

Academic @ Affairs

N E W S L E T T E R

Word of Thanks from VP-AA

As I wrap up my tenure at HKUST and begin to bid farewell to so many of you, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and hard work that have helped make my time here so fruitful and satisfying.

When I arrived in 1993, HKUST was just promise and potential - and a cluster of new buildings. Today, all that promise has been made real, and the reason is what has gone into, and inside, those walls: a world-class faculty, a lively student body, and a great deal of dedication, inspiration, and not a little perspiration. Together you have made our university's first nine years a success beyond what any of us dreamed.

Looking back, my greatest satisfaction has been to take part in HKUST's growth from earliest infancy to what is now robust young adulthood. In its vitality and high spirits, HKUST is a fitting embodiment of energy and rapid change that distinguishes Hong Kong itself. All our academic departments and research programs are on their way to making our university a leading educational institution of international stature.

At present, we have just completed our academic review and made plans for the next stage. Building a university is a never-ending task, one that requires continuous planning and consideration. I trust that all of you will continue to bring successes in the future.

As we grow in strength and maturity, it is all the more important to keep in mind our mission. Teaching is the first priority for any university, but HKUST must distinguish itself in research. Knowledge-based research provides intellectual stimulation, sets high standard for R&D work, and brings the best long-term returns. Through knowledge-based research, we will contribute to Hong Kong's industrial and technological development, sustaining in the long run the healthy future of both Hong Kong and ourselves.

To be satisfied in work, a person needs a challenging job. To be happy in life, one needs stimulating and caring colleagues and friends. I have been generously blessed with both in my years at HKUST.

Leroy L Chang

PDF Matching Fund

The HKUST Postdoctoral Fellowship (PDF) Matching Fund has been set up to provide incremental support for post-doctoral fellows, particularly in individual-type research projects that face difficulties in getting external funding other than the RGC awards.

Proposals will be considered based on the quality of project, and the research accomplishments and resources available to the PI. Projects which demonstrate that the award of PDF would help reaching a higher goal or productivity level are also accorded a higher priority.

Funding for the second year had been approved by CORI and a call for proposals is expected in November.

	Jan 00 call	Jul 00 call
Application no.	66	38
Awards made	26	24
Award amount	Half of the Postdoc's salary, up to \$15,000/month	
Award period	1 year, extendable to 2 years	

Knowledge Transfer & Academic Review

To recognize faculty's contribution in knowledge transfer, the Senate at its June 2000 meeting approved the principles and implementation mechanism for incorporation of excellence in knowledge transfer into promotion and substantiation criteria.

The University wants to encourage faculty to undertake significant knowledge transfer activities on top of delivering excellent performance in teaching and research. However, those who choose not to engage in knowledge transfer activities will not be disadvantaged.

We do value your suggestions & comments

Contact Betty Law of VPAAO

Tel: 2358 6132

Email: aabetty

First 4-year UG program

This long-awaited program, BSc in Mathematics (Mathematics and IT Education), will be introduced in 2001-02. It is our first four-year undergraduate program; it is also the first to be offered jointly with another local tertiary institution - the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd). Students are required to complete 139 credits for graduation (97 at HKUST and 42 at HKIEd). The planned annual intake is 40.

A New BBA Program in 2001-02

BBA in Global Business will offer special challenges and opportunities to 25 outstanding and highly motivated students each year. Embedded in the curriculum is an enrichment program in which students will have a chance to participate in overseas exchanges, internship, business mentoring program, case method training and Toastmasters International. It is also designed in such a way that students can have a second major even in demanding disciplines like Accounting and Information Systems.

Dismissal - Can it be Real?

Some of you may not be aware that the University has an Academic Progress Review Panel (APRP) which was established in 1995-96 to consider whether or not to dismiss from the University undergraduate students whose academic performance is very unsatisfactory. This Panel is chaired by the Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs in charge of undergraduate studies, and comprises the dean of the four schools (or designee) as members.

At the APRP meeting in July, 10 cases were reviewed. Eight of them were dismissed either due to their failing in core/required course(s) twice or more, and/or their SGA being below C- for 3 consecutive semesters or more; or due to their failing in all courses enrolled in the last two consecutive semesters. This is the first time that students are dismissed due to continuously poor SGA performance.

To develop an all-round education, students are encouraged to explore and try new things. However, they should bear in mind that it is equally important to maintain good academic standing (i.e. to obtain an SGA of C- or above) in each semester of study. Faculty should help remind students that the hearsay "UST will not dismiss students" is not true.

Students will be subject to academic dismissal

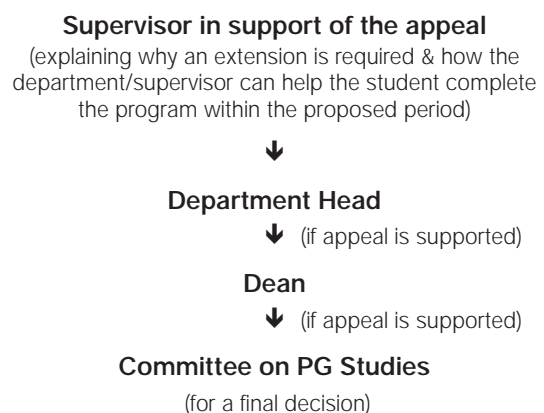
- if they fail to lift their probation after having been on probation for two consecutive semesters; or
- if they fail, in two consecutive semesters, to obtain a single passing grade in all of the courses registered in those two semesters.

Max Time for RPg Degree Completion

In the visit of the UGC's Postgraduate Education Sub-group made in 1998, the University learned that it had one of the highest number of research postgraduate students (RPgs) studying beyond the normative period of study among local institutions.

To improve the situation, different measures to ensure closer monitoring of the progress of RPgs have been introduced. In this connection, the Senate endorsed a set of guidelines in June 2000 to take effect from Fall, 2000-01.

Review of appeals for studying beyond the maximum time allowed for degree completion will involve the following:



Lists of students reaching their maximum length of study to be compiled for action:

To help relevant Schools and Departments/Divisions take appropriate action, ARRO will compile the following student lists on an annual basis:

- RPgs who have failed to submit their research postgraduate annual progress reports before the deadline set
- PhD students without a master's degree progressing to the 6th year of study
- PhD students with a master's degree progressing to the 5th year of study
- MPhil students progressing to the 4th year of study

PGS remains at \$15,500 per month

PG Studentship (PGS) is a general term that covers studentship awards supported by centrally allocated TA funding or research grants of faculty. The terms and conditions of PGS can be obtained from departmental offices or ARRO.

Despite an overall downward adjustment of PGS rates among sister institutions, our rate for the 2000-01 academic year will remain unchanged at \$15,500 per month.

Course Evaluations on the Web

In response to a number of concerns about the reliability of course evaluation scores for small classes or low response rates, the posted scores for Spring 2000 include only those classes that meet a threshold requirement with respect to these factors. Generally, classes smaller than 9 are not included, and the minimum response rate for larger classes is inversely proportional to the square root of the enrolment, with 30% required for a class of 100. This practice will be discussed with the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality to determine whether it should be continued. If not, the full set of scores for Spring 2000 will be restored. The course evaluation homepage is at <http://www.ust.hk/~webaa/courseval>.

Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS) & Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS)

CPS and CUS advise and make recommendation to the Senate on policies and regulations matters concerning academic studies. In addition, they monitor and review procedures, quality and performance relating to academic programs. Their terms of reference can be found on pages 524-5 and 533 of the 2000-01 Academic Calendar.

Please contact the respective Committee members of your School if you have suggestions or inquiries in regard to the PG or UG studies. Mr Vincent Cheung of the PG Secretariat (ext 6129, email: aackc) and Mrs Yvonne Leung of the UG Secretariat (ext 6135, email: aayvonne) may also be able to help.

CPS membership as of 1 September 2000

Chairman:

Prof Tongxi YU (*Associate Dean of Engineering*)

Member and Secretary, *ex-officio*:

Prof Nelson CUE (*AVP-AA(PG)*)

Members:

SCIE	Prof Nancy Y IP (<i>Associate Dean</i>) Dr Karl W K TSIM (<i>BIOL</i>)
ENGG	Prof Chin-Tau LEA (<i>ELEC</i>) Dr Helen C M SHEN (<i>COMP</i>)
SB&M	Dr Steven J DeKREY (<i>Associate Dean</i>) Prof Kalok CHAN (<i>FINA</i>)
H&SS	Dr Leonard K K CHAN (<i>HUMA</i>) Dr Gaochao HE (<i>SOSC</i>)
DARR, <i>ex-officio</i>	Mr Robert BRASHEAR
PG student/SCIE	Miss Cangel Pui-Yee CHAN
PG student/ENGG	Mr Leonard Kin-Man POON
PG student/SB&M	Mr Roy Chee-Hang CHAN
PG student/H&SS	vacant

CUS membership as of 1 September 2000

Chairman:

Dr Yundong WU (*CHEM*)

Member and Secretary, *ex-officio*:

Prof Peter N DOBSON (*AVP-AA(UG)*)

Members:

SCIE	Prof Shiu-Yuen CHENG (<i>Associate Dean</i>) Dr Yifan HAN (<i>BICH</i>)
ENGG	Dr Ting-Chuen PONG (<i>Associate Dean</i>) Dr Mordecai J GOLIN (<i>COMP</i>)
SB&M	Prof Kar-Yan TAM (<i>Associate Dean</i>) Dr Wilson Tong (<i>FINA</i>)
H&SS	Dr David P LAWRENCE (<i>HUMA</i>)
DARR, <i>ex-officio</i>	Mr Robert BRASHEAR
UG student/SCIE	Mr LAU Hon Sum, Ray
UG student/ENGG	Mr Tango Wing-Kin WONG
UG student/SB&M	Mr Simon AU YEUNG Kin-Nam
LANG, <i>co-opted</i>	Prof Gregory C A JAMES

OCPE Homepage

<http://www.ust.hk/ocpe>

The Office of Continuing and Professional Education (OCPE) will co-ordinate and oversee the efforts of schools and units of the University in the provision of continuing and professional education (CPE) programs, aiming to help citizens in Hong Kong and South China with their lifelong learning needs and to cope with the increasing demand they face in their workplace.

The OCPE homepage was created to provide a central point for users to access information on CPE programs offered by different schools and units. The number of visitors to the Website has been at an average of 100+ a day since its inception in early July.

To link up your new CPE program information with the OCPE homepage, please email ocpe@ust.hk. We would also welcome suggestions on how the Website can be improved to better serve its readers.

2001-02 研究生課程及入學資料簡介

A booklet entitled '2001-02 研究生課程及入學資料簡介' has been released in early August to provide abridged, handy information in Chinese on the PG programs offered by the University. It is published annually in summer to tie in with the new recruitment cycle of PG students.

The next issue of the AA Newsletter
will be in print in January.

Academic Personnel News

Administrative appointments

Prof Leroy L Chang is on sick leave and Prof Shain-Dow Kung has been appointed Acting VP-AA effective 15 August 2000.

School of Science

Prof Nancy Y IP has been appointed Head of Biochemistry from 1 July 2000.

Prof H Benjamin PENG assumed duty as Head of Biology and Professor of Biology in mid September 2000.

School of Engineering

Prof Kang L WANG will take up Deanship of the School of Engineering starting early October. He is also appointed Professor of Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

Prof Philip C CHAN has been reappointed Head of Electrical and Electronic Engineering from 1 July 2000.

School of Business and Management

Prof Ka-keung C CHAN has been reappointed Head of Finance from 1 July 2000.

Prof Gerald Joseph GORN was appointed Acting Head of Marketing from 1 July 2000.

Prof Jiing-Lih Larry FARH has been appointed Head of Management of Organizations from 1 July 2000.

School of Humanities and Social Science

Prof Samuel Hung-nin CHEUNG has been reappointed Head of the Division of Humanities from 1 July 2000.

SPECIAL THANKS to the following administrators:

Prof Jerry WANG, former Head of Biochemistry, who retreated as Professor of Biochemistry.

Prof Dennis HSIEH, former Head of Biology, who retreated as Professor of Biology.

Prof Donald CHANG, who served as the Acting Head of Biology before the arrival of the new Head.

Prof Ping KO, former Dean of Engineering, who retreated as Professor of Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

Prof Tongxi YU, Acting Dean of Engineering from 1 July to early October 2000.

Prof Wilfried VANHONACKER, former Head of Marketing, who retreated as Professor of Marketing.

Prof Anne TSUI, former Head of Management of Organizations, who retreated as Professor of Management of Organizations.

Faculty members on board

between 2 January and 1 July 2000

School of Science

Dr Ning WANG, Assistant Professor, PHYS
PhD University of Science and Technology of China

School of Engineering

Dr Chi-Keung TANG, Assistant Professor, COMP
PhD University of Southern California

Dr Wai Ho MOW, Assistant Professor, ELEC
PhD Chinese University of Hong Kong

Dr Chung-Lun LI, Associate Professor, IEEM
EngScD Columbia University

School of Business and Management

Dr Jong-Hag CHOI, Assistant Professor, ACCT
PhD University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dr Sudipto DASGUPTA, Associate Professor, FINA
PhD University of Southern California

Visiting faculty members on board

between 2 January and 1 July 2000

(Appointments for 2 months or more are listed.)

School of Science

Prof Yongzheng HUI, Visiting Professor, BICH
The Ministry of Science and Technology, Beijing

Dr John BOUKOUVALAS, Visiting Associate Professor, CHEM
Laval University

Prof Fanghua LIN, Visiting Professor, MATH
New York University

Prof Xuechu (Shuechu) SHEN, Visiting Professor, PHYS
Shanghai Institute of Technical Physics

Prof Ruibao TAO, Visiting Professor, PHYS
Fudan University

Prof Gang XIAO, Visiting Professor, PHYS
Brown University

School of Engineering

Dr Sammy Lap Ip CHAN, Visiting Associate Professor, CENG
Taiwan University

Dr Douglas B RIGBY, Visiting Assistant Professor, CIVL
HKUST

Prof Huey-Liang HWANG, Visiting Professor, ELEC
Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu

Prof Jian-Quan YAO, Visiting Professor, ELEC
Tianjin University

Dr Jie CHEN, Visiting Associate Professor, ELEC
University of California, Riverside

Dr Wai Tung NG, Visiting Associate Professor, ELEC
University of Toronto

Prof Kailash C KAPUR, Visiting Professor, IEEM
University of Washington

School of Business and Management

Prof William S WALLER, Visiting Professor, ACCT
University of Arizona
HKUST (Visiting Scholar)

Dr De-piao TANG, Visiting Assistant Professor, ECON
HKUST

Appointment of Professor Emeritus

Prof Ming L LIOU, formerly Professor of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, has been conferred the title of Professor Emeritus upon his retirement from the University on 1 July 2000.



VP-AA presenting a souvenir plaque to Prof Ming Liou on 15 May 2000 with Prof Philip Chan, DH/ELEC and Dr Ting-Chuen Pong, Asso D/ENGG joining the occasion.

Adjunct faculty appointed/reappointed

between 2 January and 1 July 2000

School of Science

Prof Yitao WANG, Adjunct Professor, BICH
China Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Dr Alexis Kai-Hon LAU, Adjunct Associate Professor, MATH
HKUST

School of Engineering

Dr Heung-Yeung SHUM, Adjunct Associate Professor, COMP
Microsoft Research China

Dr Sze-Fong Mark YAU, Adjunct Associate Professor, ELEC
Integrated Display Technology Limited, HK

Prof C P WONG, Adjunct Professor, MECH
Georgia Institute of Technology

School of Business and Management

Prof Cheng HSIAO, Adjunct Professor, ECON
University of Southern California

Dr Laurence C FRANKLIN, Adjunct Associate Professor, FINA
AIA Capital Corporation Limited, Hong Kong

Dr Hilton K H CHAN, Adjunct Assistant Professor, ISMT
Hong Kong Police Force, HKSAR Government

Mr Peter CLARKE, Adjunct Professor, MGTO
Merrill Lynch International Incorporated

School of Humanities and Social Science

Prof Leo Ou-Fan LEE, Adjunct Professor, HUMA
Harvard University

Substantiations and promotions

Faculty members substantiated and promoted to the indicated ranks effective from 1 July 2000:

School of Science

Dr Hong XUE, Associate Professor(B), BICH

Dr Guang ZHU, Associate Professor(B), BICH

Dr Yong XIE, Associate Professor(B), BIOL

Dr Paul R CARLIER, Associate Professor(B), CHEM

Dr Ben Z TANG, Associate Professor(B), CHEM

Dr Min YAN, Associate Professor(B), MATH

Dr Jiannong WANG, Associate Professor(B), PHYS

Dr Kam Sing WONG, Associate Professor(B), PHYS

School of Engineering

Dr Furong GAO, Associate Professor(B), CENG

Dr Lambros KATAFYGIOTIS, Associate Professor(B), CIVL

Dr Christopher K Y LEUNG, Associate Professor(A), CIVL

Dr Jun GU, Professor, COMP

Dr Roger S CHENG, Associate Professor(B), ELEC

Dr Ho-Chi HUANG, Associate Professor(B), ELEC

Dr Chi-ying TSUI, Associate Professor(B), ELEC

Dr Bing ZENG, Associate Professor(B), ELEC

Dr Ravindra S GOONETILLEKE, Associate Professor(B), IEEM

Dr Lilong CAI, Associate Professor(B), MECH

Dr Steve Hon-Keung LEE, Associate Professor(B), MECH

Dr Qing-Ping SUN, Associate Professor(B), MECH

Dr Yitshak ZOHAR, Associate Professor(B), MECH

School of Business and Management

Dr Chul W PARK, Associate Professor(B), ACCT

Dr Kalok CHAN, Professor, FINA

Dr Theodore H CLARK, Associate Professor(B), ISMT

Dr Shaohui ZHENG, Associate Professor(B), ISMT

School of Humanities and Social Science

Dr Ying Yi HONG, Associate Professor (B), SOSC

Dr James Kai Sing KUNG, Associate Professor(B), SOSC

Dr Barry SAUTMAN, Associate Professor(B), SOSC

Promotions

Faculty members promoted to the indicated rank effective from 1 July 2000:

School of Science

Dr Pei-Yuan QIAN, Associate Professor(A), BIOL

School of Engineering

Dr Ishfaq AHMAD, Associate Professor(A), COMP

Dr Mounir HAMDJ, Associate Professor(A), COMP

Dr Dik Lun LEE, Professor, COMP

School of Business and Management

Dr Inchi HU, Professor, ISMT

Dr Jeongwen CHIANG, Professor, MARK

Substantiations

Faculty members granted substantiation between 1 January and 30 June 2000:

School of Engineering

Dr Neville Ka Shek LEE, Associate Professor(A), IEEM

School of Humanities and Social Science

Prof Samuel Hung-nin CHEUNG, Professor, HUMA

Dr Erik BAARK, Associate Professor(A), SOSC

Substantiation and promotion review Fall 2000 timetable

Date(*)	Event
Jul 2000	Notice to faculty of the Fall review timetable.
1 Oct 2000	Deadline for receiving applications
1 Mar 2001	Completion of review at the Department level.
1 Apr 2001	Completion of review at the School level.
1 May 2001	Completion of review at the University level.
1 Jun 2001	Recommendation/decision by VP-AA or the President as appropriate.
Jun 2001	Submission to the Standing Committee of Council for approval on professorial substantiation cases.
Around end of Jun 2001	Inform faculty outcomes of the review.
1 Jul 2001	Effective date of substantiation and/or promotion, as appropriate, if approved.

* *The date scheduled above is an indication of the expected time that the corresponding event will complete. Slight variations may occur but the whole process for a Fall review shall be completed around the end of June each year.*

Faculty members are advised to consult their Department Head or Dean to check their eligibility and to consider if they wish to apply for substantiation and/or promotion. Application, together with the relevant documents, shall be sent to the Department Head who will initiate the review according to the University guidelines. Please refer to Chapter 4.4 of the Faculty Handbook for details of the substantiation policy and guidelines.

APRU Fellows Program 2000 at U of Washington, Seattle & Chulalongkorn U, Bangkok

I was lucky to be selected as the UST representative to join the other 23 fellows from 23 universities in 13 countries/regions to attend the two-week APRU Fellows Program in August. The theme of the Program was **“Environment and Development: Scientific, Social and Technological Challenges for the Pacific Rim.”**

The group traveled along the Cascade loop in Washington and the coastline of Phetchaburi province in Thailand, a chance to enjoy the beauty of these pristine environments in between the intensive and serious discussion sessions. It was particularly fascinating to us as environmental workers to explore and witness the environmental conflicts hidden behind such scenic spots. We were also impressed by the efforts that the University departments and the governments of both hosting countries made to this program and to understanding local environmental issues.

Let me share my experience by highlighting how I have benefited from this program:

Friendships among dedicated environmental personnel: Through close contact, the 24 fellows who all have common interests but diverse backgrounds became more than acquainted. Friendships developed will certainly lead to long-term collaborations that will in turn contribute to a better environment for us all.

Better appreciation of the complexity of environmental issues: The fellows gained first-hand knowledge of environmental conflicts through in-depth on site discussions. This wonderful learning platform enabled us to better appreciate the complexity of environmental issues, legislative actions and problems associated with participatory approaches. We also debated the roles of science in environmental decision-making.

Exchange of perspectives: The sharing of different perspectives among us - 8 scientists, 10 engineers, 2

lawyers, and 4 political scientists - was inspiring. The exchange of views on various environmental issues, and ideas for future collaboration not only enriched the fellows' personal knowledge but also bridged the gaps between us to pave the way for future collaborations among individuals, and perhaps participating APRU universities, or even the countries/regions involved.

The discussions with policy-making bodies enabled us to gain a better understanding of the role of various parties in resolving environmental conflicts. We came to realize that an **‘environmental scientist’ ought to become an ‘environmental manager.’**

Potential international collaboration: We are fully aware that collaborations that cross disciplines and geographic areas would not be without difficulties. Challenging as it is, some concrete ideas have emerged. They include:

- Creating a 2000 APRU Fellows website to disseminate updated information on environmental research/programs/activities in APRU universities;
- Writing a review paper on water quality issues in Pacific-Rim countries;
- Writing a paper on the case study approach;
- Developing a virtual course (web-based) on case studies of pressing environmental issues for APRU universities, and
- Offering multi-institutional summer courses to enhance student and faculty exchanges.

I am proud to say that HKUST has emerged as one of the leading research universities in the APRU community. I sincerely hope that I will also be proud of HKUST's commitment to environmental education and research programs. For a cleaner environment and for a better future for this generation and the generations to come, we must work together to improve our environmental education program, to raise public awareness about environmental protection, and to help our government to strive for sustainable development.

Qian Pei-Yuan/Biology

What does APRU stand for? APRU is the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, an international alliance of 34 leading research universities in nations bordering the Pacific Ocean. These universities are:

- Australian National U
- U of Sydney
- U of British Columbia
- U of Chile
- Fudan U
- Peking U
- Tsinghua U
- USTC
- HKUST
- Taiwan U
- U of Indonesia
- Kyoto U
- Osaka U
- U of Tokyo
- Waseda U
- Seoul National U
- U of Malaya
- National Autonomous U of Mexico
- U of Auckland
- U of Philippines
- Far Eastern State U
- National U of Singapore
- Chulalongkorn U
- California Institute of Technology
- Stanford U
- UC, Berkeley
- UC, Davis
- UC, Irvine
- UCLA
- UC, San Diego
- UC, Santa Barbara
- U of Oregon
- U of Southern California
- U of Washington

First peer-organized TA Orientation

- fun and informative!

Some 230 new Teaching Assistants (TAs) participated in the orientation program organized by their experienced peers for the first time on 28 August.

The event, jointly organized by the TA Coordinators' Committee (TACC) and the Center for Enhanced Learning and Teaching (CELT) was the brainchild of the 99-00 TACC, under the leadership of Michael Wong (TA Coordinator/Mathematics), with strong support from all the TA Coordinators.

"This time, we set a new tone of creating an energetic, friendly and welcoming atmosphere right from the start." said Michael.



The messages were informative and serious, but the event was enjoyable. How? For example, cartoons were used to introduce the 'old and new' TA Coordinators so that everyone in the lecture theatre could view their faces on screen (see picture above as to how Michael was presented); the Best UST TAs were interviewed to share their tips and advice in the form of a video; games with prizes were played right after the video of "Best TAs in Action" so that messages could be put across more effectively in a most cheerful atmosphere.

"It's fun, enjoyable and informative" were the remarks of many participants.

Job-related Induction Sessions: The Orientation also kicked off a series of Induction Sessions tailor-made for TAs who would assume their respective duties as tutors working in tutorial / laboratory session, grading and providing one-to-one help to students.

Familiarization Programs: There were also visits to library, Publishing Technology Center, Self-Access Language Center; presentation by the Student Affairs Office; and IT workshops like "Using AV equipment and facilities in a lecture theatre or classroom", "Web

publishing", "Introduction to WebCT and LearningSpace".

"More skill-oriented workshops will be organized in the Spring Semester to help TAs reflect on their work and pick up new skills". disclosed Serene Chan, the CELT staff who works closely with TACC to provide the needed support. She added, "We are keen to hear our participants' feedback on this new effort and are working on a comprehensive evaluation of the whole exercise. Please email 'ctserene' to give us your feedback so that we can improve."

Fire - Such a Hot Topic!

Several recent fire incidents prompted the need to strengthen our fire safety awareness.

- A worker was injured by a flash fire when he was cutting a drum that contained residual flammable vapor with an electric arc. The pressure generated from the flash fire bounced the drum off the ground and caused substantial bulging of the container. The worker was indeed very lucky to have escaped with only a minor injury.
- There was an incident involving mishandling of a water-reactive metal which lit up a flammable solvent in a container.
- A faulty electrical appliance led to an electrical fire in an office.
- Unattended cooking in a residential quarter resulted in not only burnt food but also a small fire in the kitchen...

The key to ensuring safety is prevention. For fire safety, we need to be cognizant of the elements which could lead to a fire. The uncontrolled presence of a fuel, oxygen and an ignition source can become a dangerous combination. For routine operations, following **HKUST's Hot Work Permit system or adhering to established Operational Safety procedures** will help prevent accidents. Selecting proper electrical equipment and following electrical safety procedure will avoid electrical fires. For new operations or research activities, proper risk assessment must be first conducted to identify the risks, evaluate the hazards and control the operation to ensure safety.

Line management responsibility: Line management must implement a safety management system to ensure that safety is an integral part of every task. SEPO is available to assist whenever needed.

Safety orientation: As new staff and students are here, we need to make sure that they have gone through a safety orientation before they are assigned to perform potentially hazardous operations. This orientation should include knowing our safety policies and procedures, attending appropriate safety training, learning the proper use of safety controls and equipment, etc.

Have a safe academic year!

Achievement Highlights

- Our School of Business and Management received full accreditation from the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) - the leading management organization in Europe that promotes best practices in management development. We are among the handful of business schools which have achieved dual recognition from both EFMD and AACSB (the International Association for Management Education in USA).
- A recent article on "resonant sonic materials" (RSM) in Science authored by a group of Physics faculty led by Prof Ping Sheng has attracted worldwide attention. It was a science news story for *Inside R&D*, *BBC World Service*, *New Scientist*, *Physics Web*, and *Reuters Health, Liberation* (France) and the biggest Brazilian newspaper *Folha de S.Paulo*. An inch thick of RSM is equivalent to a foot or more of concrete for shielding against irritating low frequency noise.
- Dr Jishan Hu and Dr Min Yan of Mathematics made major achievements in Painlevé Analysis, which was initiated by P Painlevé more than a hundred years ago for studying singularities of solutions for nonlinear ordinary differential equations. They developed an elegant theory of mirror transformation and used it to settle a fundamental question in the convergence of Painlevé Laurent series. The mirror transformation also opens up new developments in the geometric analysis of integrable systems.
- E-Library, developed by a team led by Prof Kar Yan Tam (ISMT) was one of the top winners of the Stockholm Challenge Award 2000. The E-Library is a structural innovation which provides web-based library services to distance learning students, tutors and administrators.
- The summer school program, "English Plus 2000" offered by the Language Center has been accredited by the renowned Institute of Linguists (IoL) in the UK. It is the first English program for secondary school students in Hong Kong to receive accreditation from the international language assessment body.

YK Pao Visiting Chair in Cultural Studies

Prof Immanuel Wallerstein is appointed the first Y K Pao Visiting Chair of Cultural Studies. The Inaugural Lecture on 20 September on "Cultures in Conflict? Who are We? Who are the Others?" is followed by two forums - "Dialogue on 'Cultures in Conflict-Chinese Perspectives'" and "Unthinking Social Science"

Prof Wallerstein is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the State University of New York at Binghamton, a Senior Research Scholar at Yale University, and a former president of the International Sociological Association. Among numerous honors he earned, Prof Wallerstein won the Sorokin Prize for Distinguished Scholarship of the American Sociological Association.

On the Light Side

Playmate

Peter N Dobson, Jr

Since this is a family publication (for the AA family), the title above does not refer to any friend of Hugh Hefner, or any photograph of such person with a staple in her navel. Rather I am talking about my nephew, who recently turned ten. For the past eleven years, I have been regularly attending family lunches, dinners and other social occasions that, this being Hong Kong, involve the consumption of substantial quantities of food. Conversation at these events occasionally would be a bit of a problem, since my wife and my in-laws are Chinese and I, in case you haven't noticed, am not. When we meet without other guests, the language is invariably English, and I only feel left out when my wife and sister-in-law, who now work together, spend the entire meal discussing business. Sometimes, though, we have additional guests - and these are often from the Chinese mainland or Taiwan, in which case the conversation tends to be mostly in Putonghua.

Since roughly the time that my nephew was nine, however, I have always had someone at the table I can talk to. For one thing, he is fluent in English and his Chinese is only marginally better than mine. But the main thing is that we share many of the same enthusiasms. He likes computer games, for example, and was instrumental in getting me hooked on them. So we discuss strategies for destroying the enemy bases in *Command and Conquer: Tiberian Sun*, or trade tips on how to defeat the evil boss in the India level of *Tomb Raider III*.

Sometimes my nephew and I are able to drag the rest of the family to the films that we want to see. Thus the entire family had to endure seeing the *X-Men* the first weekend it was shown in Hong Kong. My nephew was still bummed by the fact that all his friends had seen it already during their vacations abroad. It kind of bugged me, too. I had seriously considered taking a half-day of short leave on the Thursday it opened here so that I could be among the first to see it. After the film, at which my nephew and I shared a bag of Reece's pieces, we had to go his home and try to explain to his father what the film was about. The sensible among you may not even know, or care, that the *X-Men* is a film based on a wildly successful comic book, but those of us with 9 or 10 year old personalities, like my nephew and I, have been waiting impatiently for months for the Hong Kong screening.

One advantage of my "second childhood" (actually, I never left my first) is that I can observe how a real ten year old is adapting to the wonders of our modern world. I recently got him an e-mail account, and showed him a few basics about searching the web. Kids his age take to this like ducks to water - you show them something once and they not only get it, but also immediately begin to generalize the skills. In minutes he had located several websites for the latest toy craze (*Warhammer*), and even found a place that listed the local retail outlets where the stuff is sold. He has already hinted to his father that he would like to have a credit card number so he can make on-line purchases. (His dad is not amused.)

Anyway, it is really nice having a playmate who shares so many of my childish interests. My grandchildren have not yet reached my mental age - generally regarded as about 9 - so when my nephew outgrows me, I have a whole new group of playmates to look forward to.