK$180)</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accompanied guests</td>
<td>$24.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Re-issuing of membership card (staff family members &amp; alumni)</td>
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Staff dependants may now apply for new admission cards at the Office of Student Affairs, Room 108, Benjamin Franklin Centre. Each applicant has to bring along one photo and the staff ID card concerned. Applicants under 18 are required to produce copies of birth certificates for inspection.

New Publication of The University Press

The following book will be sold at a 20 per cent discount to staff members at the University Bookshop, John Fulton Centre:

- The Three Leaps of Wang Lun (in English) translated by C.D. Godwin, xxi + 419 pp., (hardcover, HK$160).

Obituary

Miss Chu Siu Wai, Jennifer, executive assistant II of the Department of Microbiology, passed away on 2nd April 1991.
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Services to the Community and International Organizations

- Dr. Leung Wai-yin, lecturer in journalism and communication, on the Advertising, Public Relations and Publishing Training Board.
- Mr. Hsu Dan-lin, lecturer in finance, on the Banking Training Board.
- Dr. Ching Pak-chung, lecturer in electronic engineering, on the Electronics Industry Training Board.

- Dr. Leung Wai-yin, lecturer in journalism and communication, on the Advertising, Public Relations and Publishing Training Board.
- Mr. Hsu Dan-lin, lecturer in finance, on the Banking Training Board.
- Dr. Ching Pak-chung, lecturer in electronic engineering, on the Electronics Industry Training Board.

- Dr. Joseph M. Chan, lecturer in journalism and communication, on the Journalism Training Board.
- Dr. Charles F. Steilen, senior lecturer in marketing, on the Committee on Management and Supervisory Training.
- Dr. Chan Sin-wai, senior lecturer in translation, on the Committee on Translation.

- Prof. Liu Shu-hsien, professor of philosophy, has been invited to serve on the School of Humanities and Social Science Advisory Committee, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology for two years from 1st May 1991.

- Prof. Patrick C. P. Ho, professor of surgery, has been appointed an honorary consultant of the Orthopaedic Association and the seventh corresponding member of the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association.

- Prof. P. C. Leung, professor of orthopaedics and traumatology, has been elected as an honorary member and as the seventh corresponding member of the Japanese Orthopaedic Association from January 1991. He has also been elected an honorary member of the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association.

- Prof. K. C. Mun, professor of marketing, has been invited by the China Assets (Holdings) Limited to serve as a member of its advisory board.

- Dr. Robert E. Allinson, senior lecturer in philosophy, has been appointed a permanent member of the editorial board of The Journal of Chinese Philosophy published by the University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

- Dr. Tsao Pen Yeh, lecturer in music, has been appointed by the Council for Performing Arts as a member of the Music Committee and of the Working Group on Chinese Operas. Dr. Tsao also serves as adviser to the Hong Kong Museum of History on the acquisition of musical instruments, and as a foundation member of the Music Advisory Committee of the School of Music, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

- Dr. Chan Wing Wah, lecturer in music, served as adjudicator in the 43rd Hong Kong Schools Music Festival from 27th February to 13th March 1991.

(All information in this section is provided by the Information Office)