Knowledge Exchange and Outreach

Knowledge Exchange (KE)
The Publicity and Outreach Committee (POC) was awarded a second round of KE funding to evaluate the impact of its popular open access website of professional writing. ProFeedHR is http://ceen.iku.tu.com/profeedhr. Free public workshops on enhancing business writing skills were offered on four Saturdays, benefiting nearly 40 participants from different walks of life. Two independent evaluators with substantial experiences in instructional design and public relations were also recruited to evaluate and offer suggestions for improving the website. Extremely positive feedback about the workshops and ProFeedHR was received from the workshop attendees and website evaluators respectively.

Inter-University Learning
An international inter-university learning project was integrated into an English writing course for social sciences in the second semester. A group of 35 students and professors from Chung-Ang University, Seoul, visited their HKU partners for the first time in a semester-long collaboration. During their 3-day visit they explored project ideas, discussed plans, and jointly presented their work with HKU students to teachers of both universities.

Research and Development
We are pleased to announce that two colleagues were awarded the SCOLAR® funding:

Case studies on how Chinese English learners and Hong Kong secondary school students mediate automated content feedback and related contextual learning elements for essay writing: Implications for pedagogy
Principal Investigator: Dr. Cynthia Lee Amount funded: HK$477,803
Objective: To examine the process by which 15- to 16-year-old Chinese Hong Kong learners of English mediate automated content feedback provided by a Web-based Essay Criticality System (WECOS) for essay writing and how other contextual learning elements influence mediation and writing.

Analyzing English learners’ experiences in the transition from senior secondary mainstream and shadow education to university studies
Principal Investigator: Dr. Kevin Tong Co-Investigators: Dr. Natalie Pang and Dr. Ora Kao Amount funded: HK$480,931
Objective: To investigate first-year university students’ English learning backgrounds and how university English lecturers can facilitate their learning at university. The findings have implications for the development of Coursely University English for today’s learning needs.

PhD successes
Dr. Tim Lee (jointly supervised by Dr. David Gardner and Dr. Ken Lau) Dr. Kevin Yang (jointly supervised by Prof. Mark Bray and Dr. Ora Kao in the Faculty of Education)

Awards and Achievements
Dr. Peter Crosthwaite, John Sinclair Byrne, ICAME Conference – Winner Kevin Jiang, John Sinclair Byrne, ICAME Conference – Runner-up Kevin Jiang, HAAL, Famses Brunei Memorial Award Winner

Obituary
It is with deep and genuine sadness that we announce the recent death of Polly Tse who died on 18th March after a long battle with cancer. Tse Hung Yu Polly, was a devoted, caring, and supportive in the field of English academic writing. She was a deeply sensitive and hardworking colleague, supportive of both students and colleagues. She was a great academic whose work and research expressed her mind. She was a dedicated student and a part-time PhD in separate logistics, but also publishing over 15 papers and several book chapters. Polly’s contributions to the field of English academic writing will be sorely missed by her colleagues in the Centre, by her students, and by her husband and family.

Polly Tse

Staff News

New Associate Director
Congratulations to Miranda Liao on taking over as the Associate Director from 15 June 2016 and a big thank you to Dr. David Gardner for his invaluable contribution to the Centre as Associate Director over the last 4 years.

Congratulations to New Promotions
Dr. Cecilia Yip, Senior Lecturer Jean Castille, Carol Jull, Kevin Yang, Lecturer

Farewell to Departing Colleagues & ETAs
Belinda Lam, With till, Winnie Ho, Tiffany Yuen

Case Study: English Aid Initiative
A Warm Welcome to New Colleagues Dr. Anas Abdul Husain, Assistant Lecturer Christian Allen, Assistant Lecturer Celine Sin, Assistant Lecturer Vivian Kwok, Assistant Lecturer Stephen Roy, Assistant Lecturer Aikyo Chih Mouey, Assistant Lecturer Rebecca Taylor, Assistant Lecturer

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This year saw the first batch of students graduating from the four-year course at HU and therefore the first graduates who had benefited from the support of our external and the Discipline BEd course. The curriculum reform of 2012, which saw Hong Kong universities transform themselves into teaching-learning institutions, has contributed to a 50% increase in academic research in the past five years. This year, 30,000 undergraduates in the process, was a challenging time for all lecturers, and we are pleased to see the first fruits of our labours. We have now taught almost all our 36 ED courses, refining and tweaking them as we go, and, they seem to have been successful in both engaging students in more active learning and academic dilemma solving in the particular areas of English (EUL). HU’s English (EUL) freshman course, the largest course at HU with some 2,200 students last year, is also now well-established and gaining increased student approval.

Because English is the official medium of instruction at HU, the role played by the Centre for Applied English Studies is at the heart of students’ experience here. Our core students are required to take 12 credits of English, six of which are in English, and in the form of ED courses. CUE is designed to help students develop skills that are useful to any career they may choose post-university.

Overall, we taught 4,216 undergraduate students (including 2,916 in CUE), 1,002 students in summer workshops, staff courses and other programmes, and 1,547 students in postgraduate courses. We also conducted 5,510 self-access consultations in our new home in the Learning Commons and graduated 47 students. We also successfully completed a first-year English (EUL) program that continued to teach 10 full-time and four part-time students on our PhD program. We graduated one PhD student this year.

The 2016-2017 academic year promises to be another challenging and productive period as we continue to refine our courses and expand our out-of-class learning opportunities for students. We have also worked closely with other institutions and invited visiting scholars to participate in our professional development program this year. Planning and preparation for a second FACOS of English conference is well under way to build on the success of our 2015 conference and bring scholars from around the world to discuss issues relevant to the teaching of English as a second language (ESL). We invite anyone interested in these important topics to join us to contribute to these meetings with the same enthusiasm, commitment, high-quality research and inspired language education for which we are well-known.

More details about the conference can be found at http://www.hku.hk/facosenglish/