We Are What We Write: The Role of Writing in the Academy

Professor Ken Hyland
Professor of Applied Linguistics in Education, University of East Anglia

October 10, 2018 (Wednesday)
12:45 – 14:00
Room 401-402, Meng Wah Complex, HKU
(Chair: Dr Yongyan Li)

Abstract:
This presentation challenges the widespread view that writing is somehow peripheral to the more serious aspects of university life – doing research and teaching students. Instead it argues that universities are about writing and that specialist forms of academic literacy are at the heart of everything we do. Drawing on some of my research over the past 15 years, I will explore what writing means in the academy and argue that it is central to constructing knowledge, educating students and to negotiating a professional academic career. Seeing literacy as embedded in the specific beliefs and practices of individual disciplines, instead of a generic skill that students have failed to develop at school, helps explain the difficulties both students and academics have in controlling the conventions of disciplinary discourses. Ultimately, and in an important sense, we are what we write, and we need to understand the distinctive ways our disciplines have of conceptualising issues, addressing colleagues and presenting arguments to be successful researchers and teachers.

About the speaker:
Ken Hyland is Professor of Applied Linguistics in education at the University of East Anglia. He was previously a professor in London and Hong Kong and has taught in Africa, Asia and Europe. He is best known for his research into writing and academic discourse, having published 230 articles and 27 books on these topics with over 38,000 citations on Google Scholar. His most recent books include Novice writers writing for publication (Palgrave, 2019, edited with Pejman Habibi), the Handbook of EAP (edited with Philip Shaw, Routledge, 2016) and Faces of English (edited with Lillian Wong, Routledge 2017). A collection of his work was published as The Essential Hyland this year by Bloomsbury. He is the Editor of the Bloomsbury Discourse Series and Routledge Innovations and Challenges in Applied Linguistics series, was founding co-editor of the Journal of English for Academic Purposes and was co-editor of Applied Linguistics. Ken is an Honorary professor at the universities of Jilin, Warwick and Hong Kong, and a Foundation Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of the Humanities.

~ ALL ARE WELCOME ~
For enquiries, please contact the Office of Research, Faculty of Education, HKU at 3917 8254.