CUHK Wins Large Grants for Two School Development Projects

The Chinese University of Hong Kong was awarded a grant of HK$74.2 million by the Education and Manpower Bureau of the Hong Kong SAR Government for implementing two school development projects — Partnership for Improvement of Learning and Teaching (PILT) and Quality School Improvement (QSI) — from 2004 to 2009. It was the largest grant ever awarded to a tertiary institution in Hong Kong for school development purposes. The two projects will provide school-based support to a broad spectrum of local schools.

The award illustrates CUHK's leading role in local school development. Its success is reflected by the implementation of a series of related projects that began with the Accelerated Schools for Quality Education Project (HK$62 million awarded) six years ago.

The PILT project aims at improving the quality of learning and teaching at junior secondary schools. It provides professional support for the development of different key learning areas and subjects, namely, Personal, Social and Humanity Education, Science, Mathematics, Physical Education, the proposed Liberal Studies, and Integrated Humanities. The project will also empower teachers to face the challenges brought about by curriculum reform and the changes of the secondary school system.

Led by Prof. John Lee Chi-kin, with Prof. Billy So Kee-long, Prof. Jimmy Yu Chi-mei, Mr. Hon Hau-wai, and Mr. Chan Kai-yuen on the advisory committee, the project aspires to provide professional support with high relevance to teachers and local schools. Ms. Louisa Cheung Yue-sai, the project manager, will coordinate a team of 20 professors and instructors from the Faculty of Education, external frontline experts, and school development officers of the Centre of University and School Partnership to administer the project.

The QSI project is a comprehensive school improvement project aiming to facilitate school development and promote quality school culture in Hong Kong. The ultimate goal of the project is to achieve all-round development in every student. Under the leadership of Prof. Leslie N. K. Lo (project director), Prof. Wong Hin-wah (head of research and development), Dr. Chiu Chi-shing (executive director) and Prof. Chung Yue-ping (head of management committee), the project team will enhance the professional capacities of teachers and principals in areas such as teaching and learning, prioritization of school aims, and development of a continuous self-inquiry process. It is hoped that participants of the project will acquire solid professional knowledge and develop a strong awareness of the responsibility for continuous improvement.

The project will span five years on a funding of HK$46 million.

Academician of Chinese Academy of Sciences Joins CUHK

Prof. Kung Hsiang-lu has been appointed professor of virology at the Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases of the School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, from 4th December 2004. Prof. Kung is the ninth member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to be in the University's service. The others are Prof. C.N. Yang and Prof. Yau Shing-song, distinguished professors-at-large, Prof. Charles K. Kao, honorary professor of engineering, Prof. Joseph Lau, professor of surgery, Prof. Wu Chi and Prof. Henry N.C. Wong, professors of chemistry, Prof. Thomas Mak, Wei Lun honorary professor of the Department of Chemistry, and Prof. Shen Xuhong, senior research fellow of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering.

Prof. Kung received his Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University in the US in 1969. Prior to joining CUHK, he was chief of the Biochemical Physiology Laboratory of the National Institutes of Health, US, from 1986 to 1999, and director and chair professor of the Institute of Molecular Biology at the University of Hong Kong from 1999 to 2004.

Prof. Kung was elected to membership of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 1999. His research work has led to the publication of 268 papers in peer-reviewed journals. He has plans to conduct collaborative research with major research centres in the US and mainland China on topics including AIDS, and liver, stomach, and nasopharyngeal carcinoma.

HK’s First Artificial Cervical Disc System Implantation

The Division of Neurosurgery of the Department of Surgery has successfully performed the territory’s first implantation of artificial cervical disc system on a 33-year-old patient to relieve nerve root and spinal cord compression caused by a damaged disc. The artificial disc allows for motion and therefore reduces neighbouring disc degeneration which the traditional procedure does not. Recovery is also speedy.

Cervical disc damage is usually associated with degenerative changes. Discs lose their water content and shock absorption properties because of age. When a disc ruptures in the cervical spine, it puts pressure on the nerve roots and the spinal cord, causing pain and other symptoms in the neck and arms and urinary incontinence. About 30 to 40 per cent of Hong Kong people aged 40 or above have cervical spondylosis and the percentage increases with age. In severe cases, surgery is needed.

In the traditional procedure to alleviate neck and arm pain, bone graft is placed between adjacent vertebral bodies which heels over several months until fusion occurs. However, since six columns of cervical spine, instead of seven, are left, physical stress to each column increases, which may accelerate disc degeneration elsewhere in the neck.
Exhibition of First Chinese Nobel Laureate in Literature

The University Library System (ULS) hosted 'Exhibition of Gao Xingjian: Sources, Literature and Drama' in commemoration of the kind Xingjian, Nobel laureate in literature, posters, books, and Dr. Gao's many collection to the ULS by Dr. Gao donation of part of his private collection to the University. The exhibition, which ran from 11th to 15th December 2004, featured manuscripts, paintings, photographs, posters, books, and Dr. Gao's many other personal belongings.

The exhibition opened on 11th December. Officiating at the opening ceremony were Prof. Liu Pak-wai, pro-vice-chancellor, Dr. Colin Storey, University librarian, and Prof. Gilbert Fong, chairman of the Department of Translation.

On the same day, The Chinese University Press held a seminar entitled 'Gao Xingjian: Archive, Literature, and Theatre' at the Central Library in Causeway Bay. Speakers included Prof. Gilbert Fong, Prof. Tam Kwok-kan of the Department of English, Dr. Colly Storey, and Mr. Jim Chim, associate artistic director of Theatre Ensemble.

A prominent playwright, director, novelist, painter, and literary theorist, Dr. Gao was the first Chinese writer to be awarded the Nobel prize in literature. His work was depicted by the Swedish Academy in Stockholm as 'an œuvre of universal validity, bitter insights and linguistic ingenuity, which has opened new paths for the Chinese novel and drama'. Over the years, Dr. Gao has given valuable support to art and literature research at The Chinese University. His writings have been carried by the Twenty-First Century

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What should we expect when an expert in services marketing and consumer behaviour who's also a CUHK alumnus becomes associate pro-vice-chancellor? Lots of lessons learnt from marketing with copious amounts of love for the University thrown in.

What Is Marketing?

'What is marketing?' Prof. Michael Hui, professor of marketing and the University's new associate pro-vice-chancellor, asked the rhetorical question. 'Marketing is not only about market research and advertising, as sometimes believed. It is actually a way of doing business that began in the US after World War II'. In post-World War II America, many large companies were shocked at the poor demand for their products. They had thought that war had solved the public of material goods so much that they would pounce on the opportunity to spend. But that was only true during the war. Market competition was nonexistent, so the handful of companies that still remained in business shifted their focus inwards, on how to cut costs. Quality and packaging were not high enough to set anything put on the shelf was snapped up the next minute. But once the war ended, business resumed and competition raised its head. The public was no longer willing to settle for cheap, boring products which some war-hardened companies were still in the habit of producing.

Marketing reminds companies that they cannot bury their noses in internal affairs because profit is outside the window, 'Companies cannot produce something and then persuade consumers to buy it. They should find out what consumers want before deciding what to produce. Basic marketing training is about how to think outside oneself, in someone else's shoes. It is also about communication,' explained Prof. Hui.

Prof. Michael Hui, together with Prof. Billy So, professor in the Department of History, were appointed the first associate pro-vice-chancellors of the University on 1st October 2004. Prof. Hui is put in charge of the Campus Development Office, the Estates Management Office, the University Health Service, and The Chinese University Press.

Emathy and Communication

Applying his marketing expertise to the University, Prof. Hui hopes to improve communication within the units, and between the units and the University.

Communication is especially important during financially stringent times when feathers are easily ruffled. The past year has been a difficult one for the University financially. Measures to save costs and tap new sources of income are widely deemed necessary but they inevitably cause friction and hurt feelings. And the situation is expected to continue.

'Some institutions have been in place at the University for a long time. They might have been efficient in their time but are no longer. A good organization needs to change even without the cut in external funding. Having said that, the University is blessed with a uniquely warm relationship among its staff, some of whom have spent half their lives here and some, like myself, are CUHK alumni,' remarked Prof. Hui.

His job, therefore, entails treading the fine line between maximizing efficiency and keeping staff happy. Wise optimism leads him to believe that often it is not the matter itself that causes discontent but miscommunication or the lack of communication, especially in a unit with several hundred staff like the Estates Management Office.

Enhancing understanding would iron out difficulties in the implementation of reforms.

Focus on Service Quality

Singer and actor Andy Lau says in the famous promo for Hong Kong's service industry: 'In this day and age, this kind of service just isn't enough'.

The units under Prof. Hui are weighted heavily towards professionals — engineers, architects, doctors, nurses, and editors. While he has every confidence in their knowledge and professionalism, he believes that, from a user's perspective, their service quality can be taken up a few notches. The ingredients for excellent service, he says, are professional knowledge and user satisfaction. 'Police officers may think that as long as they can stop crime, they're doing a good job. But the public may expect more from them than that,' he explained. 'Besides service quality nowadays is an ongoing process. There is always room for improvement.'

As the University's support units, the departments under Prof. Hui will be able to help frontline staff more effectively if they can spend a little more time to understand what their users want. As adviser and facilitator, Prof. Hui will encourage communication between supervisors and subordinates within the units, between users and service providers, and help them reach a compromise when necessary so as to achieve a win-win situation. To be convincing in these undertakings means Prof. Hui will have to think in many people's Nikes and Pradas.

PROFILe

Prof. Michael Hui obtained his BBA from The Chinese University, his CAAE from the University of Aix-Marseille in France, and his Ph.D. from London Business School. He joined the CUHK Department of Marketing in 1996 and was associate dean and BBA Programme director of the Faculty of Business Administration from 1999 to 2002. He is currently professor of marketing and director of the faculty's research programmes. Prof. Hui serves on the editorial boards of numerous international academic journals and has rendered consultancy services to the business sector and the government.

Advice for CUHKers

Prof. Hui's new responsibilities have left him less time for teaching and research. Whereas the ratio of teaching, research, and service was 30:60:10, it is now closer to 33 for each. He is prepared to increase the service component to 30 per cent as he believes his services are worthwhile.

'University staff have been under different pressures in the past year. I feel for them. But the downturn won't last forever and we still have many good things going on for us such as the opportunities offered by the new Law School. We should also remember that we have a responsibility towards Hong Kong and China. I spent half my life at this university. Of course I want the best for it,' concluded Prof. Hui.

Piera Chen

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Study Shows HK Students Perform Well in Mathematics and Science

Hong Kong's 15-year-olds were ranked first in Mathematics, third in Science, and tenth in Reading (Chinese) among their peers from 41 participating countries and regions, according to the recent Hong Kong Programme for International Student Assessment (HKPISA). Hong Kong students were also ranked second for Problem-solving Skills, a new assessment domain in which students are assessed on their general competency to overcome life's challenges. The results of HKPISA 2003 were released on 7th December 2004.

HKPISA 2003 was commissioned by the Education and Manpower Bureau to the Hong Kong Centre for International Student Assessment. Researchers also found that although the effect of socio-economic status, including parental occupation and educational level, to student performance is modest in Hong Kong, reflecting that educational opportunities in the territory are relatively high in quality and equity. But students with better communication with parents and who spend more time chatting and taking the evening meal together tended to perform better. Learning strategies and attitudes were also important. High achievers tended to have a better self-image and sense of self-efficacy. They also showed greater interest/enjoyment in learning and tended to employ multiple learning strategies.

The Programme for International Student Assessment organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development compares and evaluates the effectiveness of the education system by assessing how well 15-year-olds approaching the end of compulsory education have acquired the knowledge and skills essential for participation in society.

The study provides strong proof that the active involvement of teachers, parents, and school authorities can improve the quality and equity of the learning environment for students.

Conferences

The following conferences were held by University units in the month of December:

- **Translation Software: The State of the Art**
  - **Date:** 4th December 2004
  - **Venue:** Cho Yiu Hall
  - **Organizer:** Department of Translation
  - **Purpose:** To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the BA in Translation Programme and the 20th anniversary of the MA in Translation Programme

- **Airport Privatization and Deregulation: Theory and Empirical Evidence**
  - **Date:** 14th December 2004
  - **Venue:** MBA Town Centre, Central
  - **Speaker:** Prof. Zhang Anming, director of the Centre for Transportation Studies at the University of British Columbia

Organizer: Aviation Policy and Research Centre

GCHK Newsletter
No. 252 4th January 2005 3
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學生能力國際評估計劃最新結果

根據第二期學生能力國際評估計劃（PISA）的結果顯示，香港十五歲的學生的數學能力比異地同齡學生為優，再次名列第一，科學能力第三，但閱讀能力（中文）由第六位降至第十位，在新增的解難能力則位居第二。

研究由香港教育研究所學生能力國際評估計劃香港中心統籌，研究人員發現學生的社經背景對其學習表現的影響輕微，反映香港經為學生提供高素質而均衡的教育機會，但與其他表現同樣出色

的地區或國家相比，香港學校之間的差距卻顯著地巨大。

由經濟合作及發展組織策劃的PISA，每三年定期進行跨國研究，目的

是要了解年齡十五歲的學童的基礎能力和影響他們學習的因素，並評估及比較

各參與地區及國家的教育成效。第二期PISA共有四十一個國家及地區參與，於二零零三年五至七月期間進行；新增的解難能力項目是測試學生解決一些生活難題時的基礎能力，在面對一些不熟悉的情況下，能夠靈活及務實地解決問題。

香港學生在數學能力持續居首，但與其後的芬蘭、韓國、荷蘭、列支登士敦及日本無顯著差距。科學方面，香港第三，在芬蘭及日本之後但無顯著差距；解難能力第二，與韓國、芬蘭、日本、新西蘭及澳門同列第六位。在香港的數學考察中，香港的學生表現優異，再次名列第一，科學能力第三，但閱讀能力（中文）由第六位降至第十位，在新增的解難能力則位居第二。

研究亦發現家庭社經背景包括家長職業及教育程度，對學生的學習表現影響甚微，而更重要的是家長的參與，及學生的自主學習態度及策略是影響成績的重要因素。

學生氣質與學生表現關係重大，尤其教師及學生的士氣。培養優秀的學校，教師重要的決策成為，學生亦需有良好的學習習慣，學生行為偏差亦較少，香港學校的差異

要較大，主要與教學方法和學科分級有關，研究人員認為，改善整體的教育氛

圍，為學生創造一個互相關懷，共同努力的學習環境，可以提升學校的效能。

研究結果於二零零四年十二月七日公布。
大學獲七千四百萬
協助推動中小學發展

校管委會批准七千四百萬港元，增進「優化教學協作計劃」及「優質學校改進計劃」，為中小學校長及教師提供專業支援服務。

教育學院大學與學校夥伴協作中心及香港教育研究所自一九九七年起已致力在香港推動全面的學校改進，獲優質教育基金撥款合逾一億三千多萬元。二零零零年的「香港躍進學校計劃」更是優質教育基金資助額最高的單項計劃；而二零零三年至二零零四年的「優質學校行動」及二零零四至二零零五年的「學生領袖發展計劃——創意批判、關愛承擔」均分別取得優質教育基金第六輪及第七輪撥款的最高上限。

九位中科院院士服務中大

大學上月四日委任孔祥復教授為醫學院轄下的公共衛生學院防疫研究中心的病毒學講座教授。孔教授於二零零零年九月赴任全國國家級研究所在新竹學術中心擔任教授，並在二零零七年被選為中國科學院院士。孔教授說：「中大是一個可以實踐科研想法的平台，我認為這是一個最好的地方。」

高行健先生捐贈展

大學圖書館上月十一至十五日舉行「二零零零年諾貝爾文學獎得主高行健先生捐贈展」，展出高先生捐贈本校圖書館的部分珍藏，包括手稿、畫作、照片、畫具、海報、藏書及個人物品。開幕典禮由副校長廖柏偉教授(中)、圖書館館長施達理博士(右)及翻譯系系主任方梓勳教授(左)主禮。

「諾貝爾文學獎」得主高行健先生於藝術、戲劇、小說、散文創作，乃至文學理論方面，均有卓越成就，蜚聲國際。瑞典文學院二零零零年頒發諾貝爾文學獎予高先生，並讚揚其《靈山》等代表作，具有「普世價值、刻骨銘心的洞察力和語言的豐富機智，為中文小說藝術和戲劇開闢了新的道路。」高先生與香港關係密切，並大力支持本校的文學藝術研究，多次應邀到校主持講座及研討會，並於本校出版的《二十一世紀》雙月刊發表文章；獲頒諾貝爾文學獎後不久，又應邀到中大以「文學的語言」為題作公開演講。二零零一年十一月，高先生更親臨中大領受榮譽文學博士學位，並為大學圖書館館藏他的著作簽名誌念。

大學圖書館正籌建高行健先生特藏，收集一切與高先生有關的資料供研究之用。