

## Open Letter to Staff and Students of the University

Dear colleagues and students,

I wish to share with you my feelings about the course of events that took place at the forum on the restructuring of academic departments and programmes held last night (19th February) at the University Square.

(1) All proposals for academic restructuring are the results of extensive consultation and repeated negotiations between the faculties/departments and University management. The departments concerned have briefed their teachers and students about the progress of discussion on many occasions, and made revisions to the proposals in response to the feedback they obtain. Time and again my colleagues and I have communicated separately with students of the affected programmes and representatives of the CUHK Student Union. It was I who initiated the forum last night to understand further the views of the students on the restructuring proposals, and to address any concerns that they might raise. All opinions given at the forum will certainly be considered carefully and seriously, and all relevant proposals will be accordingly fine-tuned. I am not for implementing any proposal immediately if the departments concerned are not ready.

(2) At the forum, students expressed worries over the impact of budget cut on the University's academic development. Their sentiments I do share and very much appreciate. But then the government's huge fiscal deficit is the stark reality to be reckoned with, as I have repeatedly stated, and no university could or should stay uninvolved. It couldn't be further from the truth that, as vice-chancellor of The Chinese University, I have accepted 'with good grace' a 10 per cent (in actual fact 12.3 per cent) reduction in UGC subvention for 2004-5. But on the premise of helping Hong Kong to eliminate its deficit, I do agree that universities as members of a major sector of the community must shoulder their share of responsibility. The vice-chancellors of all eight universities have thus reached a consensus on this.

(3) I understand and share many of the views and concerns expressed by the students last night. Indeed the very purpose of holding the forum was to get to know what they thought and how they felt. But frankly speaking, the rough language used by some and their rude manners were more than just disappointing. The confusion and commotion at the close of the forum was also the last thing I wanted to see. In the midst of all the jostling and shouting I was not aware that anyone was trying to hand me a petition letter. Neither did I manage to take in what was happening outside the car when I was being driven away. Surely things could have been handled in a better way, and it was only afterwards that I learnt that a student and a colleague had suffered minor bruises. To them I send my sincere regards. I have also asked the Office of Student Affairs and other colleagues to follow up on their condition.

Dear colleagues and students, the magnitude and ferocity of the impending budget cut is unprecedented in the 40-year history of The Chinese University. In the face of such a grave challenge, I do hope to and I certainly will work with you all, not only to preserve the University's strength in teaching and research, but also to ensure its sustainable development.



Ambrose Y.C. King  
Vice-Chancellor

## 校長致全校同仁、同學公開信

各位同仁、各位同學：

我想就昨晚在大學廣場舉行「學系及課程整合交流會」的經過，提出我的幾點感受：

(一)學系及課程整合的建議是經過大學和學院／學系多番商議及諮詢而達至的方案，各有關學系亦多次對師生作簡報，並在建議中已積極回應了師生提出的意見。我和多位同事也曾多次分別與各有關課程的同學和大學學生會溝通。昨晚舉行「學系及課程整合交流會」是我主動約見有關學系及課程的同學，希望進一步了解他們對「整合」方案的意見，並回應同學的問題。同學們在交流會上提出的意見和訴求，我一定會認真和審慎地考慮，並會進一步完善有關方案。在有關學系準備不足下，我是不會主張立即實施建議的方案的。

(二)在交流會上，同學們關心削資對大學學術發展的影響，對此，我是非常認同，並且十分欣賞的。與此同時，我已多番說明，大學必須面對政府出現嚴峻財赤的現實，不能也不應置身事外。作為中大的校長，我不會也絕非「欣然」接受大學教育資助委員會在2004-5年削減中大10%（其實總計是12.3%）的撥款，但在協助香港「減赤」的前提下，大學作為香港一個主要界別的成員，必須共同承擔。此所以八間大學校長有這樣的共識。

(三)交流會中許多同學表達的意見與憂慮，我是理解並認同的。我召開交流會的目的就是要了解同學的想法，了解同學的感受。但我很坦白地說，對於會中一些粗暴的語言和態度，我是完全不能欣賞的。交流會結束後發生混亂場面，更是我極不願意見到的。當時在人群擁擠和喧鬧聲中，我並沒有留意有同學跑過來交信，離開時亦未有詳細觀察車外情況，我同意可以有更妥善的處理方法。事後我得悉有同學和同事在混亂中受到輕傷，特此我要向他們致以深切的慰問，並已請學生事務處及其他有關同事積極跟進。

今次大學面對削減資助之巨之猛，是中大四十年立校以來所未有，面對這樣嚴峻的考驗，我希望並一定會與全校師生，共同努力，不止為保存中大的教研實力，亦且為中大的持續發展。謝謝。

金耀基

二零零四年二月二十日