

# General Education at the University Level

## 大学通识教育

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# Introduction

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- ◆ The Goals (目标) of General Education at the University Level
- ◆ The Contents (内容) of General Education
- ◆ The Delivery (提供方式) of General Education
- ◆ An Example (例子) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong
- ◆ Concluding Remarks (结语)

# The Goals (目标) of General Education at the University Level

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- ◆ What is the minimum that a University graduate should know, in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century, besides his or her own major specialization?
- ◆ What are the qualities (素质) that a University graduate must possess?
- ◆ The education of the whole person (全人)—not just knowledge and skills—but a well-rounded person
- ◆ The development of an individual to his or her fullest potential
- ◆ The preparation of an individual for life and work in a globalized world

# The Goals (目标) of General Education at the University Level

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- ◆ Language ability—expressiveness and communication skills
- ◆ Breadth of knowledge, interest, horizon and perspective
- ◆ Socialization—accepting and co-existing and working with people that are different and that one does not necessarily like
- ◆ Professionalism—doing and completing tasks that one does not like to do
- ◆ Leadership capability
- ◆ Ethics, morals and values— compassion, honesty, integrity, loyalty, perseverance, and responsibility
- ◆ Critical and independent thinking
- ◆ 德智体群美

# Breadth of Knowledge, Interest, Horizon and Perspective

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- ◆ One should make sure that science, engineering and medical students take some humanities and social sciences courses and vice versa
- ◆ World civilizations and civics—national education
- ◆ International and inter-cultural exposure
- ◆ Contact with different strata of society
- ◆ Students should be taught to be knowledgeable, appreciative, sensitive to and tolerant of people from other cultures—people different from them.

# The Delivery of General Education

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- ◆ General education courses
- ◆ Residential education
- ◆ Pastoral care
- ◆ The “College System”—fully residential with communal dining and affiliated faculty fellows
- ◆ International exposure—exchanges with overseas partner universities
- ◆ Mentorship
- ◆ Internship
- ◆ Extra-curricular activities--music, sports, volunteer work, etc.

# The Contents of General Education at The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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	<i>Now (S7)</i>	<i>2012 (SS3)</i>
<i>University common core</i>	Units of credit	
Chinese	3	6
English	3	9
IT	0	1
General Education	15	21
Physical Education	2	2

# The Contents of General Education at The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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- ◆ Four Areas
  - ◆ Our Own Heritage
  - ◆ Nature, Technology & Environment
  - ◆ Culture & Society
  - ◆ Self & Humanities
- ◆ General Education will be further strengthened with launch of the 4-year curriculum in 2012; the General Education requirements will be expanded from 15% to 20% of the curriculum

# The Contents of General Education at The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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- ◆ A Foundation Course in General Education—“Wisdom in World Civilizations” (6 units; 2 semesters)
- ◆ Aims:
  - ◆ Introduce the essential characteristics of Chinese and western civilizations
  - ◆ Address contemporary issues of human concern

# The College System at The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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- ◆ Established since the foundation of the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1963
- ◆ Similar in goals and spirit to the 800-year old college system at the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford
- ◆ Unique in Hong Kong and indeed all of China and possibly Asia
- ◆ Each college has its own culture, tradition, and college spirit
- ◆ Every faculty member and every undergraduate student belongs to a college
- ◆ The college is the locus of general education and pastoral care and close interaction between and among faculty members and students

# Diversified Composition of Students Helps to Achieve the Goals

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- ◆ 250 freshman students admitted in 2007 from Mainland China
- ◆ 60 non-local freshman students admitted in 2007 from Canada, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Mauritius, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, United States of America, etc.
- ◆ 900 inbound exchange students from overseas
- ◆ 700 outbound exchange students

# Learning How to Learn

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- ◆ Learning how to learn by oneself is also part of General Education.
- ◆ It enables life-long learning which is increasingly necessary because of rapid obsolescence of knowledge and skills and unpredictable changes in the global economic environment.
- ◆ No one can be assured that he or she will work in the same occupation, same industry, or the same place for his or her entire working life.

# Education and Manpower Bureau Survey of Employers 2006

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<i>Attribute</i>	<i>All Institutions</i>	<i>CUHK score</i>	<i>CUHK rank</i>
Overall	3.58	3.72	1
Chinese	3.71	3.84	1
English	3.56	3.68	1
Numerical	3.66	3.83	1
IT	3.81	3.89	2
Analytical and Problem Solving	3.42	3.56	1
Work Attitude	3.74	3.89	1
Inter-personal Skills	3.58	3.69	1
Management Skills	3.29	3.43	1
Technical Skills for the job	3.45	3.59	2

# Concluding Remarks

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- ◆ General education is essential for achieving whole-person education.
- ◆ General education should be made mandatory for all students.
- ◆ However, there are many channels at a university for the delivery of general education, both inside and outside the classrooms.