

Welcome Address at the Convocation for New Students 2023/24

7 September 2023

College Hall, Yuen Campus, HSUHK

Students and Colleagues,

My heartiest congratulations and warmest welcome to all new students joining the Hang Seng University family! I am delighted to see the happy faces of about 1,700 new undergraduates embarking on a new learning journey here.

As a new student, you will have many new and exciting experiences, including forming new friendships, adapting to a new learning environment, and immersing yourself in new university life. Along with these exciting encounters, you may also face new challenges such as academic advancement, managing your time and finances effectively, engaging in campus activities, embracing cultural diversity and inclusivity, and so forth. I encourage you to face these challenges with an open mind, take an active role in your learning, and make the most of your university life. Our dedicated teachers, staff, and senior students are ready to support, guide, and inspire you throughout your university life.

In this volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (in short, we call it VUCA) era, technology, globalization (or de-globalization) and sustainability issues affect almost every aspect of our life. Breakthroughs in information and communication technology bring us both possibilities and challenges. AI is sure to revolutionize the way we learn, teach, work, live and interact with people. For example, the recent emergence of ChatGPT, a generative artificial intelligence (AI) chat tool that we offer to all teachers and students for use on our own platform, has shown its potential to replace many jobs such as writers, journalists, marketers, customer service personnel, computer programmers, accountants, and lawyers. At the same time, many people believe that AI would create more new job opportunities. The most important is that we are willing to adapt, learn and transform ourselves.

Technology is a double-edged sword that can benefit or harm us. AI poses other ethical and legal risks, including personal privacy invasions, false or biased data spreads, intellectual property violations, academic dishonesty, more social inequality, and concerns and controversies regarding system security and governance. Depending on the quality of algorithms, big data, and parameters used, AI can easily make mistakes

or wrong inferences. Users should input accurate intentions, requests, or questions, and repeatedly fact check and analyze each output carefully. Users should also exercise their own judgement to avoid unconsciously following AI's recommendations. While recognizing AI's potential for the betterment of humanity, we should control the risks of AI and not abuse the use of it.

As a university student, how would you equip yourself to grow in the AI era? AI cannot replace human beings. AI is not capable of reasoning and thinking like humans. Human perception is shaped through sensory perceptions, feelings and abstract intuition, but not just logical thinking. So far, AI is yet to learn, simulate, or digitize human characteristics such as emotions, crying, touching, tasting, smelling, desires and willpower. What truly makes humans unique is our soul, which cannot be computed or programmed. Therefore, it is essential for students to enhance their unique human qualities, cultivate their personal values and transferable competencies, so that they become soulful and responsible global citizens who can confidently handle challenges in their future work and life with fulfillment.

As a private liberal-arts-oriented university, Hang Seng University adopts the unique "Liberal + Professional" education model. "Liberal" means a broad-based and cross-disciplinary approach to connect knowledge domains, facilitate thinking, and solve problems, preparing your all-rounded development. "Professional" implies that we instill professional competencies and ethics to enhance your success in your future chosen career fields. We believe our education model can nurture students the following five core humanity qualities (5Cs): (1) Critical Thinking; (2) Creativity; (3) Communication and Collaborations; (4) Caring Attitude; and (5) Continuous Active Learning. These qualities and attitudes are hard to be replaced by AI machines.

During your time at HSUHK, I encourage you to make good use of the learning opportunities and resources here, such as engaging in international exchanges, internships, service learning, independent research projects, arts and sports activities, residential college life, pursuing entrepreneurial endeavours, etc. These experiences will widen your horizon, help you explore your potential and build your personal values.

Lastly, you should take good care of your health and wellness, and try to strike a balance between your study and personal life. Only with a healthy mind and body can you pursue your dreams with passions.

I hope you will enjoy your university life to the fullest and shine in this caring learning community. Wishing you a happy and fruitful learning journey!

Thank you!