

Season's Message 2020

27 December 2020

Dear Members of the HSUHK Family,

Semester 1 has just concluded and I wish you all well and healthy in this holiday season.

2020 is a landmark year as we witness the 40th Anniversary of the founding of HSUHK. It is also a very challenging and unprecedented year due to the tightening US-China relationship, the social unrest in different parts of the world including Hong Kong, and the COVID-19 pandemic. As we are now approaching the end of 2020, it is a time to remember good friends, to say thank you to those who assisted us to get through these tough times, and also to reflect and plan forward.

Recent Achievement and Developments

As I review the past 12 months, I am grateful and proud of the University community for all that we have achieved together, despite disruptions to normal teaching, learning and many campus activities. In addition to the attainments mentioned in my "New Academic Year Message" in August 2020, I am glad to share with you some recent ones, including:

- the inauguration of the first Honours Academy in Hong Kong nurturing high-performing and promising students to become future leaders;
- a breaking record of over 300 students receiving the Self-financing Post-Secondary Scholarships of the HKSAR Government;
- several student teams won the championship in respective open academic contests;
- being awarded the highest total number of funded research projects from RGC among all the 15 eligible self-financing institutions for 2020/21; and

- received a pledged major donation in support of the Evergreen College, with all the four residential colleges now each named after a major donor in recognition of their benevolence.

There are also a number of new campus development projects to be launched in early 2021. To address the longer-term floor space needs and to be funded largely by generous private donations, we plan to construct a new 4-storey academic building at the West Lane (i.e. the grassland beside the nullah). Encompassing spaces for teaching and learning facilities, staff office rooms, a purpose-built gallery and a tennis court at the roof-top, the building is expected to be completed by July/ August 2022.

In addition, the following minor projects will also be completed in this academic year, including the new Learning Commons at the 2/F of S H Ho Academic Building, the new Student Learning Hub at the G/F of Lee Shau Kee Complex, the Recognition Wall for teachers who received the Teaching Excellence Awards as well as the Hong Kong Notes and Coins Gallery (with rare collections donated by Governor Mr. Roger Luk's family) on the 1/F of Lee Quo Wei Academic Building.

Student Support and Community Engagement

To help local students in financial need under the pandemic, and with the generous donations by our staff, alumni and loyal friends, the University set up the Student Hardship Relief Fund in mid-2020. A total of HK\$251,000 has been disbursed to 63 students so far.

To better prepare final-year students for their future careers amid the challenging time of the pandemic with bleaker employment prospects, the Student Affairs Office (SAO) rolled out a number of additional initiatives to assist students to connect with prospective employers, and to offer advice and e-training sessions on career/ further study options. It is encouraging to learn that many large employers still plan to recruit the similar number of university graduates as in past years, although the recruitment pace will be slower. I encourage graduating students to be more proactive in job searches and to be better prepared.

During the epidemic period, the University continues to support our students to serve the community, such as the social inclusion project of the Institute for Youth Sustainability Leadership in which our students voluntarily communicate with children of the ethnic minorities via online platforms. This indeed testifies our students' caring for and solidarity with the local community in the hard time.

Amid the pandemic, HSUHK also connects with the local community by providing consultancy services to small businesses via the newly-established HSUHK Resource Centre for Startups and SMEs (RCSS) of the School of Business. Focusing on small businesses that are most seriously affected by COVID-19, our students and faculty advisors form teams to work closely with different clients and recommend solutions to pressing problems.

In view of the Government's latest announcements on the 4th wave of the COVID-19 epidemic and as mentioned in Registry's email of 23 December 2020, starting from the first teaching day of Semester 2 until the end of the Chinese New Year break (i.e. from 18 January 2021 to 17 February 2021), classes will be held online only. For the teaching mode after the Chinese New Year break, in case conditions improve and face-to-face classes are resumed, they will be supplemented with live broadcast.

For non-local students currently outside Hong Kong, the designated case officers of our SAO will continue to provide you with advice and support you, especially before and during any self-quarantine period if you choose to return to Hong Kong for the second semester.

Earnestly, I hope to see many of you in campus in the coming semester, despite some classes will be online.

Words of Appreciation and Blessing

Taking the opportunity, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all HSUHK students for your understanding and co-operation; teachers for your tremendous efforts (on both face-to-face and online teaching) to ensure the continuity and quality of teaching and learning despite technical and pedagogic difficulties; other administrative and academic support staff for your continued commitment and initiatives to maintain a high standard of services and operations; and also, our frontline staff for your tireless effort to keep our campus safe and infection-free during this special period.

My profound gratitude also goes to our Board and Council Members, alumni and supporters who have helped us accomplish so much during this period. I am proud of the grit and team spirit that defines and holds our community together; and I believe that this good spirit of caring for our students will continue to grow amid the challenges ahead.

In the prolonged fight against this new virus, we should continue to be alert and cautious, and above all, maintain a positive attitude and persevere. With the concerted efforts of every member of the University, we all strive to build a community embracing safety, inclusiveness and care.

I wish you all a restful winter break full of love and blessings. Meanwhile, please stay vigilant and healthy.

Truly,



Professor Simon S.M. Ho 何順文教授

President, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學校長

D810, QW Lee Academic Building, Hang Shin Link, Siu Lek Yuen, Shatin, HK

Secretary Contact: (852) 3963-5002, ireneyeung@hsu.edu.hk

University Web: www.hsu.edu.hk

Personal Profile/Publications: www.hsu.edu.hk/index.php/about-hsu/message-from-the-president

