

**THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

Minutes of the 167<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS) held on 13 January 2021 (Wednesday) at 9:30a.m. via the online platform Zoom.

Present:	Prof Andrew HORNER (Chair)	Prof Anirban MUKHOPADHYAY (Secretary)
	Prof Melody CHAO	Prof King-Lau CHOW
	Prof Jimmy FUNG	Prof Allen HUANG
	Prof Baoling HUANG	Prof Stanley LAU
	Prof Pak-Wo LEUNG	Prof Philip MOK
	Prof Emily NASON	Prof Kevin TAM
	Prof Melinda WHONG	Prof Tim WOO
	Prof Carine YIU	
In attendance:	Prof Kar Yan TAM ( <i>for agenda item #5</i> )	Ms Renee KOU
	Prof Betty LIN ( <i>for agenda item #6</i> )	Dr Trevor WEBB
	Prof Chi Ming CHAN ( <i>for agenda item #8</i> )	
Apologies:	Mr Chung Tat CHOR	Mr Tung Wai CHEUK
	Mr Pak-Ho FONG	Mr Tony LAU
	Miss Wing Yau LOK	Mr James PRINCE
Secretariat:	Ms Anne LUK	Ms Janet TANG

**Action**

**Welcome**

1. The Chair extended his welcome to two new members: Prof Baoling HUANG and Prof Carine YIU; and Ms Janet TANG who newly joined the CUS Secretariat.

**Confirmation of the Minutes of the 166<sup>th</sup> Meeting Held on 11 November 2020**

2. The minutes of the 166<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 11 November 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**Matters Arising from the Last Minutes (CUS 01/21)**

3. The Chair drew members' attention to Senate's approval for the proposed revisions to the Regulations for Examinations and Declaration Statement of Academic Integrity under the HKUST Academic Honor Code. The latter was updated in connection with the changes made to the Regulations for Examinations. Both documents were approved at the Senate's 152<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 8 December 2020 for immediate implementation.

**Oral Report by the Chair**

4. Members were briefed on the Co-terminal Degree 4+1 Pathway for BSc RMBI and MSc FinTech, which would be discussed by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies. Key features of the initiative included:

- (a) Up to 5 BSc RMBI students would be given conditional offer to MSc FinTech in Year 3. These students would be allowed to start taking up to 14 credits of MSc FinTech courses, free of charge, in Year 4. Students could have the credits earned in Year 4 transferred to the MSc FinTech program and complete the remaining credits in Year 5;
- (b) RMBI students who took the FinTech Option would not be allowed to join the 4+1 pathway. Proper advising should be provided by the program leader/unit;
- (c) The initiative would not involve any changes to the curriculum structure, admission requirements, and the award of diploma of the BSc RMBI program; and
- (d) Given that all credits taken by a UG student would be counted towards the overall CGA, the CPS Secretariat was invited to note the possible impact on the credit transfer matter.

**Initial Proposal for the New Bachelor of Science Program in Sustainable and Green Finance (CUS 02/21)**

- 5. Prof Allen HUANG gave a presentation on the initial proposal:
  - (a) Sustainable and green energy had been a hot topic around the world. All initiatives would require financing particularly in improving technologies; hence, green finance had been at the forefront of all major finance centres;
  - (b) The proposal would be a joint school program between SBM and IPO, targeting to admit students for 2022-23 with an initial intake of 30;
  - (c) Required courses concerning the finance-related and environment-related areas would bear similar weighting;
  - (d) An advisory committee comprising external green finance experts would be formed to help enhancing the curriculum; and
  - (e) The Sustainable and Green Finance (SGFN) program would differ from the existing Environmental Management and Technology (EVMT) program in terms of program objectives, curriculum and career placement. SGFN aimed to nurture sustainable and green finance experts to fill the talent gap and help develop Hong Kong into a leader international green finance center. Hence, more than one-third of the requirements would be business-related. And students would take up placement or internship in the finance industry. EVMT aimed to develop environmental management expert, with a heavy focus on environmental courses (only 12 SBM courses). Students would take up placement in non-government organizations, government sectors in the environmental consultancy field.
- 6. Members' observations and comments are summarized as follows:
  - (a) The program, likely to be the first of its kind in Hong Kong, aimed to fill the huge gap in the market due to strong demand at the top level for green finance experts, as reflected by various stakeholders. Green finance would be a priority development for SBM. The proposed program would be a major key to make HKUST a center of excellence in green finance;
  - (b) Members expressed concern if students from Schools other than SBM could join the program. They were assured that the program aimed to recruit the best students, no matter which Schools they were from. A detailed pathway and Major admissions criteria would be worked out by SBM/IPO for providing a clearer picture on the feasibility of admitting

students from outside SBM/ENVR;

- (c) The new ENVR courses would be open to students from other Majors as free electives;
- (d) SBM/IPO had had a long discussion about the program title. Having taken into account the common usage in the community (e.g., Hong Kong Exchange's Sustainable & Green Exchange, Green and Sustainable Banking as used by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority), "Sustainable and Green Finance" was adopted as the title for the program. With "Sustainable" being a broad topic, "Green" would add emphasis to the environment component of the program. The title would be confirmed after collecting further opinions from external experts;
- (e) Since it was planned that the program be included as a new initiative in the Planning Exercise Proposal, an initial discussion of the proposal at CUS would be meaningful; and
- (f) SBM/IPO to coordinate with URAO so that potential students could have a better understanding about the program.

7. Members expressed general support for the initiative. SBM and IPO were invited to include in its final proposal its feedback to comments from CUS. SBM, IPO

**Dual Degree Program in Technology and Management: 11 BEng/BSc Programs with Four More BBA Programs (CUS 03/21)**

8. Prof Betty LIN briefed members on the following key program features:
- (a) Since its inception in 2003, T&M DDP had been attracting very good students.
  - (b) The proposal to include BBA in Economics, Finance, Marketing and Management was to cater for students' request for more BBA Major choices and considering that such dual degree programs (e.g., HKU's Global Engineering and Business Program with 8 options of an accelerated Engineering degree plus 5 options of business Majors) managed to attract good high school applicants.
  - (c) The newly proposed options could provide more focused training to students that would be beneficial to their career development.
  - (d) SENG had been very supportive of the proposal. In fact, the Aerospace Engineering and Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management would be the next in the pipeline for submitting their proposal to CUS for consideration.
  - (e) Credit loading for the newly added BBA Majors, ranging from 20 to 25, would be less demanding as compared to GBM (29 credits), and
  - (f) It was projected that Finance would be very popular, the quota for which would be 15, and 5 each for Economics, Marketing and Management while the quota for GBM would remain unchanged.
9. Members' observations and comments are summarized as follows:
- (a) GBM students could take any electives courses from the SBM departments; while students from the other BBA Majors would be required to take specific courses related to their Major. Students from GBM Majors might not have priority to some popular SBM courses as their counterparts in other BBA Major did.
  - (b) In response to the enquiry about whether the GBM Major would be

absorbed into the other four Majors, it would all depend on students' interest. As some students might not want to specialize in any SBM business Major.

- (c) The quota for T&M DDP students was additional ones. BBA students would not be disadvantaged.
- (d) If students had taken all the required courses to fulfil the degree requirement, students could self-declare the Major concerned.
- (e) Students would be required to fulfil the English requirements for each School; and it was noted that there might be some overlapping. However, Schools concerned preferred to maintain the existing English requirements for different reasons (e.g., for accreditation purposes). CLE considered that it would be meaningful to consolidate the English courses and was rethinking about the matter and would discuss with the Schools accordingly.

10. Members resolved to approve the Dual Degree Program in Technology and Management: 11 BEng/BSc Programs with Four More BBA Programs.

**Final Proposal for the Revised Framework of the Undergraduate Common Core Program (CUS 04/21)**

11. Prof Anirban MUKHOPADHYAY briefed Members on how the final proposal for the revised Framework addressed comments from CUS/Senate:
- (a) CUCE would remain responsible for overseeing the Common Core Program. The Provost Office had been requested to provide the needed support and resources;
  - (b) The current practice of allowing students to complete the Chinese Communication requirement even after Year 1 would be continued;
  - (c) The course design for the Behavioral Foundations of University Education: Habits, Mindsets, and Wellness would take into account students who might have special needs;
  - (d) Different UxOP components would be piloted in advance of Fall 2024;
  - (e) Mechanisms would be devised and implemented using clear and consistent rubrics integrated into the scaffolding structure;
  - (f) Double counting of credits would be allowed for Minor programs;
  - (g) "Creative and Computational Arts (A)" under the Broadening group would be named as "Arts" for simplicity purpose;
  - (h) Due consideration was given to the suggestion of implementing the revamp in a phased manner, and it was concluded that it would not be feasible;
  - (i) Analysis of the current course offerings suggested that further sub-dividing the "Social Analysis" area by School would not serve the broadening objective and therefore was not incorporated;
  - (j) Due to the complexity of the program change, Senate had given approval that the course proposals for the required courses be submitted later using a revised course proposal form; and
  - (k) Subject to Senate's approval for the revised Framework, a Working Group on Review of the Common Core Program which advises and makes recommendation on the implementation of the revised Framework would be formed. It would comprise representatives who have the expertise/experience in setting up support systems.

*[Post meeting notes: It was subsequently clarified that CUS could appoint a Working Group at its discretion and Senate's approval would not be required. The new Working Group on Review of the Common Core Program which advises the implementation of the revised Framework had been formed by CUS and placed under CUCE on 10 February 2021.]*

12. Members' observations and comments are summarized as follows:
  - (a) The transition arrangements to take care of two cohorts of students taking courses from the current Common Core Framework and the revised one would be worked out in the short future. Prof Tim WOO gave a brief account on the general demand on common core courses for the two cohorts by year as a reference. The Working Group, comprising School representatives, would consolidate feedback from Schools on the details and recommend to CUCE for consideration and implementation accordingly;
  - (b) It was confirmed that the moving from the foundations level to the broadening level would require the completion of all the foundation level required courses except for the Chinese Communication course; Moving from the broadening level to the experiencing level would be slightly flexible, subject to the general scaffolding structure and the requirements of the individual UxOP; and
  - (c) Given the loading of the foundation level courses, there was concern that students might have insufficient exposure to the different areas before choosing their Major. CUCE was aware of the matter and would look into it.
13. Members resolved to endorse the proposal for onward submission to the Senate for approval.

**Major Program Changes for Bachelor of Science in Integrative Systems and Design (CUS 05/21)**

14. Prof Chi Ming CHAN gave a presentation on the proposed changes to the program as follows:
  - (a) The Division of Integrative System and Design was formed in 2018. Changes made to the program seemed frequent as the Division had been trying to enhance the program after acquiring better understanding of the curriculum and students' needs.
  - (b) Under the current curriculum, students had to take 12 credits of Math, Science and Engineering courses in Year 1. Students would then proceed to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> year projects, which accounted for 23 credits.
  - (c) The program would like to equip students with strong design and technical fundamental skills, which were considered essential for the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> year projects. As technical fundamental skills were missing from the current curriculum, 3 courses amounting to 10 credits were proposed to be added. To maintain the 120-credit requirement for graduation, the credits for Product Management and Entrepreneurship electives and Project-related electives would be reduced accordingly. Further adjustment included adding a Design elective and converting a level 3 Design elective to a level 2 fundamental course.

15. Members' observations and comments are summarized as follows:
- (a) The proposed changes, though reasonable with an internally consistent logic, resulted in more heavily engineering-focused curriculum. The initial design of the program was to combine design and engineering, with an aim to focus on design thinking with technology being one component and a tool used in design thinking process, which was quite broad. There had been expectations that the program should be more interdisciplinary.
  - (b) Concern was raised in previous CUS/Senate meetings that the ISDN program might have shifted too much towards the engineering side, and hence deviated from the original design of the program which was design thinking and entrepreneurship. Members anticipated that the proposed changes might raise a similar issue at the Senate again.
  - (c) It was noted that the design fundamentals and electives, account for 18 and 3 credits, respectively, totaling 21 credits of the program; and the engineering fundamentals accounted for 10 credits only. Under the Project-relative electives (15 credits), students could take electives from other Schools (e.g., SBM). However, it was felt that electives were not critical in determining the nature of a program;
  - (d) ISDN was invited to:
    - i. review the title and the content of the courses so that they could better integrate into the design thinking framework. For instance, re-title those courses which sounded like hard-core engineering courses, revisit the content of the newly proposed courses to emphasize practical aspects and applications, and how they would be implemented in an experiential learning and project-based style consistent with the program's stated all-experiential learning approach. The review should ensure that courses ISDN students took should have more of the design thinking rather than the engineering flavor;
    - ii. take the opportunity to address the issue that students in Hong Kong might not have a good understanding about integrative system and design, as reflected in the drop in the admission rate; and
    - iii. ensure that if having the curriculum moved towards more engineering-focused was considered beneficial to make the program stronger, such direction should be in line with the senior management's expectation.

ISDN

16. In view of the need to review the program in a number of aspects, some of the ISD new course/course change proposals submitted for approval by the CUS (under CUS 06/21) would be put on hold as further changes might be required. The CUS Secretariat would liaise with SENG to identify the courses in question.

CUS  
Secretariat

*[Post meeting notes:*

*Confirmed with SENG/ISD that except for ISDN 4330, all the following new course/ course change proposals concerning the program change of BSc ISDN would be put on hold as follows:*

- *PHYS 1001 - removal from the curriculum (CUS 05/21);*
- *ISDN 2601, ISDN 2602, and ISDN 3601- new course proposals (CUS 06/21);*
- *ISDN 3200 - major course change/credit change (CUS 06/21); and*
- *ISDN 2300 - minor course change (CUS 07/21).]*

**New Course and Major Course Changes (CUS 06/21)**

17. No request for un-starring of the agenda items were received. With an understanding that all proposals were fully examined by the CUS Secretariat, the Committee approved all course proposals without further deliberation at the meeting, except those related to the BSc ISDN program change proposal which were being put on hold (see post-meeting notes under para. 16).

**Items for Information**

18. The following paper would be available for information to Members upon request:  
(a) **Minor Changes to Courses and Programs (CUS 07/21)**

**Potential Graduates by Fall 2020-21 (CUS 08/21)**

19. Detailed minutes related to this reserved item are given in the Attachment to the minutes.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 17 March 2021 at 9:30am**

20. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35am.