In this the first issue of *Education Matters* in the new triennium, we look back on what we have achieved and look forward to where we want to go. In the opening interview, the Dean reflects on the considerable achievements of the Faculty over the past three years, not least the unification of the Faculty’s internal structure – a measure which has helped us to become a more potent academic force within the University, the local community and further afield. A (mostly) new team of Associate Deans has now been appointed to see the Faculty through its next vital stage of development. With the expected departure in 2006 of the present Dean, Professor Mark Bray, it remains to be seen who will be at the helm, now that the University has moved to appointing Deans rather than Faculties electing them.

The former Associate Deans share with us reflections on their individual portfolios. The splendid record of their collective achievements is testimony to their unremitting enthusiasm and endeavours over the past three years. It is not easy to manage a new project, yet it is hard to imagine a more devoted group or one that could have matched its success. Could it be that that success – to (mis)quote the British writer G. K. Chesterton – is due to them having ‘listened respectfully to the very best advice, and then going away and doing the exact opposite’?

We also celebrate the achievements of Division Heads and Programme Directors who in their various ways have overseen major innovations and advances in the Faculty’s range of degree programmes and not least its postgraduate courses, such as the introduction of the now internationally-renowned EdD. Their enterprise and vision have secured greater efficiencies in teaching, paving the way for a more rigorous and dynamic research agenda.

In the face of sustained budget stringency, the Faculty of Education continues to raise its standards in teaching and research and to achieve an ever-more impressive profile in the international arena. Along with only a few other Faculties at HKU, Education enjoyed a modest increase in its one-line budget for 2005–2006 – proof positive of official recognition that we are moving in the right direction, and doing so purposefully.

In the years ahead, we expect to see growth as we position ourselves strategically to meet the challenges of expansion into the Mainland and more generally throughout Asia. Our postgraduate student population, in particular, continues to grow. As the University embarks on its policy of internationalisation, the Faculty, with its already strong international links, is well positioned to benefit from such a policy and to play an active role in the thrust and tenor of its implementation.

The challenges do not reside in the tertiary sector alone, of course. The Faculty is in active partnership with the ‘market-place’ and the ‘chalk-face’. Without close ties with the community and the local primary and secondary schools where so many of our graduates serve, we could easily lose sight of what education is about: the learners, the teachers, the learner-teachers – all of whom act in concert within the context of society as a whole. The theme of partnership informs Dr Ora Kwo’s enlightening foray into teacher education, set against the professional contexts of the schools where much education takes place. The feature article reminds us that education is not about accumulated bodies of knowledge, rather informed action as this is embedded in the processes of life-long learning. We are all in partnership: educators and ‘non-educators’ alike. To quote the great American educator, Francis Keppel: ‘Education is too important to be left solely to educators’!

_Education Matters_ is not just the Faculty’s voice for imparting news of its activities and achievements, important though these are. It has an essential role in keeping former and present members of its team in touch with not just the University of Hong Kong, but also with each other. With that goal in mind, we invite alumni to share with us their present whereabouts, achievements and occupations. We hope to include this information in the next issue as a ‘Where are you now? What are you doing?’ feature. Alumni are also welcome to send in their contributions for inclusion in future issues. We are part of a family which extends well beyond the walls of the Runme Shaw and Hui Oi Chow Buildings, Hong Kong Island, Kowloon or the New Territories. We are part of that wider community which is so much more than the sum of its individual parts and one where the true measure of education can be gauged for all its worth. In the words of John Dewey: ‘Education is a social process ... Education is growth ... Education is not a preparation for life; Education is life itself’!

Dr Leo Francis Hoye is an Associate Professor in the Division of Language and Literature of the Faculty of Education, and is Guest Editor of this issue.
An Interview with Professor Mark Bray
Dean, Faculty of Education, HKU

LFH Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed by Education Matters. What do you think have been the main achievements of the Faculty over the past three years?

MB The biggest achievement is unifying the Faculty - merging the former Departments of Education and Curriculum Studies, and incorporating Speech and Hearing Sciences. We operate more efficiently, and this has helped us to achieve our vision and mission.

LFH If you had to single out one event, which would be your proudest moment?

MB That would be our 20th Anniversary as a Faculty (though, as you know, we have origins going back to 1917). The anniversary celebrations led to a great climax at our dinner in the Loke Yew Hall. This was a terrific event - the result of 20 years of hard work and commitment!

I think we also need to look at our programmes. These have greatly developed and diversified. We launched the EdD, which is now very strong. We have a range of new programmes: an MSc in Library Information and Management, a BSc in Information Management, and the BA and BEd double degree. The latter shows how important it is for Faculties within the University to collaborate and pool their resources. The BEd part-time is reducing in numbers since it has achieved its mission; at the same time, MEd numbers have grown substantially. With that diversification of programmes, we are doing more things and doing them better than ever.

The research side is highly visible: our scores as measured by the external Research Assess-
The BA & BEd is only for English. I would like to extend it to Chinese with the Faculty of Arts and to explore other collaborations with, say, the Faculty of Science. We have lived too much in separate boxes; inter-Faculty collaboration will make all partners stronger.

Do you think the Faculty of Education has been more proactive than other Faculties?

Well, all Faculties have to be proactive and innovative. We have certainly taken several initiatives during the last three years and we are now seeing the benefits: approval by the University as seen in the extra budgetary resources that we have been allocated. In these hard times, getting a budget increase is a rare achievement. Only two other Faculties received increases whilst others have suffered decreases.

I would also like to praise the excellent team of Associate Deans, Division Heads, Programme Directors and others who work so hard on implementing the various programmes and doing their research. The five Associate Deans, who have just completed their term, deserve special mention: they are a wonderful, diverse, but focussed group with wide-ranging expertise. It has been marvellous to operate so well as a team.

This is the next important phase of our development: we certainly need to strengthen links with Mainland China and with the region beyond. The pool within Hong Kong SAR is too small, so Mainland China is an obvious partner. But why stop there? We haven’t tapped the potential of South East Asia where, arguably, we are the premier English-medium University. Vigorous internationalization is the next objective that we should be aiming at.

Our staff body is pretty international: we have some nine nationalities represented. Our student body, however, needs to be much more international. Among our research postgraduate students are many Mainlanders as well as locals. I would like to adjust balances and to have more nationalities.

One last question. We are awaiting news about the appointment of your successor, the new Dean. Do you have any advice to offer?

Clearly, my successor will decide how s/he wishes to lead the Faculty, but will also need some grounding in where we’ve been and where we feel we are heading. A smooth transition is essential. I am optimistic that we’ll get a good Dean and that we will move into a new era with ever stronger leadership and contributions locally, nationally and internationally.

Thank you very much.

Thank you, Leo.
Reflections from former Associate Deans

The term of office of the initial team of Associate Deans in the unitary faculty lasted for three years and ended on 31 August 2005. We have invited them to share with us some of their reflections during their tenure.

(In alphabetical order of surname)

Professor Colin Evers, Associate Dean (Research)

After serving as Associate Dean (Research) I welcome this opportunity to reflect on my term of office, especially from the pleasing vantage point of a newly-entered period of Sabbatical Leave. As I understood the job, the basic task was to help create conditions within the unitary faculty under which staff and research students could prosper and further advance their research interests and efforts. Creating an Office of Research was the most central aspect of this task – an Office committed to service for all constituents, to assisting with the implementation of research policies, and to the measurement of policy outcomes. For their splendid efforts, I am deeply grateful to Norris Liu and her team of support staff. They made me appear to be a much better administrator than I really am.

Another part of the job was to promote research. This mainly involved inserting the expression “RAE” into as many conversations and documents as I could possibly manage up to an invisible threshold beyond which the strategy annoyed people and became counterproductive. I’m now full of hope that research dominates the consciousness of staff as an elephant might dominate the space in a phone booth.

Being Associate Dean (Research) required developing a taste for committees: some fifteen in all, including chairmanship of seven. The importance of committee work should not be underestimated, as every important decision concerning research and research degrees was made by a committee. I take this opportunity to thank the members of these various committees, particularly the ones I chaired, for their wise counsel.

Of all the committees, the most engaging in terms of overall Faculty policy development was the meeting of the Dean and Associate Deans. No serious policy work in any portfolio could be accomplished without the support, cooperation, and independent input of members of this formidable group, which met nearly every week for the last three years. It was often the first place where ideas were proposed, tested, challenged, debated and revised for decision or discussion in other relevant forums.

I am gratified that on all of the major research performance indicators that we targeted, the Faculty’s performance continued significantly to improve – a trend that was underway well before my term of office. We are clearly the best providers of research postgraduate training in education in the region, and we enjoy international visibility for our research excellence. I wish the new Associate Dean (Research) and the rest of the new team well in their endeavours to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Dr Nancy Law, Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching)

My three years’ service as Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) began and finished on the same symbolic activity: moving office. As I finished unpacking my boxes to relax in my now much smaller office, I felt a strong sense of relief typical of a traveler after a challenging journey. In my academic work, I study educational change and innovation as well as give lectures and talks about leadership and change. But that is very different from making change happen on the ground!

The challenges we faced three years ago were complex. Internally, establishing a unitary faculty meant changing structures, relationships, and work...
processes for each and every member of the Faculty. However, changing the structure was not our goal, but a means to enable our Faculty to face better the challenges posed by changing demands and pressures from within the University and from the UGC, as well as to enable us to better achieve our mission. I still remember inviting external speakers, including Mr P H Cheung, Dr K K Chan and Mr Chris Wardlaw, to our seminars on “Context for Change”, organized to help us formulate a three-year strategic development plan when the unitary faculty was just established.

The most significant Faculty development in the area of Learning and Teaching was to strategically align and develop our academic programmes to provide a continuum of professional and academic courses which education professionals can take at various points of their careers to prepare for career advancement and leadership positions. We have restructured and expanded our MEd and MSc programmes to provide a greater range of choices, established an MSc in Library and Information Management and a Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Educational Studies (PCAdvEdStud) programme articulated with our Masters programmes for those who prefer to take a more focused selection of Masters level modules. Three Minor courses for undergraduate students outside the Faculty of Education: Applied Child Development, Education, and Educational Studies, were launched in September 2004 and 2005. In addition, we launched two new undergraduate programmes in September 2005: a BA & BEd programme in Language Education (English), and a BSc in Information Management.

In line with the general development of our academic programmes, great efforts have been made to improve their quality. We implemented a new e-learning platform – the Interactive Learning Network (ILN) – developed by the Centre for Information Technology in Education (CITE), which is available for all education-related programmes in the Faculty. A common set of guidelines for curriculum information and assessment was also introduced for all Faculty degree programmes.

I hope our alumni and friends will continue to give us input on how we may further improve our programmes!

**Dr Nirmala Rao, Associate Dean (Centres and Outreach)**

One of the very pleasing developments during my tenure as Associate Dean (Centres & Outreach) has been the strengthening of ties with our Alumni. In 2002, links with our alumni, both locally and in Mainland China, were generally weak. Because of the efforts of numerous individuals, these are now much stronger. The 20th Anniversary celebrations, the formation of the Hong Kong University Education Alumni Association (HKUEdAA), and efforts exerted by the Faculty to improve communication with alumni have contributed to this.

2004 was a big year for the Faculty as it celebrated the 20th Anniversary of its establishment (http://www.hku.hk/faced/20anniversary.htm). Anniversary lectures, international conferences and fora were held throughout the year. The celebrations culminated in the gala Anniversary dinner, held on November 27, 2004, which was a particularly memorable event (http://www.hku.hk/education/anniversary-dinner.htm).

The HKUEdAA (http://www.hku.hk/education/alumni.htm) was established in 2004, and the Alumni were actively involved in planning the Anniversary Dinner. The Preparatory Committee of HKUEdAA organized a Policy Forum on Senior Secondary School Reform: from “5-2-3” to “3-3-4” in November 2004. Another one, the Policy Forum on Medium of Instruction (MOI) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA), was held in March 2005. It is indeed heartening to see the Alumni and Faculty working together to organize discussions on topical issues.

In January 2003, we published the inaugural issue of “Education Matters” to keep fellow educators, alumni, and friends informed about Faculty developments and topical educational issues. Close to 10,000 copies of this newsletter were distributed to alumni, primary and secondary schools, sister institutions and relevant government departments. The Newsletter is now published twice a year and one of the main forms of contact with our Alumni. Please keep in touch with us!
Dr Tse Shek-kam, Associate Dean (Facilities and Administration)

I have now been Associate Dean in the Faculty for three years and am glad to continue in the next phase. In my last term of office, my main responsibilities were in the area of Facilities and Administration. At the beginning of my term of office, the Faculty had just undergone a difficult and challenging process of merging its departments. The SARS epidemic and the economic downturn created another challenge. Throughout this period, I received excellent support from colleagues in the Faculty and take this opportunity to thank them all very sincerely for their generosity and kind consideration.

We now have a well-established administrative structure with staff who are helpful, efficient and cooperative.

I would also like to thank our Dean for his support, especially on matters regarding facilities. Although I constantly faced the problem of limited resources, I have always tried my best to strike a balance amongst various needs in the allocation of resources.

In the new academic year, I will continue to look after facilities and take on the new portfolio of external affairs. The latter is a fresh challenge for me. My focus will largely be on local affairs and how these affect the Faculty. I hope I can call, as usual, on your advice and support in the days to come, as the Faculty engages in new endeavours.

Dr Tara Whitehill, Associate Dean (Speech and Hearing Sciences)*

It has been an honour to serve the Faculty during the past three years. This has been a particularly interesting time for the Faculty, and I was proud to be a part of our efforts as we re-shaped and redefined ourselves as a unitary faculty.

As I stepped into my post three years ago, my former colleague, Paul Fletcher, cautioned me not to plan my work schedule around having any “quiet periods” or slower times. This proved excellent advice! There were few quiet times as the Faculty faced tight deadlines for academic development plans, faculty development plans, budget proposals, research assessment exercises, human resources initiatives, bids for university development funds, and various other demands.

Serving as an Associate Dean has been a growing experience for me personally. I take this opportunity to thank the Dean and my fellow Associate Deans, from whom I learned so much over the past three years. I also thank the many other Faculty members with whom I have worked, and in particular the other Heads of Divisions.

* Dr Whitehill stepped down from her Associate Deanship on 1 May 2005.

From 1 September 2005 onwards, there are four Associate Deans in the Faculty with slightly reshuffled portfolios. They are:

(From left of the photo)
- Dr Edwin Yiu, Associate Dean (Centres and Speech & Hearing Sciences)
- Dr Tse Shek-Kam, Associate Dean (Facilities and External Relations)
- Professor Mark Bray, Dean
- Dr Christine Davison, Associate Dean (Research)
- Dr Allan Yuen, Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching)
In this era of educational reform, teachers vary in their capacity to respond to new challenges. Central to the expected changes is the assumption that good teachers are good learners. In the move towards the learning profession, as documented by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education Qualifications (ACTEQ 2003), learning is the focus.

With teacher competencies being defined in terms of the continuum of initial teacher education, induction and continuing teacher development, partnership in teacher education needs to take place in the professional contexts of schools. The major challenge is to nurture individual teachers to reach excellence in learning so as to reflect the expected measures set out in the accountability system. A nurturing environment can integrate various dimensions of teacher competencies for the needed accountability. Educators from different sectors need to reach a better understanding of how teachers learn. This understanding can be acquired collectively, as educators converge for learning inquiries.

Building on the Faculty’s Vision

Our Faculty’s vision for partnership in teacher education is rooted in the professional contexts of schools. This is demonstrated in our review and re-structuring of initial teacher education programmes, and in our work on mentorship development in schools as an across-programme initiative. We are always grateful to our school counterparts for accepting placement of our student teachers for teaching practicum. We are also delighted to make steady progress beyond placement, as we are cultivating a professional community of school mentors.

In 2004-05, we updated our Teaching Practice Handbook, and reached a cohort of 457 teacher mentors for our placement of 429 student teachers. Over half of the teacher mentors attended our series of mentoring workshops with the themes as follows:

- Re-orienting Teacher Education: Implications for Mentoring
- Mentoring Student Teachers: Classroom Observation, Feedback and Portfolio-Building
- A Journey of Co-Learning: Voices from the Practicum

A few snapshots of these workshops give a glimpse of the joint inquiry in the process of intensive interaction amongst participants. The feedback comments were most encouraging:

“...It has enhanced my awareness of the power of co-teaching. When our student teachers become more confident, they can acquire more freedom to explore on their own...”
“I have re-discovered that teaching is great fun!”

“All mentors should be strongly encouraged to attend these workshops. We should build up a mentoring culture!”

With our concerted effort, as university and school partners, mentoring will no longer be taken as a burden on top of a heavy teaching load, but appreciated as an opportunity for learning together with our student teachers. More details are posted on our Partnership Website: http://pws.edu.hku.hk.

An Unnatural Venture
Looking back, partnership seemed like an unnatural venture in the tradition of clear-cut institutional boundaries. By nature, educators from different sectors are loaded with institution-based demands. To enter partnership, we need to break beyond our boundaries in the pursuit of joint motives. Partnership has to be built in a life of learning together: stretching beyond isolated work for reinforced educational values is a motivating force.

In my experience with the community dialogue over the three mentoring workshops, I observed open sharing of critical questions, mutual respect for diversity of contexts and views, and above all new insights into learning and teaching! The learning partners were rewarded with the excitement of knowledge co-construction.

Looking Ahead
In 2005-06, my aspiration is to continue working with colleagues* on scaffolding of activities to build our learning community for a deeper understanding of how teachers learn in the changing contexts, and how meanings are created for renewed practices. In addition to the workshop series for beginning teacher mentors (29 October 2005, 21 January 2006, 8 April 2006, as scheduled in our Teaching Practice Handbook), we are keen to create opportunities for co-inquiry with experienced teachers. This initiative to foster a learning force will be accommodated within the frame of the Professional Development Course for Secondary School Graduate Teachers 2005-06, organized by the office of the In-Service Teacher Education Programme (INSTEP) in the Faculty of Education. It has been commissioned by the Education & Manpower Bureau (EMB).

On an assumption that a collective inquiry is capable of generating a powerful source of professional energy, this Course will provide a platform for frontline educators to reflect critically on daily professional practices and identify the nature of the problems encountered. The participants will embark on different tracks of inquiries, as teams of action researchers, and share understanding of changes as individuals and in respective schools. We shall conclude with a forum for group presentations of action research and exchange of insights across school sites. We look forward to the continued co-learning and networking for professional inquiries!

* Colleagues for renewed teamwork are:
  - Associate Dean (Facilities & External Relations): Dr SK Tse
  - Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching): Dr Allan Yuen
  - PGDE Programme Director: Dr Tammy Kwan;
  - Deputy PGDE Programme Director: Mr Fran Lopez-Real
  - BEd Programme Director: Dr Winnie Lai
  - Teaching Practicum Co-ordinator: Dr Allen Leung
  - Mentoring Workshop Co-ordinator: Ms Gerry Davies
**New website of HKU Education Alumni Association (HKUEdAA):**
http://www.hku.hk/education/alumni.htm

**Join HKUEdAA**
- Life membership: $300 ($150 for 2005 full-time graduates)*
- Annual membership: $100 ($50 for 2005 full-time graduates)*

* Download the membership enrolment form at the Association’s website now!
  * effective until 31 December 2005

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**Announcements**

**Seminar on “Why Boys Fail and What We Can Do”**

Medium of presentation: Cantonese

香港大學教育學院及香港大學教育學院校友會主辦，《明報》協辦

日期: 2005年10月30日（星期日）Sunday, 30 October 2005

時間: 2:15 pm - 4:30 pm

地點: 九龍塘聯福道香港浸會大學永隆銀行大廈 WLB203室

講者: 研究角度 - 莫慕貞教授（香港教育學院）

學校角度 - 林浣心校長（英華小學）

家長角度 - 楊少榮先生（香港浸會大學教育學系）

鄧萬霖小姐（資深傳媒工作者）

及其他講者

對象: 中小學教師、家長

費用: 全免

預留座位: 請登入http://www.hku.hk/education/alumni-highlights.htm（額滿即止）

**Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

Date: Saturday, 17 December 2005

Time: 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm

Venue: Room 230 Knowles Building, HKU

All members and members-to-be are welcome!

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**Forum on “A Dialogue on Teachers’ Present Situation and the Future”**

Medium of presentation: Cantonese

香港大學教育學院及香港大學教育學院校友會合辦

日期: 2005年12月17日（星期六）Saturday, 17 December 2005

時間: 2:50 pm - 5:00 pm

地點: 香港大學鈕魯詩樓二樓223室

講者: 盧瑋鑾教授（小思）M Ed (HKU), 1990

陳燕輝校長(佛教茂峰法師紀念中學) B Soc Sc (HKU), 1987

鄧耀南校長(五邑馮平山夫人李穎璋學校) CerEd (HKU), 1998

譚文斌老師（聖公會蔡功譜中學） CerEd (HKU), 2002

對象: 校友及所有關心教育的朋友

費用: 全免

預留座位: 請登入http://www.hku.hk/education/alumni-highlights.htm（額滿即止）

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**Want to share your whereabouts, joys and experiences?** Please send a paragraph with relevant information including photos and details of yourself (e.g. year of graduation, programme enrolled, email address, etc.) to the Editorial Board (Attn: Ms Mary Chung, Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong; Tel: 2859-1936; Email: mlkchung@hku.hk). Spread the word when you come across other alumni.

Please also keep us up to date with your latest email address and other contacts so that we can send you timely news of the Faculty.
The Research Grants Council (RGC) of Hong Kong announced the results of the annual Competitive Ear-marked Research Grant exercise for 2005-06 on 29 June 2005. The table below shows the projects from our Faculty which have been funded.

### Principal Investigator | Project Title
--- | ---
Dr Kevin Chung | Temporal Processing and Cognitive Processing in Chinese Dyslexic Children: Behavioral and Electrophysiological Investigation
Dr G P Fairbrother | A Study of Provincial-level Implementation of Citizenship Education Policy in China
Dr Nancy Law | Supporting Conceptual Change in Science through Knowledge Building
Dr S P Law | An Ortho-phonological Cueing Treatment for Cantonese Brain-damaged Individuals with Word-finding Difficulties
Dr M F Pang | The Use of Learning Study to Enhance Students’ Domain-specific Generic Capability
Dr G A Postiglione | The Second International Study of the Academic Profession: The Hong Kong and Chinese Mainland Components
Ms Lena Wong | Development of Children Versions of the Hearing in Noise Test (HINT) in Chinese Dialects and Maturation Effect on Speech Understanding Ability

The Faculty also secured three projects from the 8th Call for Applications to the Quality Education Fund.

### Project Leader | Project Title
--- | ---
Mr W I Lam | Effective Teaching of Chinese Language: School-based Collaboration Project
Dr Nancy Law | Pedagogical Use of IT and Learning Outcomes: SITES 2006
Dr Alice Wong | Enhancing Senior Secondary Students’ Understanding of the Nature of Science and the Interconnection between Science, Technology and Society (STS) through Innovative Teaching and Learning Activities

Congratulations to …

**Dr Gregory Fairbrother**, Research Assistant Professor at the Faculty’s Wah Ching Centre of Research on Education in China, on the award of the Li Ka Shing Prize for his doctoral dissertation on **Political Socialization and Critical Thinking: Their Influence on Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese University Students’ Attitudes Toward the Nation.**

**Dr Carol K K Chan**, Associate Professor, Mr Eddy Y C Lee, PhD candidate at HKU Faculty of Education, and Dr Jan van Aalst, Assistant Professor at Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, Canada, on winning the **Best Research Paper Award** at the International Conference of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning held in Taipei from 30 May to 4 June 2005. Their paper also won the **Most Usable Research Paper Award** in Learning Sciences from NASA-funded Virtual Design Centre, United States, in 2005.
In response to the government’s latest consultation document on Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation, the HKU Education Alumni Association (HKUEdAA), in conjunction with the Faculty of Education and the Education Society of HKU Students’ Union, organized a policy forum on 19 March 2005 to discuss these two inextricable education issues which have long been matters of great public concern.

Speakers at the Forum: (from left) Dr Stephen Andrews (Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, HKU), Mr Chu Fu-yau (Principal, Cheung Sha Wan Catholic Secondary School), Dr Cheung Kwok-wah (Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, HKU), and Convenor of the Forum, Ms Ada Wong (Member of HKU EdAA)

Conference on Learning Effectiveness and Class Size

In November 2004, the Faculty held a seminar on Learning Effectiveness and Class Size. In order to involve wider discussion, an international conference on this theme was organized on 14 May 2005. Academics from overseas universities gathered to present their views on the relationship between class size and learning effectiveness. Local speakers were also invited to address the topic in its local context. The Conference attracted more than 200 participants including Mrs Fanny Law, Dr Rosanna Wong and Ms Audrey Eu.

Speakers at the Conference: (from left) Professor Peter Blatchford (University of London), Professor Eric Hanushek (Stanford University), Professor John Hattie (University of Auckland), Professor David Watkins (HKU), Dr Lo Mun Ling (Hong Kong Institute of Education) and Dr Carol Chan (HKU)

Symposium on Reforming Learning and Learning to Reform

This symposium, held on 18 May 2005, was jointly organized by the Faculty’s Centre for Information Technology in Education and the Education and Manpower Bureau with the support from the Quality Education Fund.

At the symposium, Mrs Fanny Law, Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, engaged in a dialogue with students to find out their perception of the education reform initiatives.

According to Professor Martene Scardamalia of the University of Toronto, who delivered a keynote speech on “Breaking Barriers in Reforming Learning: International Experiences from the Knowledge Society Network”, the experiences and views of the students and teachers shared in the symposium were very similar to the best practices in school education around the world in one important respect - the continual quest for sustained improvement.

Professor Cheng Kai-ming of our Faculty summarized the outcomes of the symposium in his closing remark on “Learning to Reform: what have we learnt?” He pointed out that the most important mission of the education reform is to change the mindset on learning rather than to change structures and practices of schooling. Success in reform requires everyone engaged in the educational process to take on the agency of change rather than being passive implementers.
The 2005 International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) conference, attended by 650 delegates, took place at HKU from July 8 to 12. This 34th Annual Conference was supported by the EMB, our Faculty and the Hong Kong Teacher-Librarians’ Association.

With “Information Leadership in a Culture of Change” as its theme, the conference covered a wide range of important and current issues, including information literacy, information policy, knowledge management, and social responsibility. Conference activities included school visits, a trade exhibition, social events, and local tours.

In her address at the opening ceremony, Mrs Fanny Law, Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower Bureau, said: “The school library and teacher-librarians have a vital role to play in the new paradigm of teaching in the knowledge economy, building partnerships for learning and developing the school into an information community, where information and communication technologies support rather than override the educational goals.” Mrs Law also took the opportunity to thank our University for providing high quality professional development for teacher-librarians, and for hosting the conference.

HKU is the only tertiary institution in Hong Kong offering undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Library and Information Management. It does so through the BEd and MSc programmes in the Faculty of Education, and the Diploma in Teacher Librarianship operated in partnership with the HKU School of Professional and Continuing Education. Details are available on http://www.hku.hk/education/.

Seminar on Developing Students’ Independent Learning Capabilities in Secondary Chinese Language Curriculum

Independent Learning is an important strand of learning in the Chinese Language Education Key Learning Area. A project entitled, “Developing students’ independent learning capabilities in the secondary Chinese language curriculum”, has been implemented since 2003 through the collaboration of Dr S K Tse, Associate Dean in the Faculty of Education, Professor Ference Marton from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, the EMB, and four pilot secondary schools. Students have been helped to master the learning process and strategies independently – one of the keys to life-wide and life-long learning. Teachers have also been trained in new concepts and theories related to effective curriculum, learning, and teaching and assessment strategies of Independent Learning in Secondary Chinese Language, empowering them to nurture their students’ capabilities for the future.

The Project has proved to be very successful. Students in the experimental group have seen great improvement in their Chinese language performance, especially in reading and writing. Their interest in reading has also been enhanced. The good practice was disseminated in a seminar held on 4 June 2005. The event, which was reported in the media, attracted nearly 300 headmasters and Chinese language teachers.

Dr K K Chan [right], Principal Assistant Secretary, EMB, and Mr Y F Chow, Chinese Language Panel Head, HKFEW Wong Cho Bau Secondary School
As a response to the growing demand for Putonghua education in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Putonghua Education and Assessment Centre (HKPEAC) (香港普通話培訓測試中心) was established in the Faculty in April 1996. In the same year, HKPEAC collaborated with the State Language Commission (SLC) (國家語言文字工作委員) to organize the first National Putonghua Proficiency Test (普通話水平測試) in Hong Kong. Our collaboration with the SLC was renewed for the fourth time at the signing ceremony held at HKU on 29 August 2005. Officiating at the ceremony were Professor Xao Xishuang, Director of the Mandarin Training and Testing Centre, SLC, and HKU Vice-Chancellor Professor Lap-Chee Tsui.

Details of the National Putonghua Proficiency Test and Putonghua courses offered by the HKPEAC are available on http://www.hku.hk/peac/.

The Centre for Advancement in Special Education (CASE), established under the Faculty, was officially inaugurated on 11 May 2005. The ceremony, officiated by Professor Mark Bray, was attended by principals and teachers from special and mainstream schools, academics and students, government officials, and professionals in the field of special education.

The Government’s policy of integrating special education into mainstream schools has created new challenges for teachers. The establishment of CASE represents the University’s firm commitment to support teachers as they adapt to changes and endeavour to improve the education of children and youth with special educational needs.

Professor Chris Forlin from Western Australia presented a lecture following the Inauguration Ceremony. In her stimulating lecture, entitled “Implementing an outcomes-focused approach to learning: Implications for inclusive education”, Professor Forlin shared her experiences of education reform in Western Australia.

To further promote exchange and cooperation on collaborative educational projects, a branch centre of the Faculty’s Wah Ching Centre of Research on Education in China (CREC) (華正中國教育研究中心) has been established at the China National Institute for Educational Research (CNIER) (中央教育科學研究所) in Beijing. The inauguration ceremony for the establishment of the CNIER-HKU Education Research Centre took place on 15 March 2005 and was attended by the President and Vice-President of CNIER, Dr Gerard Postiglione (former Director of CREC), and other senior CNIER officials.

CNIER is a long-established national-level institute for educational research and is directly under the Ministry of Education.
A new undergraduate double degree in Arts and Education, namely the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education in Language Education – English [BA&BEd (LangEd-Eng)], was launched in September 2005 with a cohort of 50 students. This initiative is in response to the Education & Manpower Bureau’s projection that there is still a shortage of well-trained language teachers in Hong Kong, particularly in the English stream, and that therefore there will be continuing community need for such qualifications. The BA&BEd (LangEd-Eng) is jointly offered by the Faculties of Art and Education.

Like the BEd programme that has been offered by the Faculty for over a decade, the new BA&BEd (LangEd-Eng) programme prepares undergraduate students for direct entry into the language teaching profession.

The Bachelor of Science in Information Management programme [BSc (IM)] is another new undergraduate programme launched by the Faculty in September 2005. This programme targets the fastest growing component of the modern economy, namely the information sector. In particular, it provides the platform for lifelong learning. The BSc(IM) capitalizes on the Faculty as a leader in the field of education for information and technology studies. Students interested in advanced study may continue in the Faculty’s Master of Science in Library and Information Management [MSc (LIM)] programme. Graduates are prepared for a wide range of positions, including executive and administrative posts in libraries and other sectors, and information and knowledge managers. The programme provides a first step along a professional career path in the information age.

The Faculty has recently entered into partnership agreements with the Research Institute of Educational Economics and Administration of Shenyang Normal University and the China National Institute of Educational Research (CNIER) to jointly offer Doctor of Education (EdD) programmes. Details of these programmes will be available soon.

Details of the full range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the Faculty are available on

http://www.hku.hk/education/
Welcome!
Dr David Carless, Associate Professor
Dr Karen Chan, Post-doctoral Fellow
Dr Samuel Chu, Assistant Professor
Dr Lee Kai-man, Teaching Consultant
Dr Li Hui, Research Assistant Professor
Dr Luen Chih-biau, Assistant Professor
Dr Pang Wing-chung, Teaching Consultant
Dr Beverley Webster, Assistant Professor
Mr David Yan, Teaching Consultant

Farewell and best wishes
Ms Yvonne Lam, Teaching Consultant
Ms Sandra Lee, College Lecturer
Mr Leung Kin-ping, Teaching Consultant
Dr Li Yui-ching, Lecturer
Mrs Julia Lui, Teaching Consultant
Ms Joan Ma, Clinical Instructor
Dr Yang Rui, Research Assistant Professor
Dr John Sachs, Assistant Professor
Mr Teddy So, Tutor
Mr Lewis To, Faculty Fellow
Ms Jessie Yum Teaching Consultant

UPCOMING EVENTS

Seminar on “Why Boys Fail and What We Can Do”
香港大學教育學院及香港大學教育學院校友會主辦，《明報》協辦:
日期：2005年10月30日(星期日) Sunday, 30 October 2005
時間：2:15 pm - 4:30 pm
地點：九龍塘聯福道香港浸會大學永隆銀行大廈 W LB203室

Forum on “A Dialogue on Teachers’ Present Situation and the Future”
香港大學教育學院及香港大學教育學院校友會合辦
日期：2005年12月17日(星期六) Saturday, 17 December 2005
時間：2:50 pm - 5:00 pm
地點：香港大學鈕魯詩樓二樓 223室

Faculty of Education Graduation Ceremony
Date: 2 December 2005 (a.m.)
Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Enquiries: 2241 5414
Email: edfac@hku.hk

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Write back.....
The Editorial Board welcomes comments, suggestions and contributions to this newsletter. Whatever your views, do write and let us know!