



常務副校長室

Provost's Office

To	Faculty Members
Cc	Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors/Vice-President, Associate Vice-Presidents, Registrar, Faculty Deans, Dean of Graduate School
From	Provost
Date	February 19, 2020
Subject	Teaching & Learning in the Time of COVID-19
Enquiry	<a href="mailto:info.prvo@cuhk.edu.hk">info.prvo@cuhk.edu.hk</a>

Dear Colleagues,

Classes resumed on Monday, and I am delighted to report that our e-learning campaign has gotten to a fine and promising start. In all, 2,320 classes were conducted on Monday and Tuesday. Attendance is high, averaging about 90% according to the surveys received. Today, no incident has been reported so far. Due to your dedication and effort, and the excellent preparations and support rendered by the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Registrar's Office, ITSC, EMO and other units, for once Murphy's Law didn't quite apply! This is no mean feat.

Thank you!

What is even more encouraging is that colleagues are venturing beyond delivering their lectures online, to devise meaningful and interesting interactive learning activities for our students. One faculty member commented that s/he ran four trials with students last week, using the Zoom Meeting platform, and consulted colleagues on "how to run different figures and functions to make [his/her] lessons multimodal." To me, this is inspiring. From the responses to our running questionnaire, there is reason to be optimistic about the effectiveness of online teaching and learning. And this is only Day 3—with experience, we can do a lot more with the tools available. Indeed, we should compile a playbook of best practices, not only for sharing within

our own community but also to showcase the strength of CUHK to our international partners.

Graduate student supervision remains a challenge. Lab/studio/workspace access must continue to be tightly controlled, and many of our PhD students still cannot return to the campus. Unfortunately, COVID-19 is showing little sign of abating, and it is imperative that we put up the strongest defense possible to prevent it from reaching our shores. There have been suspected cases of infection, and while we have been lucky so far and managing the situation well, thanks to the intervention of the Committee on Health Promotion and Protection, University Health Service, Student Affairs Office, Graduate School and other Departments/Units, we simply cannot afford to be cavalier about the possibility of an outbreak on campus. I am deeply heartened to learn, in this respect, that colleagues are taking extra steps to engage their students, to map out afresh their progress and study schedule, and to assure them that they will reap fully the benefits of a CUHK education. Certainly, we can ask our students to focus on writing up their data, deepening their analysis or extending the coverage of their reviews, but there is really nothing more comforting and meaningful than the individual counsel of a caring supervisor.

I do hope that the situation will improve soon. Much as we want to support graduate student research, we will have to bear with the restrictions for a little while longer. With colleagues investing selflessly their time and effort to ensure that learning outcomes are not adversely affected by the unhappy circumstances, I am confident that we will emerge from this experience a stronger University.

Best,  
Alan

Alan K. L. Chan, Ph.D.  
Provost  
J.S. Lee Professor of Chinese Culture  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong