

General Education Newsletter

May 2017 ISSUE 4

Welcome Message

Thank you for your time to read the annual newsletter of GE.

The highlight of Issue 4 is the featured interview with our Council Chairman Dr. Moses Cheng. He shares his vision of liberal arts education at HSMC. More importantly, he explains the value of liberal arts education across various professions in our contemporary society. He highly recommends that students should be fully equipped with general education in their undergraduate studies to meet future challenges.

In addition, I would like to congratulate Dr. Michael Chan from Department of Social Science to receive the 2015-2016 Teaching Excellence Award. He has been teaching GE modules since 2010 in our college. He is one of the popular GE teaching faculty members. As an expert in geography, he is going to share his view on GE teaching with us.

Similar to the last academic year, our Section and Department of Social Science co-organised four GE Salons in 2016-2017. Altogether, they attracted more than 400 students to attend. In the next academic year, we aim to work with other academic departments to co-host GE salons or seminars.

Last but not least, there is an on-going GE module review exercise in this summer. A Task Force under Common Core Curriculum Committee composing representatives of five Schools was set up to examine whether the existing GE modules are aligned with the newly revised GE intended learning outcomes. It is not a easy task but the process is so important because HSMC strives to provide quality GE curriculum to every student.

Enjoy reading!

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

News

A Task Force of Review for GE Cluster Modules, led by Dr. Victor Chan, was set up in February 2017.

Composition and Membership

- Dr. Victor Chan (CTL)
- Dr. C.K. Chan (SCOM)
- Dr. Shelby Chan (STRA)
- Dr. S.K. Choy (SDSC)
- Dr. Paul Fung (SHSS)
- Dr. Anselm Lam (SSC)
- Dr. Rebecca Luo (SBUS)
- Dr. M.Y. Wong (SSC)

Terms of Reference

- (1) To review the nature of GE cluster modules (interdisciplinary and/or issue based)
- (2) To examine and modify the Intended Learning Outcomes of clusters and cluster descriptions
- (3) To discuss ways to incorporate elements of common learning into GE modules
- (4) To advise on the second stage of review process on module level

Table of Content

- Featured Interview - Dr. Moses Cheng P. 2 - 3
- Sharing by Recipient of Teaching Excellence Award P. 4
- Events highlights - GE seminar & GE Salon 2016-17 P. 5 - 7

Contact Us

Editor: Dr. Victor Chan
Executive Assistant: Ms. Phyllis Mak

Centre for Teaching and Learning

✉ ctl@hsmc.edu.hk

☎ 3963-5572

Liberal Arts Education at HSMC

★ Dr. Chan: What is meant by liberal arts education in undergraduate curriculum at HSMC?

Dr. Cheng: Liberal arts education is the continuation of whole-person development, a development of the language skills and soft skills, knowledge of different subjects, and finally to help with character building and develop a sense of life values to face the world. I think this is what I understand as liberal arts education.

In HSMC, what we are trying to do is to blend in the element of the liberal arts education into our curriculum. That is why we say it is “liberal + professional”. I think that is more suitable for the world today. We should get students ready to learn by themselves so that they can carry out life-long learning to develop skills and knowledge to cope with changing world.

Dr. Chan: Some students and teachers may think that liberal arts components in the curriculum are irrelevant to their professions. How do you response to these comments?

Dr. Cheng: In the old days, teaching is to teach knowledge. You must have heard of the “theory of ink bottle”. Students are like ink bottles, teachers add the ink drop by drop. When students graduate, their ink bottle is full and they can face the world. To speak of the people who are not well-learned, in Chinese, we put it as「胸無點墨」. This is a traditional philosophy of teaching.



Dr. Moses Cheng,
Council Chairman of HSMC

Dr. Cheng: But nowadays, as I said, technology and the world are changing so quickly. It is impossible to learn everything since there is overloading information from the Internet. Irrespective of the profession, Students should be equipped with skills, such as where to find the knowledge from the Internet, what the knowledge is and whether the knowledge is supported by evidence, and apply knowledge to the problem in front of you. What’s more, to communicate your thinking process effectively. These are the soft skills that can be taught in the GE programme. For example, you learn about History and its impact on the society. But eventually how to apply those facts to your current day situation is more important.

Dr. Chan: In other words, GE is not simply about learning more facts, but to learn how to learn and to develop framework so that it can be applied to solve future problems.

Featured Interview

Dr. Chan: As an employer, how would you value student differently if s/he has received the liberal arts education?

Dr. Cheng: These days, it is important to have common sense and broad perspective of knowledge, to communicate properly, to have problem-solving skills, and most importantly, proper work attitude. The education programme should equip students with all these qualities. Actually you can tell easily whether the student is knowledge-specific graduate or a liberal arts graduate.

Dr. Chan: You have mentioned about attitude. Do you think we can teach attitude?

Dr. Cheng: No, you cannot teach attitude. The GE programme would enable students to learn and develop their attitudes. For example, learning business ethics would enable students to develop the proper attitude of doing business.

Dr. Chan: Actually we do require students to choose one module from the cluster “Moral reasoning”.

Dr. Cheng: I think this is very important. It is important for students to have a set of life values and ethical standard. For example if you want to be a lawyer, the ethical standard of lawyers must be learned. If want the student to be a good lawyer just learning the law well without ethics would never be sufficient. That would be dangerous. If they have learnt and practiced proper ethical standard they would behave properly and be successful.

Dr. Chan: What specific areas of liberal arts education should HSMC develop more given that Hong Kong is being undergone unstoppable transformation?

Dr. Cheng: Firstly, understanding modern Chinese history is important. Young people should learn about the fundamental traditional Chinese thinking, and how to apply these values to modern daily life is another important area. Young people nowadays do not pay attention to life values such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, respect, punctuality. They should be guided properly to practice these values in their daily lives.

Another aspect is how to present themselves well with interpersonal skills and how to behave on different social occasions. Finally, they should develop social responsibility to build up Hong Kong, and the responsibility to the community, to the country, ultimately being a global citizen is equally important.

Dr. Chan: Thank you Dr Cheng for your time and valuable comments!



General Education is...

Dr. Michael Chan, one of the recipients of the Teaching Excellence Award 2015-2016, is happy to share his views on General Education.



Assistant Professor
Department of Social Science

What do you think is the role of General Education in tertiary education?

General Education is essential in University Education as it broadens students' understanding of knowledge beyond their major studies, as well as training up their learning and interactive skills. As to serve this purpose, HSMC has adopted the current 21-credit GE curriculum, which require students to take GEN1000 "Perspectives on General Education", and select at least one module from the four clusters (Humanities, Social Science, Science & Technology and Moral Reasoning) for broadening their knowledge base.

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

I always tell my students I don't expect a model answer in my lecture. Learning in General Education should be open-minded. For example, in GEN1000 module, one of the tasks in the tutorial is to let students go to the court and study a real court case. After their observation, students are required to comment on the judgement. They can either agree or disagree with the judges. Students found it really interesting because it can stimulate their thinking on moral reasoning, rather than just listening to a boring lecture in the classroom.

What is your expectation from students? What outcomes do you expect?

To be frank, the very first expectation for my students is: Please don't be too examination-minded! I know a good GPA is essential, but learning and enjoying the lectures are definitely more important. As I teach Cultural Tourism, I am so glad that, students can become a Cultural Tourist, planning a good Graduation Trip and going to the place with in-depth experience after taking my course.

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

As a geographer, if I have that opportunity, I would like to write a new module on Hong Kong Ecology, Geology, Country parks and Eco-tourism! Also, I am a big fan of Hong Kong history, a module on "War and Peace" in Hong Kong would also be very interesting.

The Idea of Liberal Education

Date: 29 April 2016

Speaker: Prof. Cheung Chan Fai



Prof. C.F. Cheung was appointed as the Professional Consultant of the Common Core Curriculum from Feb 2016 to Jun 2016



Faculty attended the seminar and discussed the rationale of General Education of HSMC.

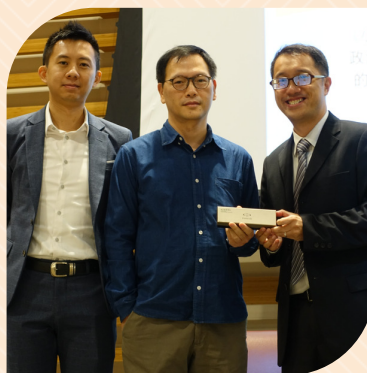


Senior Management and faculty with Prof. Cheung

GE Salon 2016-17

3 Nov 2016
「小王子的哲學之路」

Guest Speaker:
Prof. CHOW Po Chung,
Department of Government and
Public Administration, CUHK



GEN1000

Perspectives on General Education



Over 200 First-year students listened attentively.

9 Nov 2016
「戀屍癖：為什麼人人要看
《屍殺列車》？」

Guest Speaker:
Mr. Pierre LAM,
Film Critic



GEN1015

Film and Society



Many film lovers joined the talk.

GE Salon 2016-17

2 Mar 2017

「心·境」

Guest Speaker:

Dr. SIK Fa Ren,

Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU



Students learned how to resist daily pressure from the perspective of Buddhism.

GEN2023

Religions and Human Spiritual
Quests in the Contemporary World

13 Apr 2017

「裏千家茶道體驗」

Guest Speaker:

Ms LEUNG Pui Ling,

日本裏千家茶道準教授



Students made Japanese tea by themselves.



Students were fascinated by the demonstration of Japanese Tea Ceremony.



Group photo of all demonstrators and participants

GEN1003

East Asia Cultures –
Comparison of
Japanese and Korean
Cultures