

General Education Newsletter

ISSUE 3 February 2016



Welcome to the third issue of General Education (GE) Newsletter.

In AY2015/2016, GE at HSMC is no longer under a single academic department but a college-wide Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The Common Core Curriculum Section under CTL is responsible for daily administration of GE such as the coordination of module offering among all academic departments. With the college-wide collaborated efforts, I believe that GE at HSMC can realise our unique “Liberal + Professional” education model.

In this issue, we would like to introduce the principles and structure of GE requirement at HSMC. In addition, we are happy to have Dr Wong Muk Yan (the recipient of 2014/2015 HSMC Teaching Excellence Awards) to share his views on General Education. Then, a short report of 1st Semester GE Salon and a list of tentative 2nd Semester GE salon are presented. Finally, a new module – GEN4001 Capstone Project is open for all eligible students in AY2016/2017. You can find out more relevant information in this issue.

If you have any further inquiry about the news and events of General Education at HSMC, please contact me (victorchan@hsmc.edu.hk) and Ms Phyllis Mak (phyllismak@hsmc.edu.hk).

Enjoy the third issue!

Dr Victor Chan
Associate Director,
Centre for Teaching and Learning (Common Core Curriculum)

Principles and structure of GE requirement

In an effort to achieve the objectives of HSMC's Mission, the Common Core Curriculum identifies two abilities that students at HSMC should acquire at the end of their four-year undergraduate studies:

- (a) **intellectual-analytical ability** from an inter-disciplinary perspective, which enables a student (1) to find out the inter-connectedness among different fields of knowledge and (2) to apply such analytical skills in their everyday life issues. The enhancement of the integrative and synthetic ability would be supplemented by providing a basic knowledge of humanities, social sciences and science and technology; and
- (b) **moral reasoning ability**, which enables a student to distinguish good from bad, right from wrong, ought from ought not, and why. This ability would facilitate students how to reason and judge morally, by assessing and weighing the reasons for and against various theories of ethical concepts.

Structure of the Common Core Curriculum

GEN1000
Perspectives on General Education = 3 credits



GE Cluster Electives X 6 modules = 18 credits

Cluster 1
Humanities

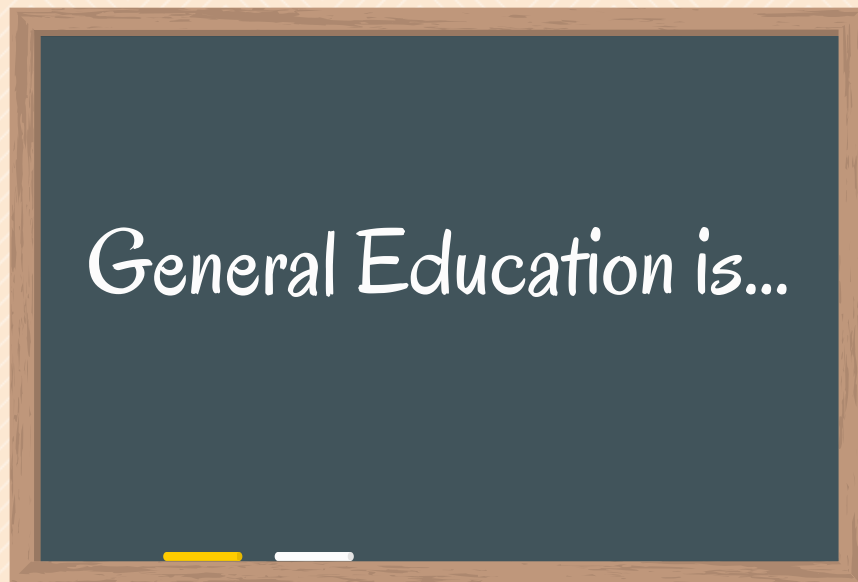
Cluster 2
Social Science

Cluster 3
Science, Medicine &
Technology

Cluster 4
Moral Reasoning

Students are required to take at least ONE module from each of the clusters.

We are pleased to have Dr. Wong Muk Yan (黃沐恩博士), one of the recipients of Teaching Excellence Awards 2015, to share his views on General Education.



Q1: In your opinion, what is the role of General Education in tertiary education?

The idea of General Education is derived from the Latin word "Studium generale", which means gathering all people to learn. University education is an elite education, General Education is a complement to university education.

In Chinese, General Education is translated as "通識" people sometimes play a joke that it means "通通都識", but a more appropriate interpretation should be "貫通的知識". General Education emphasizes the holistic nature of knowledge, which means that all kinds of knowledge are actually connected together. Here is an example. Setting up a tutorial school is an Economics decision. However, you also need to know a bit about Psychology – to understand the needs of students and parents. It may be even better to have the sense of art and design so that the furniture can be nicely arranged in the classroom; otherwise the economic decision is bound to fail.

So how can we learn outside our expertise? Communicate with experts of different fields and exchange ideas are the key. Through discussion, you will learn how to deal with people of different mindsets. Therefore, one of the more important missions of General Education is to cultivate students' attitude to appreciate different point of views as well as the ability to criticize.

Q2: Can you share with us any special pedagogy for General Education?

As I said, General Education is to cultivate students' attitude. I usually give students real examples to encourage them to think. When I teach the course of emotion, I pour some lemon tea into a brand new plastic bedpan and ask them to drink. Of course nobody dares to drink even though they know that it is clean! This example arouses students' curiosity and motivates them to think deeply about the emotion of disgust.

**Q3: What is your expectation from students? What outcome do you expect?**

I hope students can actively participated in class such as answering questions and discussing with classmates. I like to ask them to describe their personal experience from different point of views.

I think that it is not realistic to expect students to remember a lot of theories after only 14-week lessons. As long as students can develop the attitude to appreciate and criticize diverse opinions, it is good enough. Sometimes the knowledge they learned will bring impacts on their lives later in an unexpected way.

Q4: If a new GE module will be introduced in the future, what is your suggestion?

Perhaps "Movie and Philosophy". Have you watched Matrix? This movie brings out a possibility that, there may be some computers controlling you. You feel hungry only because a computer makes you feel so. So are your lives "real"? This kind of movies stimulates students to think about the meaning of life.

Dr. Wong Muk Yan, Assistant Professor of Department of Social Science.

He is one of the recipients of HSMC Teaching Excellence Awards 2015.

Dr. Wong received his BA and MPhil (Philosophy) from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and his PhD (Philosophy) from the University of Cincinnati in USA.

His major research areas include Philosophy of Emotion, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Science, and Philosophy of Evolutionary Biology. He is also interested in teaching students the art of scientific reasoning. During leisure time, he enjoys playing violin, badminton, and basketball, as well as having fun with his cats.

Event Highlights

1st GE Salon

**Speaker: Mr. Mark SUTCLIFFE,
CEO of the Hong Kong Football
Association (HKFA)**

On 3 Nov 2015, Mr. Sutcliffe delivered a speech on “The Transformation of Football in Hong Kong”. He shared his experience of managing the HKFA and the difficulties encountered when implementing the “Project Phoenix”. Students and the speaker also exchanged opinions on the football industry in Hong Kong. The seminar was well-received.



2nd GE Salon

**Speaker: Ms. Alison SIU,
Registered Nurse (HK) and
Nutritionist (UK)**

On 23 Nov 2015, Ms. Siu introduced students the ideas of being “healthy” and examples of illness caused by imbalanced diet. She also shared tips on healthy diet and pointed out incorrect diet methods which may cause harm to body. Different keep-fit exercises and seasonal food were also introduced. The talk was casual yet informative.



New Elective in 2016/17 - GEN4001 Capstone Project

What is a Capstone project?

A Capstone project is intended to be an intensive, active learning project, in which students pursue independent research on question or problem of their own choices. It requires students to apply integrated knowledge across subjects.

Learning outcomes

- identify the characteristics and methodologies of inter-disciplinary research;
- conduct an independent study on a selected political, educational, economic, social and cultural issue;
- integrate the knowledge acquired from undergraduate studies to examine real world situations;
- communicate and present ideas and results of the work with clarity and precision

Characteristics of GEN4001

This elective module is designed for **Year 3 or Year 4 students** to integrate general education experience with their major study, by conducting an **inter-disciplinary small group research**. It is designed to gather **2 to 4 students from different disciplines** to complete a guided research project that demonstrates the attainment of the cognitive goals of the GE core program, mastery of the skills developed throughout the undergraduate studies, and the knowledge/skills acquired through study of a major.

Eligible students*

To be eligible to apply for the module, students must:

- have completed at least 15 credits of GE modules; and
- attain a Cumulative GPA 3.3 or above

*Special exemption will be granted on case-by-case basis.

	Assessment Methods	Weighting
1.	Individual progress report	20%
2.	Group proposal	20%
3.	Oral presentation	10%
4.	Individual written report	50%
		100%

Tentative Schedule

Semester 1, 2016/17	
Mid-April 2016	Information Session
May – June 2016	Application period
Late July 2016	1. Pre-module registration briefing 2. Grouping
Early August 2016	Consultation with potential supervisor
Early – mid August 2016	Preliminary approval by potential supervisor
Mid-August 2016	Module registration
September 2016	Beginning of module
Early December 2016	Submission of report

Semester 2, 2016/17	
Early September 2016	Information Session
September – mid October 2016	Application period
Late October 2016	1. Pre-module registration briefing 2. Grouping
Early November 2016	Consultation with potential supervisor
Mid-November 2016	Preliminary approval by potential supervisor
Early January 2017	Module registration
Mid-January 2017	Beginning of module
Late April 2017	Submission of report

Upcoming Events



Save the date for our events!

3rd GE Salon
Date: 2 March (Wed)
Time: 4:30 pm
Venue: N102
Title: Life & Death

4th GE Salon
Date: 8 March (Tue)
Time: 1:30 pm
Venue: M1003
Speaker: Ms. Candance Chong
(莊梅岩女士)
Title: 戲劇創作有市場?

March 2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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