Equity, Social Justice and Education

The Faculty of Education has selected equity and social justice as one of its key strategic themes. There are many equity and social justice issues and concerns in educational policy, curriculum design and implementation, and educational practice at the school and classroom levels. The Faculty firmly believes that equity and social justice is an important foundation and condition for creating an egalitarian, fair and just society. In research and teaching, the Faculty also upholds the view that although education mirrors, embeds and potentially reproduces unequal, unfair and unjust social relations, it also has the power to be an agent of positive social change, leading to a more equitable and just society. Specifically, it is vital to make education an important vehicle promoting equity, equality, fairness and social justice in society at large, and to help schools to be caring and inclusive learning places in which students see and experience equality and social justice in their daily life.

The Faculty is a leader in Hong Kong, the region and the world in research on policies and issues of equity and social justice, particularly in Chinese and Asian societies. It is well positioned to address the issues and challenges of inequality and social injustice. As shown in the Faculty’s research profile and this booklet, from different perspectives (such as linguistic, sociological, cultural, philosophical and religious approaches), Faculty members contribute to the understanding and promotion of equity and social justice in education and society by conducting various important research projects and publishing findings in international journals and outlets.

From the different perspectives listed above, they examine and explain how education, curriculum and language reflect the ideologies of dominant groups, using them as instruments of social and cultural production and reproduction, and perpetuating their structural dominance. They also provide theoretical insights into how economic, social and educational inequalities
and injustices can be eased or minimized by protecting and promoting civil liberties, providing equal opportunity for competition for socially desirable things (for example, education, power, wealth and status), practising tolerance of diversity, and facilitating fair and reasonable resource allocation.

Through its wide-ranging research work, the Faculty firstly helps policymakers and curriculum developers to address concerns of equity and social justice in their work. Second, it supports principals and teachers in making schools and classrooms caring and inclusive learning places that do not tolerate discrimination and oppression in any form. Third, the Faculty helps schools and teachers equip students of diverse backgrounds and needs with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable and empower them as active, responsible and participatory citizens. Fourth, the Faculty encourages teachers to teach students to respect human dignity and differences; promote fairness and equality in family, the workplace and society; protect the needy and disadvantaged; challenge existing social inequalities and injustices; and participate in creating an inclusive society.

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