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## THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG Faculty of Education

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## Press Invitation 25 April 2012

## HKU Faculty of Education Distinguished Lecture "Learning in Landscapes of Practice: New Developments in Social Learning Theory" By Dr Etienne Wenger, Independent Researcher, Consultant and Author

Traditionally learning has been viewed as a process of acquiring a body of knowledge through the transmission of a curriculum. Yet both research and experience suggest that learning is a much broader phenomenon—an inherent part of life and a deeply social process. If we take this seriously, then we need a new "social discipline of learning" to help us foster learning. The human world consists of a landscape of communities of practice. Our learning is a trajectory through this landscape: entering some communities, being invited or rejected, remaining visitors, crossing boundaries, being stuck, and moving on. Learning is not merely the acquisition of a body of knowledge in the form of a curriculum, but a journey of the self. Successful learning entails the achievement of a state of "knowledgeability", which is a matter of negotiating a productive identity with respect to the various practices that constitute this landscape.

A fundamental and distinctive feature in HKU's new undergraduate curriculum is experiential learning. It takes students into workplaces and other settings where they have direct encounter with the phenomena being studied. It is a powerful form of learning in which students develop an integrated and holistic understanding of the issues and skills required to deal with them.

Dr Etienne Wenger will explore the issues above and their implications. The Distinguished Lecture is sponsored by UGC Knowledge Exchange Funds and Tin Ka Ping Education Fund organized by the Faculty of Education, HKU, with details as follows:

Date: April 27, 2012 (Friday)

Time: 5:00pm

Venue: Rayson Huang Theatre, HKU

Language: English

Online Registration: http://web.edu.hku.hk/outreach/lecture

## Dr Etienne Wenger

Dr Etienne Wenger is a globally recognized thought leader in the field of social learning theory and communities of practice. He has authored and co-authored seminal articles and books on the topic, including Situated Learning, where the term "community of practice" was coined; Communities of Practice: learning, meaning, and identity, where he lays out a theory of learning based on the concept; Cultivating Communities of Practice: a guide to managing knowledge, addressed to practitioners in organizations; and Digital Habitats, which tackles issues of technology. Etienne's work is influencing both theory and practice in business, government, international development, healthcare, non-profit, and education. He helps organizations apply his ideas through consulting, public speaking, and a new series of workshops. He is a visiting professor at the Universities of Manchester and Aalborg. He recently received an honorary doctorate from the University of Brighton and is currently consultant to a number of business organisations in Singapore.

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