Focus

Staff prepare for introduction of General Education courses

With General Education (GE) courses set to launch, staff and students alike are now in the position of having to gain an understanding of exactly what is on offer and the advantages of GE.

The new four-year degree structure, which sees GE courses introduced in January 2008, will enable students to gain in-depth knowledge through major studies with the option to take complementary minor or elective units. The GE courses will focus on three central areas of study, namely the arts and humanities; different societies, social and business organisations; and science and technology.

“CityU is all about producing graduates who are well-rounded, readily employable, individuals but the University is not simply a job factory. Our aims go beyond that. We aim to equip students with the skills to contribute to the wider society as useful and valuable members of the community,” said Professor Lilian Vrijmoed Kwan Leping, Dean of Student Learning.

Professor Vrijmoed added that while students had to consider what courses best satisfied their career and personal goals, the exams were on staff to be suitably equipped to address their questions and concerns.

“Staff should be familiar with the courses being developed and find out how the different courses will help the undergraduates,” Professor Vrijmoed added. “We are then in a good position to offer advice on course selection.”

“The University is now focusing on putting things in place, in the immediate future, a more systematic academic advising system because students now have more choices from the four-year system - double majors, major-minors, free electives and so on,” said Professor Vrijmoed.

While GE courses have specific goals and learning outcomes, staff developing new courses can still incorporate some facets of the Out-of-Discipline (OOD) courses.

“Critical thinking, leadership, sports courses can all form part of the co-curricular curriculum. Staff will have the opportunity to develop GE courses that fit these goals and philosophies,” said Professor Vrijmoed.

The GE structure will also offer the advantage of providing a more universal context to subject areas. Cross-curricular course content will enable students to better grasp how their course studies can have applications and connections with a broader array of other subject areas and professional or personal life situations.

An example in the new GE course, Information Management and its Social Impact, in which students will gain the ability to leverage information and technology efficiently and effectively, better equipping them to sift through the sea of information in which they are immersed by using the body brush technology developed in the Department of Computer Science, students enrolled in this course will visit the interactive-media laboratory to try to classify and use some virtual image information. They will experience how to manage virtual information, which is also essential in this new world.


The University has made an effort to publicise the GE courses through its own internal media and by staging a forum outlining the course objectives.

By Craig Francis
Looking deeper into faces

Charles Darwin, the famous naturalist, endured being judged by his facial features and was almost rejected entry to join an exploration journey due to the shape of his nose. In his autobiography he wrote about the incident: “He (the captain) was convinced he could judge a man’s character by the outline of his features, and he doubted whether anyone with my nose could possess sufficient energy and determination for the voyage.”

Dr Yang came to teach at CityU in 2001. He is not only sensitive to market changes, but also innovative in his selection of research topics. His PhD thesis has been frequently quoted in academic papers since its publication. Embracing the growing trend of internet commerce, Dr Yang has published many papers on internet sales and customer evaluation. One of his papers has been selected for Information Management & Technology as one of its most popular articles, and another of his papers has received the Emerald Literati’s Recognition Award.

The idea of studying one’s appearance popped up after a chat with Dr Su, who has a very handsome brother. With a photographic face and a generous character, his brother is known for successfully closing business deals with little hassle. In the business world, it is said that one’s appearance is very important. A person who can project a pleasant, honest and reliable person can more easily accomplish his task.

The conversation triggered Dr Yang’s association of a marketing theory about consumer behaviour. The theory purports that in selecting a product or making a purchasing decision, consumers often rely on their first impressions or thin slice of information.

“We don’t want to encourage people to judge others by their appearance,” said Dr Yang. “But we want to study how consumers make judgments about people with different appearances and what messages are conveyed by different looks.”

In Dr Yang’s project, he will not only study traditional Chinese facial techniques, but also make use of the modern technology of Functional Magnetic Resonance Tomography (fMRIT) to detect the neurological activity of the respondents when looking at different faces.

“When seeing an attractive face, you may try to evert your look out of coyness or politeness, but your neurological reaction won’t lie. This is one more motivation for us to continue the research. We hope we can achieve a breakthrough in this area,” Dr Yang said. “The analysis of a person’s first impression is an external study, while on the neurological reaction is an internal study. By combining the two, we hope to analyse the faces from the physiological and psychological perspectives and develop a scientific pattern relating to the perception of faces.”

Dr Yang, with his stature slightly on the short side, speaks at a pace neither too fast nor too slow. He has a square face and chin and thick eyebrows. His eyes are clear and sparkling. Although not typically handsome, he is quite decent looking and well-dressed. What kind of impression will such a man trigger in you?

By Longyen Chen
In important to safeguard your own personal data as well as the personal data of other people to which you have access while performing your assigned duties at the University.

“To protect our own personal data, such as the Hong Kong ID number or date of birth, we should never disclose them to other people without a legitimate reason. It is extremely dangerous to post our personal data on popular websites that can be accessed by strangers from all over the world,” said Mrs. Laura Tang Ling Wai-ting, Systems Manager of Enterprise Solutions Office.

As a prolific user and collector of personal data, the University must comply with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. Violations may lead to legal liability and damage the University’s reputation or image. Thus, all University members with access to the data must work together to ensure the University complies fully with the requirements of the Ordinance.

Protection of online personal data requires an end-to-end (from end user to network) protection strategy. This includes the IT information security policies, IT infrastructure security, data and information security, and security practices of the persons who will process or use the data.

The Office of the Chief Information Officer is responsible for overseeing the data security and privacy matters at the University. Working closely with associate offices such as the Enterprise Solutions Office (ESU) and the Computing Services Centre (CSC), they are committed to providing a safe and convenient IT service. They provide IT security policies and guidelines and promote awareness on campus of information security and data governance.
策略教學優化計劃 協助同事提升教學能力
“STEP” to excel in teaching

由香港教育大學 EXPORT-TO 時報社有限公司

策略教學優化計劃 \“STEP\” to excel in teaching

怎樣才可進取不斷變革的教學環境？如何在課堂上推行電子學習和培養学生的創意？是香港教育大學為此進行研究和實踐而著手舉辦的\“策略教學優化計劃\”，便找出了這些問題的答案。

教育學系教授王麗華博士說：\“電子教學和設置不同的學習模式可以讓學生在不同的學習環境中學習。\”

中國香港中文大學文學院的方福亮博士表示：\“針對不同學生需要設計不同的教學方法。\”


參加活動的同事都認為，\“策略教學優化計劃\”在實現目標和提升教學質量方面都取得了顯著的成果。


2007年8月3日的\“策略教學優化計劃\”，自2007年10月17日，並於12月22日結束。參加活動的同事們同意，\“策略教學優化計劃\”對提升教學質量有很大的幫助。

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2007年11月30日的\“策略教學優化計劃\”，自2007年10月17日，並於12月22日結束。參加活動的同事們同意，\“策略教學優化計劃\”對提升教學質量有很大的幫助。