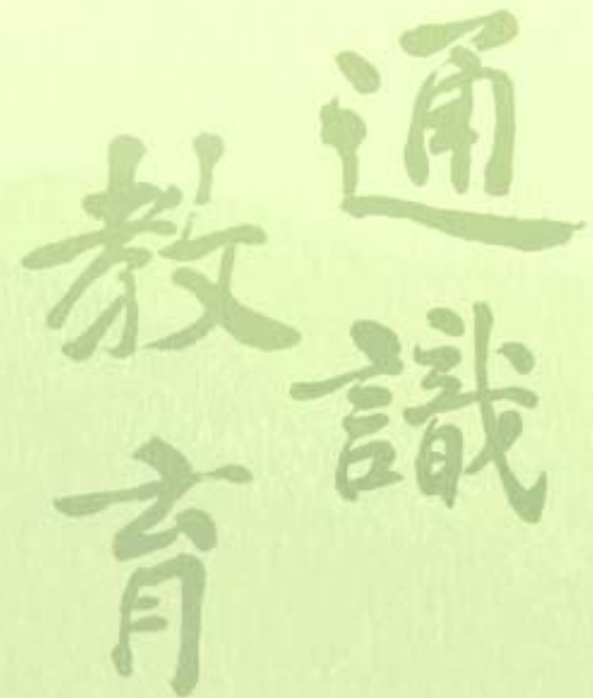




Key issues in developing and managing a **GE programme** at tertiary institutions



Prof. Cheung Chan-Fai
Director of University General Education
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

3 June 2009



- Free electives
- Distribution requirement
- Core curriculum
- Great books programme

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- *studium generale*: scholars and students from different quarters **learning together**
- An education programme *for all*
- GE as an **embodiment** the idea of a university

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Relevance of GE in a research university

- GE is the only platform where students and teachers can together reflect on issues of **common concerns**, issues that are **across disciplines** and matter to the mankind, to our society as a whole

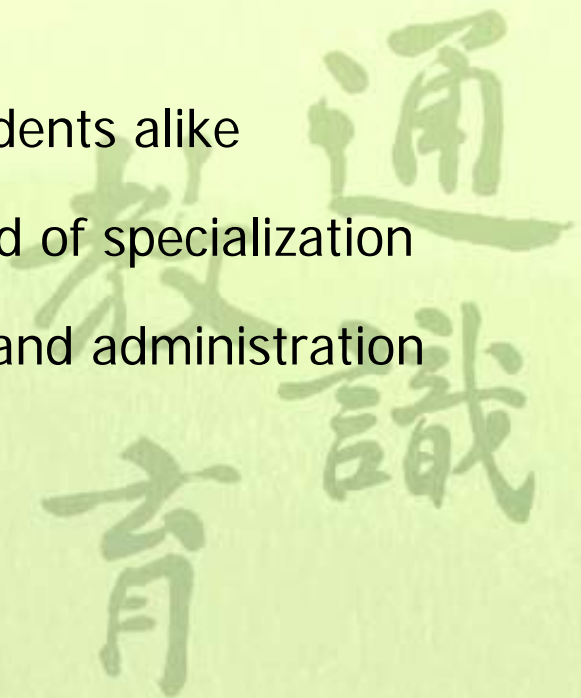
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The Inherent tension between **research** and **teaching**, **specialization** and **general education**

Common Problems of a GE Programmes

- Lack of programme cohesiveness
- Lack of enthusiasm from teachers and students alike
- Challenges of utilitarian concerns and trend of specialization
- Lack of proper governance, management and administration
- Insufficient resource
- Easy credits





A Programme through many changes

- 1963: Founding of CUHK; Colleges each tailor its own core programme
- 1976-1986: College GE under a Unitary University Administration
- 1984: Review of the undergraduate curriculum
- 1986-1991: University GE Programme with “Seven Areas”
- 1991-2003: Flexible Credit Unit System and GE Programme with “Three Areas”





Comprehensive Programme Review in 2002-2003

The current programme, structure and quality assurance mechanisms derive from a major review report adopted by the Senate in 2003.

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● ● ● *Six Essential Conditions*



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for a Successful GE Programme

- Commitment and support of the university top management
- Coherent and viable curriculum
- University culture for GE
- Faculty participation
- Effective administration and assessment
- Reward for and recognition of contribution to GE

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1. Commitment & Support



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Adequate resource allocation:

- A central coordination office of 10 full-time staff
- Full-count of teaching load

High power policy-making body:

- Pro-Vice-Chancellor as Chairperson of the Senate Committee on GE and its Standing Committee
- Deans of Faculties and Colleges as members of the Senate Committee on GE
- Senior members from the management serving as *ad personam* of the Standing Committee

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2. Sound Curriculum



博文約禮

Coherent to the mission and ideal

- Objectives linked to CU mission and clearly articulated

The Motto of the Chinese University of Hong Kong: 博文約禮

“The superior man, extensively studying all the learning, and keep himself under the restraint of the rules of propriety, may thus likewise not overstep what is right.”

Analects of confucius, James Legge's version

In choosing ‘博文約禮’ as its motto, the University is laying equal emphasis on the intellectual and moral aspects of education.



Ethos of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

- *To Combine Tradition with Modernity,
To Bring together China and the West*
- *Bilingualism*
- *College education*





GE at CUHK

*An integration of
Humanism of Chinese Culture
and
Liberal Education of the West*

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教育

2. Sound Curriculum



博文約禮

Some Attributes of Ideal CU graduates:

Appreciation of the values of a broad range of intellectual disciplines

Habit of reading widely

Critical and independent

Deep understanding of Chinese culture

Inter-cultural sensitivity, tolerance and a global perspective

Compassion, honesty and integrity

A sense of purpose, responsibility and commitment in life, a desire to serve

GE Foundation (6 units)

- A great book prog. in dialogue with nature and humanity

4-Area University GE

- Chinese Cultural Heritage
- Nature, Technology and the Environment
- Society and Culture
- Self and Humanity (9-11 units)

College GE (4-6 units)

- Formal College GE courses
- Co-curricular activities

2. Sound Curriculum



博文約禮

Four areas of human intellectual concerns:

Reflect on one's existence through GE

Area A: Chinese Cultural Heritage

- Human's relation to Our Own Heritage

Area B: Nature, Technology and the Environment

- Human's relation to Nature, Technology and the Environment

Area C: Society and Culture

- Human's relation to Society and Culture

Area D: Self and Humanity

- Human's relation to one's Self and Humanity

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2. Sound Curriculum



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**Tang Chun-I (1909-1978),
Founder of New Asia College,
Founder and First Chair Professor of Philosophy
Department:**

- all branches of knowledge originate from human subjectivity
- The pursuit of self-awareness and self-knowledge

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教育

2. Sound Curriculum



博文約禮

Chen Tien-chi, Emeritus Professor:

Stand firmly, stand tall: Understanding our own Culture

Feasting our eyes on Nature: Understanding Nature, Technology and the Environment

Crisscrossing society: Understanding Society and Culture

Knowing thyself: Understanding the Humanities

植根本土：立足香港、薪傳中國文化

放眼自然：認識自然、科技與生態環境

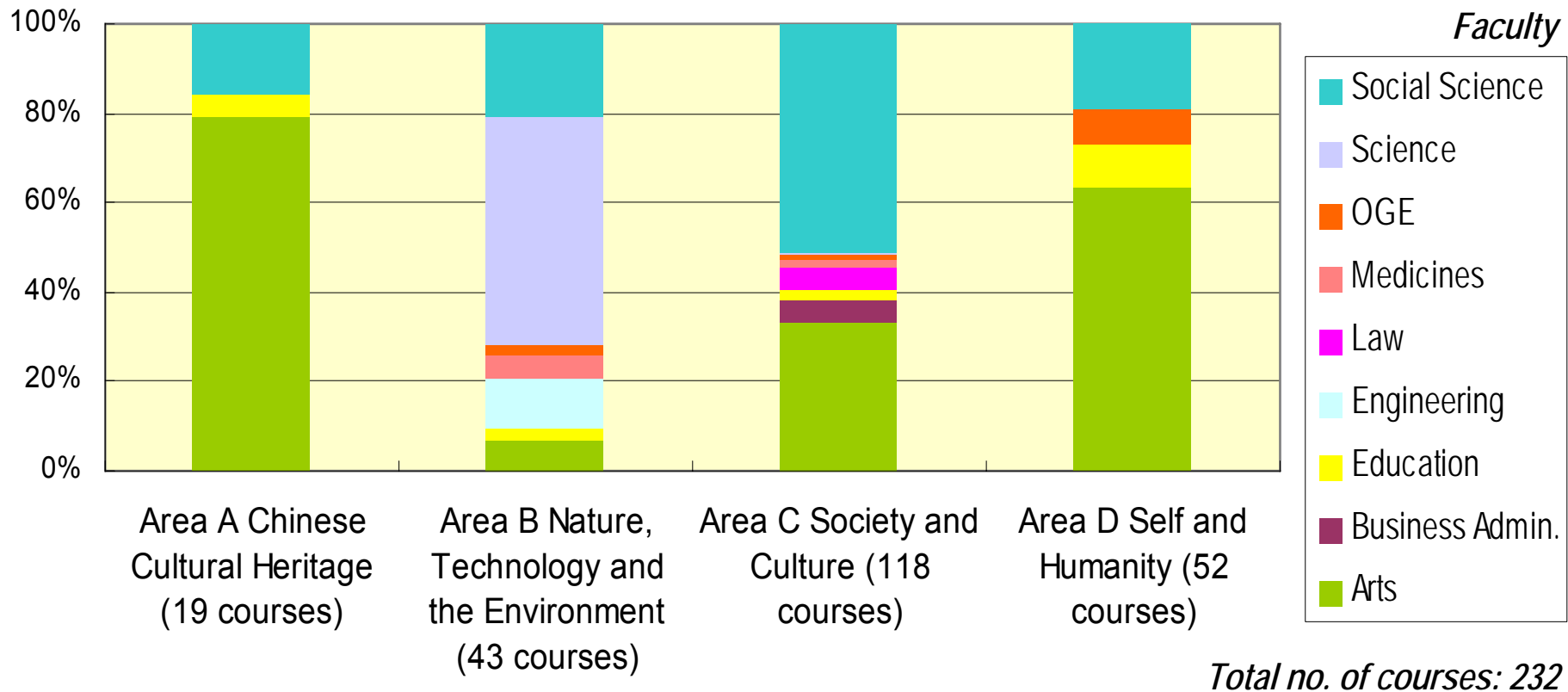
縱橫社會：了解社會與文化

發掘自我：探索人文世界與人生

2. Sound Curriculum



博文約禮



3. Campus-wide Culture



博文約禮

Good publicity and promotion

- Publications, mass email, Book Club and Salon activities



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3. *Campus-wide Culture*



博文約禮

Students well-informed on the meaning and value of GE

- Student focus group
- Freshmen orientation

大學通識教育部

香港中文大學

通識教育迎新資訊

● 了解通識教育... ● 選課須知 ● 同學老師說通識 ● 校友分享 ● 特稿: 有關論文寫作

本網頁專為2008-09年度中七及中六入學本科生而設, 二年級入學同學可參考「[第二年入學學生課程](#)」有關通識教育課程的要求

↓ 下載新生選課輔導 大學通識教育主任的話

查詢及聯絡方法

2008

香港中文大學 大學通識教育部製作

自2008年7月29日起, 本網頁的瀏覽次數為: 001212

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3. *Campus-wide Culture*



博文約禮

Shared ethos by professors

- Briefing and information sessions
- Lunch seminar
- Academic conferences on issues of concern of GE



4. Faculty Participation



博文約禮

Support from department

- Course provided by 40 teaching departments including all faculties
- Achieved to a certain extent the ideal of “people from different quarters learning together”
- Funding formula provides incentive for teaching department to offer GE courses (but quality measures need to be in place)

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4. *Faculty Participation*



博文約禮

Enthusiastic and dedicated teachers

- Teachers are professionals in different areas, ensuring the necessary depth and academic substance of the courses
- Building a GE team spirit: seminars and retreats to reflect and reiterate GE ideals

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● ● ● 4. *Faculty Participation*



博文約禮

Innovative course design

- A GE course is not based on the concerns of just one discipline, but “for all”
- Courses go beyond disciplinary boundaries and disciplinary concerns

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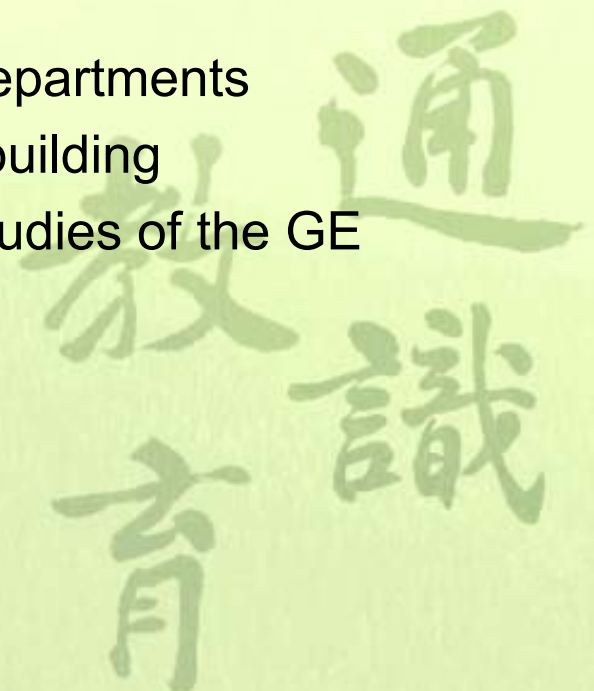
5. *Effective Administration and Programme Assessment*



博文約禮

An independent GE office/centre

- Executive arm of the Senate Committee
- Programme administration
- Coordination of teachers and teaching departments
- Promotion of GE ideals and community building
- Director also serves as the Director of Studies of the GE Programme





5. **Effective Administration and Programme Assessment**



博文約禮

A hands-on, high power committee

- Standing Committee of the Senate Committee of GE
- In charge of in-depth course review and approval of new courses

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5. **Effective Administration and Programme Assessment**



博文約禮

Workable quality assurance mechanism

- **New courses:** vigorous approval procedures and criteria
- **Existing courses:** in-depth course review in 3-year cycle basing on **course archive**
 - **Two levels of review:** course design & Implementation quality
 - **Review Criteria:** alignment to GE objectives, UGE Area specifications and desired course characteristics
- **Effective course evaluation**
- **Emphasis on two-way communication**
- **External review**
- **Research studies** on students' expectation, attitude and experience to inform policies

5. *Effective Administration and Quality Assurance*



博文約禮

Workable quality assurance mechanism

Table 1 Outcome of first-round Internal GE Course Review (six exercises conducted from 2005 to 2007)

	05-1	05-2	06-1	06-2	07-1	07-2	Total
Endorsed	10	19	12	16	7	15	79
Not suitable for GE	2	2	2	1	0	0	7
Endorsed subject to major revision	9	5	4	5	5	5	33
Endorsed subject to minor revision	17	12	12	13	18	10	82
Total no. courses reviewed	<u>38</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>201</u>

6. *Reward and Recognition*



博文約禮

Adequate resource allocation:

- Teaching of GE courses bring full-load equivalent (FLE) student numbers
- Teaching GE counts towards normal teaching load

Reward of good teaching:

- Exemplary Teaching Award since 2006

Publication opportunity:

- Articles on GE teaching on *GE Bulletin*
- GE book series

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6. *Reward and Recognition*



博文約禮

Some Possible Directions

Scholarship on GE:

- Providing research opportunity?

Incentive system and staff development opportunity:

- Columbia model?

Recognition in performance review:

- Linking GE teaching to current indicators (teaching, research, service)

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Thank you!

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