Telling the Complete Story of the SARS-coronavirus

The Chinese SARS Molecular Epidemiology Consortium, formed during last year’s SARS epidemic by researchers at the University and over 50 scientists from mainland China and the US to study the complete evolutionary history of the SARS-coronavirus, published their results on 30th January 2004 in Science. This research is the most extensive molecular epidemiological study of the SARS-coronavirus to date. A total of 63 SARS-coronavirus genomic sequences isolated from SARS patients infected at different time points were analysed in combination with detailed epidemiological data to map the precise landmarks of the evolution of the virus.

The study found that the virus mutated continuously throughout the epidemic, most rapidly in the early part of the epidemic and at a third of the rate of the AIDS virus. It was also revealed that human SARS-coronavirus sequences differ from those isolated from civets by the absence of 29 units of genetic code in one region of the virus genome. A SARS-coronavirus sequence with a further absence of 386 units of genetic code in the same region of the virus genome was identified in two patients in May 2003. The same sequence was subsequently found in a group of 15 SARS patients whose infections were inter-related.

This complete evolutionary map of the virus provides a blueprint for the prediction of the future sequence of events should SARS reemerge. The foresight would allow for better planning of public health control measures to prevent major outbreaks. The mutation rate of the virus is shown to be moderate in comparison with rapidly mutating viruses such as the HIV. This suggests that once successfully developed, vaccines are more likely to remain effective. The study also shows that in order to be effective, diagnostic tests have to be developed to target regions of the virus genome that are less likely to mutate.

Genes May Hold Answer to Variations in SARS Susceptibility

The importance of SARS infection is related to its characteristics of high infectivity and an unpredictable clinical course marked with significant fatalities. It has been observed that clinical severities among patients may vary from mild febrile conditions to severe respiratory distress requiring assisted ventilation. Responses to infection by the SARS-coronavirus also appear to vary among individuals with apparently the same exposure.

The patterns of human leucocyte antigen (HLA) genes, which influence the ability of T-lymphocytes to respond to a particular antigen or viral protein, are very important in most disease processes mediated by infections and autoimmunity. HLA genes control the expression of specific cell surface proteins. These proteins play important roles in the selection and maintenance of the appropriate spectrum of antigen-specific T-lymphocytes, and the activation of these T-lymphocytes during the initiation of immune responses. The HLA genes are highly variable among individuals and may contribute to the variation of immune responses to SARS infection.

To assess the relationship of HLA genes with the risk of SARS infection, the Faculty of Medicine examined the blood samples of 90 SARS patients and studied the patterns of their HLA genes. The studies indicate that individuals with one class of HLA protein have a much higher risk of getting SARS than the general population while those with another class have a much lower risk. These genetic data may explain individual variations in response to SARS infection. The findings have critical impact on understanding of the disease mechanisms of SARS and the design of SARS prevention programmes. A full report will be published in The Journal of Infectious Diseases.

The results of the study were announced at a press conference on 15th January at the Postgraduate Education Centre of the Prince of Wales Hospital.

Mainland SARS Expert Shares Ideas and Experience

Prof. Zhong Nan-shan, famous Chinese expert in thoracic medicine and respiratory disease, gave a public lecture entitled ‘What We Have Learnt from SARS’ in his capacity as Sir Run Run Shaw Distinguished Visiting Scholar of the college.

The lecture was held on 20th January at the lecture theatre of Shaw College.

Prof. Zhong Nan-shan is the president of Guangzhou Medical College and head of the Guangzhou Institute of Respiratory Disease. During last year’s SARS outbreak in China, he headed an expert task force to gather data and trialled various strategies which eventually led to breakthrough treatments. The contribution of Prof. Zhong and his team has been affirmed by the World Health Organization.

WE CARE Foundation Makes Graceful Exit

The full balance of the WE CARE Foundation was transferred to the University’s Faculty of Medicine on 31st January to support the research activities of the Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases. With the completion of the fund transfer, the foundation’s accounts are formally closed.

As at 20th January, the foundation registered donations totalling some HK$2.27 million. After deducting expenses for specific causes, the unspent balance of HK$1.8 million was transferred to the CEID.

WE CARE Foundation was set up by the Alumni Affairs Office of the University during the SARS outbreak in Hong Kong last March for relief of frontline health care workers at the Prince of Wales Hospital and other public hospitals. It was enthusiastically patronized by CUHK alumni and members of the public.

Upcoming Anniversary Celebration

University Presidents’ Global Forum 2004

The University Presidents’ Global Forum 2004 ‘Universities in the 21st Century’ will be held from 28th to 30th March 2004 at T.Y. Wong Hall and Cho Yiu Conference Hall on CUHK campus.

It will be conducted in putonghua and English with simultaneous interpretation from English to putonghua and vice versa.

Please visit http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/40thanniversary for updates.
Inauguration of New Centre for Infectious Diseases

The University’s Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases (CEID) was inaugurated on 17th January 2004. Located at the Postgraduate Education Centre of the Prince of Wales Hospital, the centre will capitalize on local and overseas expertise in epidemiology, microbiology, clinical medicine, and health economics, and work with Hong Kong’s health authorities to strengthen the territory’s preparedness for infectious diseases.

The centre’s missions are to provide training on infectious disease control to health care professionals and researchers, conduct research on epidemiology, the basic sciences and clinical management of infectious diseases, promote infectious disease preparedness in the hospital and university environments, and provide consultancy service to health authorities.

The officiating guests of the inauguration ceremony were Dr. E.K. Yeoh, Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food; Dr. William Ho, chief executive of the Hospital Authority; Dr. P.Y. Lam, director of health of the Department of Health; Prof. Ambrose King, vice-chancellor of the University; and Prof. Sydney Chung, dean of the Faculty of Medicine. Also present were members of the CEID’s advisory board.

The occasion also saw the official opening of the symposium on ‘Preparing for Emerging Infectious Diseases: A Global Challenge’ and the signing of memoranda of understanding between CEID and the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University, the Department of Infectious and Tropical Diseases of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and the School of Public Health of the University of California at Berkeley. CEID was represented by its director, Prof. Joseph Sung, in the signing ceremony.

NIH Grant Lands Traditional Chinese Medicine Research on World Stage

Two research projects on Chinese medicine involving The Chinese University were awarded grants by the National Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NCCAM funds new partnerships between US and international research teams to create the infrastructure and scientific foundation for research into complementary and alternative medicine. Ten projects were selected from 108 applications in the first funding exercise. Of the 10, two have CUHK participation.

The first involves a two-year grant of US$263,031 awarded to a team comprising researchers from the University’s Institute of Chinese Medicine, Harvard Medical School, the China Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Keio University, to establish a US-China-Japan research consortium on herbal medicine. In response to NIH’s call to systematically evaluate the quality, safety, efficacy, and basic scientific mechanism of herbal medicines worldwide, the consortium will aim at developing an international centre for research on complementary and alternative medicine which will pool Chinese medicine experts and researchers from Hong Kong, mainland China, and Japan — places with a long and rich history of herbal medicine. Promising herbal medicines for untreated diseases will be identified and systematically procured, extracted, characterized, and tested with advanced high-throughput screening methodologies. Further preclinical testing and multi-site international human clinical trials are anticipated for the second phase.

The second project involves a grant of US$255,940 to a group of medical experts from the CUHK Department of Medicine and Therapeutics, the University of Maryland, and the University of Illinois for setting up a Centre for Functional Bowel Disorders and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Irritable bowel syndrome is a functional disorder of the digestive tract characterized by abdominal pain and altered bowel habits in the absence of organic disease. The collaborative consortium will support a multi-disciplinary team of researchers to explore the use of complementary and alternative medicine in the treatment of the syndrome by combining expertise in traditional Chinese medicine from Hong Kong and expertise in basic science and clinical research in the US to produce evidence-based results in traditional Chinese medicine studies.

The University is the only institution from Hong Kong joining these partnerships and research efforts are expected to enhance the University’s competitiveness for more substantial grants for Chinese medicine research.

Medical Breakthroughs

Restoring Hearing to NPC Patients

The Department of Surgery has successfully pioneered the use of the Bone Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA) in nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) patients. The device is directly and permanently anchored to the skull behind the ear of the patient suffering from hearing loss caused by complications arising from radiotherapy. Instead of having sounds enter the outer ear canal and impinge on the eardrum as in normal hearing, sounds amplified by the device are conducted to the cochlea through a tiny titanium screw anchored to the skull and the bones of the skull.

In current trials of the hearing aid, the Department of Surgery reports significant hearing improvements in NPC patients. It is shown to increase patient satisfaction and it promises improvement in quality of life, with implications extending beyond the patients to their families, friends, and colleagues. And because most patients develop NPC at an age when their earning powers are at their highest, it is vital both economically and psychologically that they return to productive work.

The device has been successfully used since 1996 to assist patients with hearing disabilities arising from other causes. This is the first time that the BAHA has been used on patients with NPC.

The results of the current trials of BAHA in NPC patients were released at a press conference held on 2nd February at the Postgraduate Education Centre of the Prince of Wales Hospital.

Cloning of New Gene Means New Hope for Cystic Fibrosis

A new gene related to pancreatic insufficiency in cystic fibrosis has been cloned by researchers at the Epithelial Cell Biology Research Centre of the Faculty of Medicine and their collaborators from Nanjing Medical University. The findings indicate the possibility of a new method for circumventing destructive pancreatic secretion were published in the December 2003 issue of Lancet.

Cystic fibrosis is caused by mutations in the gene encoding an ion-transport protein, the cystic-fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR). Defective secretion of anions is the primary cause of many clinical manifestations of cystic fibrosis, including pancreatic insufficiency. The researchers have proven that suppression of the newly identified gene results in improvement in the amount of mutated CFTR reaching the plasma membrane, which will help in the restoration of pancreatic anion secretion.

Advances in Care and Monitoring of Childhood Asthma

Asthma is an inflammatory airway disease. Among Chinese populations, Hong Kong school children have the highest prevalence of asthma.

In 2002 and 2003, the Department of Paediatrics conducted two large epidemiological surveys of childhood asthma in Hong Kong. Over 3,000 school children were studied to assess the prevalence of the condition and the level of control in affected children. The results, when compared with those obtained eight years ago, were found to show marked improvement in the control of the disease. Another survey — the first local study on preschoolers — targeted children aged two to six years. It was found that prevalence in preschoolers is comparable to that of school children.

The results of the two studies were released at a press conference held on 13th January 2004 at the Postgraduate Education Centre of the Prince of Wales Hospital. There were also demonstrations of a novel method for measuring airway inflammation.
Support for Five Projects

The following research projects undertaken by faculty members of the University have attracted funding support from different quarters:

- **A Study on Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH) in Hong Kong (HK$400,000)**
  **Sponsor:** The Hong Kong Society of Gastroenterology
  **Principal Investigator:** Dr. Hui Yui (Department of Medicine and Therapeutics)

- **New Air-conditioning System Based on Ultrasonic Actuation and RMZ Heating (HK$4,650,000)**
  **Sponsor:** Innovation and Technology Fund and Aoyagi (HK) Ltd.
  **Principal Investigator:** Prof. De Ruux
  **CU Co-Investigator:** Prof. Xu Yangsheng

- **Prevalence of Respiratory Symptoms, Common Respiratory Disease, Atopy and Bronchial Hyperreactivity in Elderly Chinese Living in Hong Kong (HK$60,000)**
  **Sponsor:** Hong Kong Lung Foundation
  **Principal Investigator:** Dr. Fanny W.S. Ko (Department of Medicine and Therapeutics)

- **A Centre for the Study of Foetal Nucleic Acids in Maternal Plasma (HK$4,400,000)**
  **Sponsor:** Research Grants Council — Central Allocation
  **Principal Coordinator:** Prof. Dennis Lo (Department of Chemical Pathology)

- **A Study on Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH) in Hong Kong (HK$400,000)**
  **Sponsor:** Research Grants Council — Central Allocation
  **Principal Coordinator:** Prof. Dennis Lo (Department of Chemical Pathology)

- **Are VDR, Era and PTHRII Genes Associated with the Occurrence as Well as Abnormality in Bone Growth and Sexual Maturation in Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis? (US$70,000)**
  **Sponsor:** Scoliosis Research Society
  **Principal Investigator:** Prof. Jack Cheng (Department of Orthopaedics and Traumatology)

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Forum Explores Ways to Boost Entrepreneurship in HK

Mr. Cao Jiagen (left 4) with CU faculty; from left: Prof. Hugh Thomas, Kelvin Au, Chua Bee-Leng, T.S. Lee, and Kwok Siu-tong

The Faculty of Business Administration held a forum on 16th January at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre to explore ways of encouraging entrepreneurship in Hong Kong. The event was well attended by leading entrepreneurs, educators, business leaders, scientists, and government officials. Welcoming remarks were delivered by Prof. Lee Tien Sheng, dean of the CUHK Faculty of Business Administration. Mr. Cao Jiagen, director of the Shenzhen Bureau of Science and Technology, delivered an opening speech on 'Opportunities for Enabling Entrepreneurship Through Hong Kong-Shenzhen Cooperation'.

The highlight of the forum was the release of the full report on Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Hong Kong and Shenzhen. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study for Hong Kong and Shenzhen was conducted by the University jointly with the Shenzhen Academy of Social Science.

This was followed by the delivery of GEM 2003 Global Findings. The study found that Hong Kong is among the least entrepreneurial in the world, with only 3.2 per cent of its population involved in recent startups, trailing well behind mainland China (11.6 per cent) and Shenzhen (10.5 per cent). The two contributing factors are inappropriate education and training and ineffective transfer of research from academia to industry.

GEM is an international research consortium of some 150 researchers in more than 40 countries, led by the London School of Business and Babson College. It benchmarks and investigates entrepreneurship activity annually in 60 per cent of the world’s population. In 2003, 31 economies participated in the study. Over 100,000 adults were polled and over 1,200 experts interviewed. The most entrepreneurial economies last year were Uganda, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, and New Zealand.

There were also two panel discussions addressing the low level of entrepreneurship in the territory. Speakers included Mr. C.D. Tam, CEO of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Cooperation; Mr. Howard Sou, chief curriculum development officer (technology education) of the Education and Manpower Bureau; Ms. Michele Cheow, director of Junior Achievement Hong Kong; and Mr. Teddy Tang, principal of HKMA K.S. Lo College.

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Executive Training for Tourism and Hospitality Talent in South China

Prof. Sheryl E. Kinos

Fifty-eight top executives from 27 organizations of the hospitality and tourism industry in Hong Kong, Macau, and Shenzhen gathered at the Marco Polo Hongkong Hotel on 19th and 20th January for a workshop on Yield Management. It was jointly organized by the Centre of Hospitality and Real Estate Research of the University's School of Hotel and Tourism Management, the Hotel Controllers and Accountants Association of Hong Kong, and SKAL International Hong Kong, and co-sponsored by The Marco Polo Hongkong Hotel and Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong.

The workshop was conducted by Prof. Sheryl E. Kinos, professor of operations management at Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration. Participants learned how to apply the strategic levers of revenue management, inventory control, and the pricing of guest rooms, meeting space, restaurants and spas. Through lectures, discussions, and hands-on exercises, they were also updated on new techniques and concepts for improving forecasts of length of stay, booking, and managing groups and prices.

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Two Faculties Honour Outstanding Teachers and Students

Social Science Faculty

Prof. Tracey Lo (Anthropology), Prof. Yin Berin (Architecture), and Prof. Eric Ma (Journalism and Communication) were honoured with the Exemplary Teaching Award of the Faculty of Social Science on 10th January 2004. The award presentation ceremony took place in the Ho Tin Building with Mr. Lo Fook-cheung (seated right), chairman and chief executive officer of FC Packaging (HK) Ltd., and Prof. Jack Cheng (seated left), pro-vice-chancellor, as guests of honour. The ceremony was hosted by Prof. Leung Yee (standing), dean of the faculty.

On the same occasion, Dean’s List certificates were presented to 141 undergraduate and 13 graduate students of the faculty’s taught master’s programmes who had demonstrated outstanding academic performance in 2002-3.

Science Faculty

Six teachers won the Exemplary Teachers’ Award of the Faculty of Science and 143 students made it to the faculty’s Dean’s List this year. Both groups were honoured at a ceremony held on 17th January at L1 of the Science Centre. From left: Prof. Liu Kwok-leun (Physics), Prof. Tam Loon-fai (Mathematics), Prof. Wu Ka-ho (Statistics), Prof. Kwan Ho-san (associate dean), Prof. Leo Lau (dean), Prof. Gee Wei (Biotechnology), Prof. Lee Hung-kay (Chemistry), and Prof. Leung Kwok-nam (Biochemistry).

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A Moment of Frankness with Michael Sze

Mr. Michael C.C. Sze (right), executive director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, was the first guest of the new series of Talking to CEOs: CEOs in the New Century coorganized by the EMBA programme of the CUHK Faculty of Business Administration and RTHK. The show was broadcast on 8th February on RTHK 1 and simultaneously posted on the RTHK website (http://www.rthk.org.hk).

Mr. Sze has amassed a great body of skills and knowledge in management, having worked in the public sector for over two decades. He plans to retire in May this year. Mr. Sze talked about what it takes to get to the top in the public sector, about how he has remained true to his beliefs in the face of difficulties, and about his most satisfying achievements while working for the TDC. He also explained why it is important for top management personnel to retire at the right time. Mr. Sze quoted Mencius’s teachings in support of his philosophy that one should be aware of one’s limitations, maintaining that in his seven and a half years with the TDC, he was always aware of his own abilities and never took on something that he felt was beyond him.

Academic Activities at Chung Chi College

Annual Education Conference
About 260 scientists, academics, and interested individuals attended Chung Chi College’s Annual Education Conference on 10th January. The theme this year was ‘Genome Research: Opportunities and Risks’. The four panel speakers were Prof. Kwok Pui-Yan, professor of dermatology from the University of California at San Francisco and Chung Chi College Siu Lien Ling Wong Visiting Fellow 2003–4; Prof. Tui Lap-Choe (left 2), vice-chancellor of The University of Hong Kong; Prof. Dennis Lo (left 1), associate dean (research) of the CUHK Faculty of Medicine, and Prof. S.F. Pang (right 1), vice-president and chief technology officer of CK Life Sciences International. Prof. Mary Y.M. Wuye (right 2) of the CUHK Department of Biochemistry was the conference moderator.

Visiting Artist 2003–4
Ms. Nancy Wolf, a renowned artist from New York, is the Chung Chi College Visiting Artist in 2003–4. She is also artist-in-residence of the Department of Architecture in the second term of the 2003–4 academic year.

Ms. Wolf has been actively involved in art in the past 30 years. She has held 12 solo exhibitions and more than 14 group exhibitions in Washington D.C. and New York. Her works have also been collected by galleries and museums.

Many of Ms. Wolf’s meticulously rendered pencil drawings are related to architectural issues associated with tradition, modernity, post-modernity, and contemporary urbanism. At CUHK, Ms. Wolf conducted a talk at the College Assembly on 13th February entitled The Faces of a Chinese Beauty: Wang Zhaojun. The exhibition of her work is mounted by the Department of Architecture from 9th to 26th February at 5/F Wong Foo Yuan Building.

EXHIBITION TRACES CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN

Changes in the roles of women in Hong Kong were recounted in an exhibition entitled ‘Women of Hong Kong: Gender Roles in Flux’ held from 27th November to 12th December 2003 at the Hui Gallery, New Asia College. The exhibition was organized by the Gender Studies Programme and the Gender Research Centre of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies. It was sponsored by New Asia College and the Department of Anthropology.

The exhibition was divided into four parts: ‘Home/Work’, ‘Education’, ‘Social/Movement’, and ‘Cultural Representation: Transforming Gender Role, Sex, Love, and Bodies’. Prof. Henry Wong, head of New Asia College, Prof. Tan Chee Beng, chairman of the Department of Anthropology, and Prof. Maria Tam, director of studies of the Gender Studies Programme officiated at the ceremony held on 29th November 2003.

Research Centre for Translation New Books

Renditions Special Issue 2003
The Faces of a Chinese Beauty: Wang Zhaojun
This special issue features the most representative poems, plays, stories, and paintings on the celebrated beauty Wang Zhaojun, the Han court lady who married the Xiongnu Khan in 33 BC. These works reveal a broad spectrum of Chinese cultural attitudes and perceptions of women from the 3rd to the 20th century.

272 pages. HK$99

A Silver Treasury of Chinese Lyrics
Edited by Alice W. Cheang
The song lyric (ci), which began as a form of minor divertissement in the urban pleasure quarters of 8th and 9th century China, evolved into an important poetic form over the four centuries that followed. This collection of 128 poems by 33 poets, represents the genre’s major stylistic development from its early days to the end of the Song dynasty.

The books are sold at a 30 per cent discount to staff members at the University Bookshop, John Fallon Centre.
In mainland China, the love affair with the 'international language' has reached a feverish pitch, fuelled by China's accession to the World Trade Organization, the presence of multinational corporations, and the coming of the Beijing Olympics in 2008. English tutorials in all shapes and guises sprout like mushrooms after rain and locals approach English-speaking expatriates for the sole purpose of brushing up on their oral English. At many universities, the English language department is often the largest and students study up to 12 hours of English per week in their freshman year, regardless of major.

However neither genuine enthusiasm nor hype seems to have spilled over to Hong Kong, where historical exposure to this foreign language seems to have bred disinterest. Yet this attitude will have to change if Hong Kongers want to maintain their linguistic advantage and competitiveness in the global market.

Territory-wide Clean Hong Kong's English Campaign

To improve the level of English in the territory and also the level of keenness for it, the government has been developing considerable resources to a range of new initiatives such as the change of the medium of instruction in schools, the Native English-speaking Teacher schemes (NETs), the Workplace English Campaign, the establishment of a framework of language competencies to assess language standards, and the introduction of a voluntary English exit test for all final-year university students.

Dr. Arthur McNeill, the new director of the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) attributes Hong Kong's reluctance to embrace English to its association with the colonial government and the dominant medium of instruction in most schools, English is being taught more formally with an emphasis on how the language system works rather than just exposing students to English and expecting them to be able to use it.' English is being taught more formally with an emphasis on how the language system works rather than just exposing students to English and expecting them to be able to use it.

Exit Test for Final-year Students

At The Chinese University, the ELTU has been spearheading efforts to complement the government's English enhancement initiatives. Since September 2002, all final-year students from UGC-funded institutions have been encouraged to take the Common English Proficiency Assessment as an exit test. Since his appointment as director in April 2003, Dr. McNeill has been very busy reviewing the unit's programme to prepare CUHK students for this test which uses the academic version of the IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

The ELTU has finished piloting a five-day workshop to prepare student volunteers for the IELTS. Feedback from the workshop will be used to finalize the content and format of a programme of IELTS workshops to be offered during the summer and other times of the academic year. The Government has already taken a lead in using IELTS results in the recruitment of civil servants. The minimum overall score required is 6.5, with a minimum of 6.0 on any of the sub-tests.

Compulsory English at CUHK

Last October, the University Senate approved in principle a proposal that, starting in the 2004-5 academic year, all Secondary 7 or JUPAS entrants will have to take three credit units of compulsory English, and all Secondary 6 or EAS (Early Admissions Scheme) entrants, six units.

"Starting in the 2004-5 academic year, all Secondary 7 or JUPAS entrants will have to take three credit units of compulsory English, and all Secondary 6 or EAS (Early Admissions Scheme) entrants, six units."

Three credit units translate approximately into 45 hours or three hours a week, for a semester, which isn't much. It has been estimated that 45 hours of study are required for students to progress half a band on the IELTS scale. So the three units are really a drop in the ocean. Students who are serious about improving their English should also take elective English courses during their degree," said Dr. McNeill who nonetheless believes that it is a chance to make an impact, especially since CUHK is currently the only university in Hong Kong where English language courses are largely voluntary. He also hopes that when the four-year undergraduate curriculum is implemented, more English can be put in.

To develop its proposal for compulsory English, the University's Working Group on Language Enhancement, chaired by Prof. Kwok Siu-Tong, has set up a task force comprising Dr. Beatrice Ma, Dr. Jose Lai, Prof. Jane Jackson, Prof. Gladys Tang, and Dr. McNeill.

Understanding English Needs of Students

The ELTU ran a workshop on 5th December 2003 to clarify to faculty representatives what they can offer and to establish different departments' English language needs and priorities. The workshop served as the start of a dialogue between the ELTU and the faculties on how best to raise their students' English standard. The unit inched towards the faculties again before end of March 2004 to solicit their views on how the ELTU can help.

Dr. McNeill is of the view that Secondary 6 entrants should spread their six units of compulsory English across different years of their undergraduate studies so that they can better prepare for the exit test. Targeting the three units for the Secondary 7 entrants, however, is trickier. "Some faculties want technical or scientific English; others favour academic English. Some want their students to be able to produce grammatically correct sentences; yet others prefer their students to acquire good formatting and documentation skills. We need to negotiate with them.

We also need to avoid duplicating what the students have already studied in secondary school," explained Dr. McNeill.

The ELTU hopes that the University's Working Group for Language Enhancement will approve its proposal within this year.

Diagnostic Screening Test

Dr. McNeill and two of his colleagues, Prof. Eva Lai and Ms. Maggie Chau, are developing a diagnostic screening test for all EAS entrants and non-local students who do not have Use of English exam results. The test will give the language profiles of students and enable the unit to make informed recommendations on what courses each student should take. The team has trialled parts of the test with 100 undergraduate students and is looking at the results to refine the test. They hope that the test, which will cover vocabulary, grammar, listening, writing and speaking, can take the place by the 2004-5 academic year.

External Liaisons

There are also plans to reach out. In May 2004, the ELTU will be holding an international conference on Teaching English at a University Level jointly with the College English Teaching and Research Association of China for the benefit of language teachers throughout mainland China and Asia. The conference will be held partly in Hong Kong and partly in Nanjing. The unit also has a committee responsible for exploring how it can make a greater impact in the local community and to tap new sources of income for the unit. The Civil Service is now contracting out language training for its language officers to the universities and the ELTU has put in a bid for some of this.

Bilingualism the Way to Go

The ELTU's business may be English but it is supportive of the University's bilingual policy. "People who are successful in life tend to use more than one language. The human brain copes astonishingly well with bilingualism."

"People who are successful in life tend to use more than one language. The human brain copes astonishingly well with bilingualism. Students can operate in both English and Chinese and in different cultural settings have an enormous advantage in a globalized, inter-dependent world," said Dr. McNeill. In a few years' time, visitors to the University may find American and British exchange students falling over themselves to practise their patronising and their English with CUHK students. If this sounds far-fetched, then what about CUHK students rattling off their well thought out ideas in silken English and expressing them aptly, succinctly, and educately inside and outside the classroom?"
The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) invites applications from staff members of the University for various Fellowships/Awards tenable for 2004-5.

Applications endorsed by department chairmen and faculty deans, or unit heads, members of the University for various Fellowships/Awards. Details of application forms are obtainable from faculty/unit offices or the Personnel Office (2609 7251). Further enquiries may be directed to the Personnel Office (2609 7191/7288).

ACU Titular Fellowships

To the Personnel Office on/before 12th March 2004.

Deadline for submission to the relevant university committees for consideration. Detailed information and relevant application forms are obtainable from faculty/unit offices or the Personnel Office (2609 7251). Further enquiries may be directed to the Personnel Office (2609 7191/7288).

Visa Extension

Visa extension for the said sponsorship letter.

ACU/FCO Chevening Scholarships Programme

This service however is not available to those required to file an immigration application.

visa requires a sponsorship letter from the University to certify the staff member’s eligibility.

Health Screening Programme

The Administrative Affairs Committee of the University has recently approved the launch of a Health Screening Programme by the University Health Service (UHS) for eligible staff members.

The Bursary announces the following investment returns in the Designated Investment Schemes and the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme (MPFS).

Funds of the 1995 and 1983 Schemes and the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme (MPFS).

No. 235 19th February 2004

- Change of Employee Voluntary Contribution

- Investment Returns of Staff Superannuation Schemes and MPFS

- MPFS — Change of Employee Voluntary Contribution

- MPFS and UHS — Change of Employee Voluntary Contribution

- PQRC and UHS — Change of Employee Voluntary Contribution

- Health Screening Programme

- Funds of the 1995 and 1983 Schemes and the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme (MPFS).

- Health Screening Programme
appointees and their dependents at reasonable charges.

The programme will be a comprehensive health assessment to be conducted at the UHS by its medical, nursing, and laboratory staff. The service charge for consultation and basic tests will be HK$600. Additional charges will be levied for special tests and procedures not included on the standard list.

Employment-related basic medical examinations for staff will continue to be conducted free of charge.

To avoid disruption of regular services, health screening will be done on Saturdays only. The UHS initially welcome bookings from individuals aged 45 or above. Staff, their dependents, and retirees are eligible. Clients may choose the date and time, but the UHS prefers to assign physicians in accordance with its internal duty roster.

Physicians will discuss with clients the range of tests or procedures they need and the costs, and provide follow-up advice on the outcomes of the physical examination, laboratory tests, and other health issues. A printed health report will also be issued to clients for record purposes. Health problems identified in the process will be followed up through the regular consultation system of the UHS.

For further information, please contact Mrs. Pauline Kan at 2609 6436. For appointments, call 2609 6439.

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**Preventive Bone Density Exercise**

Bone density is a type of degenerative disease. Most people start losing bone density after the age of 35, but it may not be noticeable until later in life. A preventative bone density test can be performed to ensure that bone density testing is conducted free of charge.

The Hepatitis Awareness Campaign will take place from 1st to 12th March 2004 at the University Health Centre. There will be health counselling and an exhibition at the Health Centre during the period. Prevaccination blood tests, optional for Hepatitis A vaccination and required for Hepatitis B, will be available at 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. The cost is HK$100 per test.

Vaccination for Hepatitis A comes in two doses at $225 per dose; vaccination for Hepatitis B comes in three doses at $320 per dose; and vaccination for combined Hepatitis A and B comes in three doses at $220 per dose. Vaccination dates are 11th and 16th March for the first dose, 15th and 16th April for the second, and 16th and 17th September 2004 for the third.

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**Faculty and Staff Language Courses**

Putonghua and Cantonese Courses for CU Staff and Their Spouses

The New Asia Yale-in-China Chinese Language Centre offers Putonghua and Cantonese courses to the University's staff and staff spouses on a regular basis. Such courses have been scheduled as follows:

**Course Title:**

(1) Beginner's course in Putonghua for non-Chinese speakers.
(2) Beginner's course in Cantonese for non-Chinese speakers.
(3) Beginner's course in Putonghua for non-Chinese speakers.
(4) Beginner's course in Cantonese for speakers of other Chinese dialects.

**Duration:**

Class A: 13th April to 17th June 2004; 40 sessions
Every Tuesday and Thursday
Class B: 14th April to 22nd June 2004; 40 sessions
Every Wednesday and Friday

**Time:**

6:30 p.m. to 8:20 p.m. (two sessions each)

The size of each class will be limited to eight students. The minimum number of students to form a class is six. Enrolment will be on a first-come-first-served basis. Basic tuition fee for each course is HK$3,200. 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 2609 6439 before 2nd April 2004.

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**Art Museum News**

On exhibition from 12th March to 16th May 2004 in the East-wing Galleries of the Art Museum will be selections from the Art Museum Collection.

The exhibition will be held in two parts. The first part, entitled "Selections from the Art Museum Collection," will showcase a selection of early Chinese porcelain and other decorative art. Highlights include recent gifts of stone carvings and calligraphy, ceramics, and other decorative art. The exhibition will be held from 12th March to 16th May 2004 in the East-wing Galleries of the Art Museum.

The second part of the exhibition, entitled "Art Museum Selected Objects for the Scholar's Desk," will showcase a selection of early Chinese porcelain and other decorative art. The exhibition will be held from 12th March to 16th May 2004 in the West-wing Galleries of the Art Museum.

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**Modern Porcelain Replicas — Imperial Elegance Revived**

Peachbloom ware of the Kangxi (1662-1722) period has been the most prized among the imperial stationery of the Qing court. Apart from the subdued and pleasing glaze, the forms are exquisite and elegant. The Shangyin Jingshe has commissioned experienced potters at Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, to reproduce a three-piece set of the Kangxi peachbloom set. The exhibition will showcase a selection of early Chinese porcelain and other decorative art. The exhibition will be held from 12th March to 16th May 2004 in the East-wing Galleries of the Art Museum. The set comprises a beehive washer, a seal vermilion box, and a brush washer. The original incised chi-potters at Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, to reproduce a three-piece set of the Kangxi peachbloom set. The exhibition will showcase a selection of early Chinese porcelain and other decorative art. The exhibition will be held from 12th March to 16th May 2004 in the East-wing Galleries of the Art Museum.

The price of each set is HK$3,800. The original peachbloom set and the replicas are now on display as part of the exhibition "Object for the Scholar's Desk" in the West-wing Galleries of the Art Museum.

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**Preventive Bone Density Exercise**

Bone density is a type of degenerative disease. Most people start losing bone density after the age of 35, but it may not be noticeable until later in life. A preventative bone density test can be performed to ensure that bone density testing is conducted free of charge.

The Hepatitis Awareness Campaign will take place from 1st to 12th March 2004 at the University Health Centre. There will be health counselling and an exhibition at the Health Centre during the period. Prevaccination blood tests, optional for Hepatitis A vaccination and required for Hepatitis B, will be available at 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. The cost is HK$100 per test.

Vaccination for Hepatitis A comes in two doses at $225 per dose; vaccination for Hepatitis B comes in three doses at $320 per dose; and vaccination for combined Hepatitis A and B comes in three doses at $220 per dose. Vaccination dates are 11th and 16th March for the first dose, 15th and 16th April for the second, and 16th and 17th September 2004 for the third.

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**Art Museum News**

On exhibition from 12th March to 16th May 2004 in the East-wing Galleries of the Art Museum will be selections from the Art Museum Collection featuring painting, calligraphy, ceramics, and other decorative art. Highlights include recent gifts of stone stele and carvings of the Six Dynasties from Mr. Robert H. Ellsworth in the US and a local donation of paintings and calligraphy by Sun Xingge (Shiwan shanren, 1897-1996) from his son Mr. Sun Zhonghong.

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培訓酒店及旅遊業高級行政人員

五十八名來自香港、澳門及深圳二十七家酒店或旅遊業機構的高級行政人員，上月十九至二十日參加在馬可孛羅香港酒店舉行的“收益管理”工作坊，學習如何改善收益和存貨管理，客房、會議廳、餐館和水療等設施的訂價方法。

工作坊由本校酒店及旅遊管理學院的“收益管理”工作坊，學習如何改善收益和存貨管理，客房、會議廳、餐館和水療等設施的訂價方法。

齊關心基金圓滿結束

去年三月SARS催生，威爾斯親王醫院首當其衝，校友事務處即展開籌款行動，創中大校友及各方支持，設立“齊關心基金WE CARE Foundation”，支援威院前線醫護人員的個人急切需要。同年四月杪，該基金的支授對象擴展至本港其他公立醫院的員工；至六月更擴及由中大開展的SARS及傳染病的研究。

截至上月二十日，“齊關心基金”共籌得二百二十七萬餘元，扣除各項開支後，結餘為一百八十萬元。個別開支項目可於網上（http://www.alumni.cuhk.edu.hk/chi/wecare/expense.html）瀏覽。

廠商扶掖工科生

自動化與計算機輔助工程學系上月十三日在利黃瑤璧樓舉辦“第三屆香港工業界獎學金頒發典禮”，出席嘉賓包括校長楊綱凱教授、工程學院院長任德盛教授及龍昌國際控股有限公司董事總經理梁鍾銘先生。

該系系主任徐揚生教授感謝香港廠商本著“推崇尚學術，扶掖青年”的一片熱心，給予學生支持和鼓勵。今年的贊助機構已增至八家，獎學金的名額更增至三十三個，受惠者全是該系一年級的優秀學生。
兩項中藥研究獲美國資助

本校兩項中醫藥研究項目，獲得美國國家衛生研究所屬下的補充替代醫學中心資助，成為首批獲補充替代醫學研究領域國際合作研究中心資助的計劃。

全球約八成人口使用草藥作保健治療，如果深入研究這些傳統草藥配方，將有助推動全球健康邁向新領域。補充替代醫學中心資助國際性的合作，就補充替代醫學的多個領域作基礎及科學研究。這些研究結果，是有關機構競逐更大規模資金的起點。該中心共收到一百零八份申請，其中十項研究獲得資助。中大會參與其中兩項，而中大也是香港唯一一所參與此等國際合作的科研機構。

社會科學院表揚優異師生

社會科學院上月十日在何添樓B6室舉行「二零零三年模範教學獎暨院長榮譽錄頒獎典禮」，由永富容器(香港)有限公司主席及行政總裁羅富昌先生及副校長鄭振耀教授主禮，出席者逾二百人，包括模範教學獎得主社會福利系呂烈丹教授、建築學系Prof. Vito Bertin和新聞與傳播學院馬傑偉教授，以及學系代表和名列院長榮譽錄的學生及他們的親友。

著名校友職業談

新亞書院師生交流

新亞書院本年度學生交流及研討活動，邀請了北京師範大學及台灣師範大學作合辦單位。兩校共二十一名代表於一月二十七日至二月三日訪問該院，出席「全球化浪潮下的青少年文化」學術講座，並參觀和探訪香港的學校及機構。兩校學生又與新亞學生合作撰寫論文，並就論文主題實地考察，加深了解香港的青少年文化。

港深創業精神研究及會議

工商管理學院與深圳社會科學院合作的「全球創業觀察」研究顯示，香港成年嘗試創業的比率(3.2%)遠低於內地(11.6%)和深圳(10.5%)。研究人員建議香港改革教育及訓練，更要加強大學的技術轉讓予工商界。
揭示 SARS 冠状病毒演進史

本校科研人員與五十多名來自中國內地及美國的華人科學家組成 SARS 分子流行病學研究協作組，探究 SARS 去年爆發的整個進化歷程。這是至今最全面、最廣泛的 SARS 冠狀病毒分子流行病學研究，研究結果已刊於一月三

防疫研究中心成立儀式

醫學院為預防 SARS 重臨及其他傳染病肆虐香港，成立防疫研究中心，為全港防疫作好準備。中心集合了本地和海外流行病學、微生物學、臨床醫學及衛生經濟學等方面的專家，並會與香港醫療機構合作，加強社區對各種流行病的防護。

中心成立儀式及全球防疫醫學研討會於上月十七日在醫學院深造中心逸夫講堂舉行，出席嘉賓包括衛生福利及食物局局長楊永強醫生、醫院管理局行政總監何兆煒醫生、衛生署署長林秉恩醫生、金耀基校長和醫學院院長鍾尚志教授。該所當日並與中國疾病預防控制中心、約翰霍普金斯大學布魯爾伯格公共衛生學院、倫敦衛生和熱帶醫學院傳染及熱帶病學系，以及柏克萊加州大學公共衛生學院簽署備忘錄，強化交流合作。

中心主任沈祖堯教授(左一)、美國疾病控制及預防中心傳染病主任 Dr. James Hughes(左二)、龍昌國際控股有限公司主席梁麟先生(左三)和董事總經理梁鍾銘先生(右一)在儀式上向研究人員介紹新技術的發展特點。