A Message from the President and Vice-Chancellor

The University’s achievements have been steadily garnering increasing recognition and global prestige. In 2023, a record 51 HKU academics were on Clarivate’s list of “Highly Cited Researchers”, ranking 13th globally among universities. In the latest QS Asia University Rankings, HKU moved up two spots to ranking the second. These and many other accolades are the harvest of the endeavours of our scholars and students – the global acclaim we are receiving now would not have been possible without the collective efforts of all members of the HKU community.

In 2023, HKU recruited students from over 40 countries and regions, welcoming 83 top scorers from all six inhabited continents. Following several months of campus-wide debate, the University now fully embraces Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in education. At the curriculum level, new interdisciplinary programmes with a technology focus have been developed, such as the Bachelor of Arts in Humanities and Digital Technologies and the Master of Arts in AI, Ethics and Society. Alongside technology, the Future Readiness Initiative aims to equip first-year students with essential soft skills and encourage them to plan their learning journey. Communication skills are also emphasised through communication-intensive courses developed by dedicated teams of teachers.

Our strength in attracting top students reflects the excellence of our scholars, both established and newly recruited. The 2023 Best Scientists ranking, compiled by Research.com, named 10 HKU professors as among the top 100 best scientists in their discipline, with three among the top 10 in the world. In 2023 alone, we welcomed 91 academics from some of the top universities in the world, including a Nobel Laureate. Furthermore, HKU continues to excel in major competitive research funding exercises: our researchers secured HK$276 million for 284 projects under the General Research Fund and Early Career Scheme, and attracted eight Excellent Young Scientist Fund (HK and Macau) awards, alongside many other successes.

HKU remains committed to fostering forward-thinking, innovation, and impact through various strategies, infrastructure, and curricula, with the newly established Techno-Entrepreneurship Core acting as the central hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. The introduction of a HK$405 million Entrepreneurship Engine Fund aims to transform research into practical applications, seeding early-stage deep tech ventures and accelerating high-impact tech start-ups. In 2022–23, 90 new patents were granted, and recent years have also seen more than 280 HKU-affiliated start-ups launched. The Strategic Impact Funding Scheme funds new projects in seven globally strategic areas aligned with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, and rewards scholars who aim for international as well as local impacts.

Today, we celebrate the outstanding accomplishments that showcase the innovative work of our educators and researchers as they address the key issues of our time. I extend my heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to all the recipients of these prestigious awards. Looking ahead, I am excited about the new heights HKU will achieve in the future through nurturing talent and further cultivating a culture of academic excellence.

Professor Xiang ZHANG
President and Vice-Chancellor
March 2024
Professor Chu received his BS degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and PhD from Emory University in the USA. He joined the University of Hong Kong in 2012 and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology.

The pathogenic mechanisms and host and viral determinants of emerging viral pathogens are Professor Chu’s main focus of investigation, with an emphasis on human-pathogenic coronaviruses. His studies have revealed key mechanisms for how coronaviruses spread and cause diseases. Findings from his studies have had major impacts on the international and national policy shift in public health control measures, as well as clinical management strategies for COVID-19. Professor Chu’s work has been highly recognised by the field. He has publications in *Nature* as both the first and last corresponding author, and he has been ranked as a Highly Cited Researcher by Clarivate in 2021, 2022 and 2023. In recognition of Professor Chu’s track record in research on coronaviruses, he was awarded the Excellent Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macau) in 2021 by the National Natural Science Foundation of China.

Professor Chu believes that impactful research is rooted in curiosity and is made possible by passion, self-motivation and enthusiasm. He also feels especially blessed to have received tons of support from family members and his mentors, colleagues, collaborators and students, and he is confident that together they will continue to make interesting discoveries that are important to the field.
Professor Luo received his BSc and MSc from Sun Yat-sen University and later his PhD from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2014. He was a research director at SenseTime Group Ltd from 2014 to 2019, before joining the University of Hong Kong.

“Can we work with machines more efficiently without using touchscreens and keyboards?” Professor Luo and his team try to answer this revolutionary question by focusing on generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) research to develop efficient and low-cost AI systems, which enable ordinary people to collaborate with machines on professional tasks using simple natural language without touchscreens, keyboards and mice. Tasks include generating high-quality documents, images and videos. His work reveals the intrinsic differences and connections between data modalities such as text and images and neural network structures.

Professor Luo and his team have developed over 30 renowned software and databases related to GenAI, serving hundreds of thousands of professional developers. His works have won several international outstanding paper awards, such as at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics 2022, the 2023 World AI Conference, and from the Computational Visual Media journal, and his pioneering work on diffusion models for visual perception was among 17 nominations from 8,260 papers for the best paper at the 2023 International Conference on Computer Vision.

GenAI is hailed as the catalyst for the fifth industrial revolution. Professor Luo will continue working on highly reliable and low-cost GenAI research through teamwork and collaboration, transforming human-robot interaction and collaborative production between humans and machines.
Before Professor Wong joined the University of Hong Kong in 2016, he received his BSc and MPhil degrees in Biochemistry and Molecular Biotechnology from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2005 and 2007 respectively, and completed his PhD in Biochemistry at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 2011. He joined the Synthetic Biology Group at the Research Laboratory of Electronics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 2012 to 2016 for postdoctoral training.

Professor Wong’s groundbreaking gene-editing tool screening platform has overcome the current limitations of one-by-one testing, enabling rapid identification of the most suitable and effective gene therapy tools and accelerating the development of next-generation precision genome editors. Other screening platforms that he has developed facilitate the interpretation of biological system complexity, leading to efficient screening of combination therapies for clinical applications. His work has resulted in publications in prestigious journals including Nature Methods, Nature Biomedical Engineering, Nature Biotechnology, etc, as well as PCT patents and patent applications on CRISPR-based screening methods and tools. He was awarded the Research Grants Council’s Early Career Award (2016), the National Natural Science Foundation of China’s Excellent Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macau) (2020), and the BOCHK Science and Technology Innovation Prize (2023).

Professor Wong enjoys thinking from different perspectives. As a biologist, he is committed to understanding intricate biosystems and explaining how they concisely work out their operations. From there, he also thinks like an engineer, considering how to design biological tools for real-world applications. He feels that both ways of thinking are equally important, and together they could create new biotechnologies that offer real-world value.

Professor Qian is trained in human geography and urban planning. He obtained a BSc in Urban and Regional Planning from Sun Yat-sen University, China in 2010, and a PhD in Human Geography from the University of Edinburgh, UK in 2013. Prior to joining the University of Hong Kong in 2017, he worked as a postdoctoral research fellow at the Singapore Management University, Singapore.

Professor Qian’s research investigates the social and cultural dimensions of urban and regional development in China, engaging interdisciplinarily with human geography, urban studies and social theory. His work investigates (1) how social and cultural qualities and differences shape the particular practices for urban and regional development; (2) how everyday social and cultural innovations are mobilised by ordinary people to deal with drastic urban changes; and (3) how cultures can be activated as important assets and sources of value for development. His works have earned him accolades such as the prestigious Gill Memorial Award from the UK’s Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) in 2022, and being ranked among the world’s top 2% scientists in 2023 by Stanford University.

Professor Qian believes in the important role a universe of cultures, meanings and place attachment plays in enhancing people’s well-being in an era of rapid modernisation and development, as well as the necessity for social cohesion and solidarity beyond the pursuit of economic value.

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Professor Zhang received his BE from the University of Science and Technology of China and PhD in Controls from the University of California, Berkeley. He joined the University of Hong Kong in 2018 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

With a focus on robotics, Professor Zhang designs new configurations of unmanned aerial vehicles that can best adapt to environments with high efficiency and safety. His research also centres around developing navigation methods for robots to operate autonomously in real-world scenarios, without the need for human intervention. Professor Zhang’s work has been recognised by world-leading journals such as Science Robotics and Nature Communications. His work has been featured on the cover page of Science Robotics, and visually featured by Science. He has also won several best paper awards and has been among the finalists for a number of awards from renowned international journals and conferences. Professor Zhang’s team have developed and open-sourced a range of mapping and navigation software, widely utilised in the industry. His team have won numerous championships in international challenges.

Professor Zhang is interested in solving real-world problems. His research is widely supported by industry. His prior experience as an industry consultant has provided him with valuable insights into identifying high-impact problems, which have formed the foundation for his subsequent research endeavours. He believes that fostering close collaboration between academia and industry is vital for achieving research excellence.
A learning experience is like a museum visit, where museum visitors are presented with exhibits and descriptive information organised based on a coherent narrative or theme. A museum needs its curators, designers and guides to work hand-in-hand to co-create an engaging experience for its visitors. Likewise, I work simultaneously as the curator, the designer and the guide in crafting a transformative learning experience for my students.

Content overload has been a perennial issue in medical education since the 19th century, hence it is not uncommon for medical students to become merely storehouses of abundant information, without gaining sufficient understanding. As a curator of content, I believe the decision of what is core biomedical science content in a medical programme should not be made by the biomedical science content expert alone. The teacher should integrate the perspectives of different stakeholders: content experts, students and clinical practitioners, to ensure the content curated are fit for purpose in a medical curriculum.

As a designer of learning experience, I partner with medical students to create practical classes that are relevant to their aspired professional identity as clinicians. We collectively identify threshold concepts and study relevant simulations or point-of-care devices. We then use an iterative process to craft the practical classes: (1) design, (2) testing, (3) evaluation, (4) refining and then (5) delivery.

As a guide of students’ learning, I strive to facilitate students’ self-motivation to learn through grounding in Ryan and Deci’s theory of motivation. To support my students’ autonomy, I give them freedom in finding their own solution to solve a problem relevant to real-life clinical practice. To support their competence, I ensure the problem presented is appropriately difficult; while also providing scaffolds at the initial parts of a learning experience, to help them develop mastery and confidence.
A characteristic Dr Chan possesses, which is appreciated by many students, is his ability to empathise with their academic struggles. Being an MBBS I student last year, I – along with many other students in my cohort – were still adjusting to the learning pace while being overwhelmed by the sheer amount of complicated concepts shown in physiology lectures. As a physiology lecturer, not only did Dr Chan understand our struggles, but he was more than willing to spend time outside of class and to the best of his ability – clear specific confusing physiology concepts in a simple and patient manner. As a result, I had little difficulty navigating through the physiology content in MBBS I, and was able to successfully explain those confusing concepts to my friends in the same way he did for me.

Bryan LEE Ho Lam  MBBS, current student

From the perspective of a student, teaching is a duty that has to be fulfilled with multiple key elements. To be a good teacher, one has to find a good blend of professionalism, care and empathy. Dr Chan has shown on many occasions in and out of lecture halls that he has a good balance of these qualities, but I remember several of these in particular.

The first moment was related to Dr Chan’s lecture delivery. Inside the lecture halls, his delivery was concise and simple. He understood the potential obstacles for students in learning medical physiology and adjusted accordingly. The most memorable was him drawing detailed diagrams explaining the complicated connections between a vascular function curve and cardiac function curve. This amount of care that Dr Chan displayed in and outside the classroom made learning medicine even more worthwhile.

The second memorable moment was when I worked under Dr Chan in the Student-Educator Partnership programme. While a high standard in our work was expected, knowing that we just finished our first year of medical studies, Dr Chan understandingly checked if we needed more guidance and feedback, boosted our confidence in coming up with new ideas, and even went one step further to make sure we enjoyed the progress as well.

Peter YUEN Tak Yu  MBBS, current student

As a medical educator, the essence of my teaching philosophy is encapsulated in the acronym PASSION:
- Person-centred;
- Actively engaging;
- Social and collaborative;
- Scholarly and reflective;
- Inclusive and supportive;
- Outcomes-based; and
- Novel.

Accordingly, my educational practice is underpinned by pedagogical approaches derived from constructivism, sociocultural theories, and adult learning principles. In the rest of this portfolio, let me unfold how PASSION is interwoven into my teaching and learning practice, curricular innovations, leadership and scholarship.

My commitment to teaching excellence has been recognised internationally through Fellowship of Advance HE and Membership of the Academy of Medical Educators in the UK. I am also passionate about supporting my colleagues to excel as learner-centred teachers by serving as Programme Director of Pedagogy and Training for the Bau Institute of Medical and Health Sciences Education. In this role, I lead, teach and provide quality assurance for various Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses that support multidisciplinary colleagues in their development as health professions educators e.g. new academics, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) tutors and paramedic instructors.

This promotion of teaching excellence extends globally and in January 2023, I served as a voluntary international medical education consultant in Papua New Guinea, bringing my expertise in medical education and clinical medicine to the team. We reviewed their family medicine training programme and offered peer review of teaching plus CPD seminars. As first author, I also wrote the consulting report with recommendations on enhancing their training in a learner-centred way which was appreciated by the programme’s leadership.

I am thrilled to further advance teaching excellence and facilitate recognition among our Faculty’s undergraduate students by serving as Deputy Programme Director for the Student Teaching and Reflection (STaR) Programme. This pioneering initiative is the first of its kind in Asia and second worldwide. With the team, I am leading its implementation to enable peer teachers to be mentored and apply for Associate Fellowship of Advance HE. Through this programme, I aspire to nurture our next generation of competent and passionate health professions educators.
Professor Chan invariably puts students at the heart of her teaching. Such an attribute makes her very capable of creating a relaxed and engaging atmosphere for us to learn effectively and enjoyably. She made it a habit to regularly reach out to students to better recognise our needs at different times. With her belief in collaborative effort and openness in receiving feedback, she would often tailor her teaching to further accommodate our expectations and ever-changing needs. She never fails to find time, even during off-work hours, to care for her students both academically and emotionally.

Since knowing her in my Enrichment Year, I have constantly felt very accepted and supported, and she is a huge encouragement to my medical journey. She is very humble and understanding, so conversations with her are always filled with peace and comfort. Moreover, her wide range of work experience in multiple countries, in both high- and low-resource settings, have provided students with invaluable insights, opening our eyes to immeasurable opportunities in our lives. With a heart devoted to service, along with a strong desire to help, she has illuminated the lives of many of us, and even friends outside of the medical faculty.

Beata WONG Pui Kwan MBBS, current student

I began my higher education journey at the School of Biological Sciences, the University of Hong Kong in 2019. I constantly ask myself how I can best equip my students with the knowledge and skills they need for their future endeavours. In light of this, my teaching philosophy revolves around two key aspects: developing students’ communication skills and employing problem-based learning to empower students to tackle real-world challenges. Additionally, I recognise the need to keep pace with the rapid development of science and technology, prompting me to consistently review and update my course materials.

Anne Roe, a renowned psychologist, once emphasised, ‘Nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated.’ Inspired by this quote, I have collaborated with the Communication-Intensive Courses (CIC) Committee to revamp two of my courses. By incorporating diverse communication tasks, fostering peer feedback activities, and encouraging experience sharing, I strive to enhance my students’ oral presentation and reflective writing skills.

At the core of my teaching philosophy lies problem-based learning. In my laboratory courses, I present students with thought-provoking questions that require them to conduct experiments and apply the knowledge gained from lectures to find solutions. By working collaboratively in groups, students explore various approaches to answer these questions. Furthermore, to create an immersive learning environment and promote independent learning, I adopt the flipped classroom approach, encouraging students to review lab materials and videos before attending the lab sessions.

Through the implementation of these teaching strategies, I have witnessed the achievement of my primary goals: motivating and inspiring students to learn while also equipping them with essential communication skills and hands-on research experience. The joy I derive from teaching has surpassed my expectations, fueling my commitment to constant improvement. In the years ahead, I eagerly anticipate acquiring and incorporating new knowledge into my teaching activities, ultimately benefitting my students and their future endeavours.
In my teaching, I prioritise skill development, treating it as a tangible learning objective, and not just an abstract goal. We delve into a diverse range of skills, from fundamental ones like summarising arguments and interpreting data to advanced skills such as critically analysing Generative AI outputs. This practical approach is designed to elevate students’ awareness and mastery of skills that are directly applicable in the real world.

Beyond the curriculum, I believe in the power of a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Breaking down the barriers of the traditional student-teacher hierarchy, I strive to create a space where students, particularly those navigating university life for the first time, feel comfortable and supported. I organise informal gatherings like campus lunches and coffee hours to provide a relaxed setting for students to connect, discuss diverse topics, and ease into university life.

My teaching philosophy is a blend of practical skill-building and creating a nurturing academic environment. This combination is key to empowering students not just to succeed in their university studies but to thrive in their future careers and personal growth.

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**Students’ Words of Appreciation**

Professor Chan is my teacher for several core courses such as From Molecules to Cells, and Genetics. I am strongly interested in the course content he designed because it is always related to our daily lives and contextualises difficult concepts. For instance, he uses the example of mosaicism in cats to help consolidate understanding of the co-dominance concept and eliminate misconceptions that it is caused by genetic diseases.

Professor Chan is very encouraging during classes. He always asks open questions to stimulate students’ thinking, which help me gain new insights into genetics. I have developed a strong interest in the field after attending his lectures, and am fortunate to work under his supervision on my final year project. Professor Chan explains the rationale behind experimental designs very clearly, and demonstrates experimental procedures such as cell culturing to me. As a caring teacher, he regularly checks on my project progress, analyses potential issues, gives detailed replies to my questions to boost my confidence, and acknowledges my ability when I feel uncertain.

Overall, Professor Chan has a friendly relationship with us. He would schedule regular lab activities so that we could understand more about each other. He is also very supportive of my studies and research. I truly appreciate his teaching and guidance.

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Eddy YEUNG Ka Ho  
BSc, current student

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I met Professor Chan for the first time in BIOL3408 Genetics. While I originally expected it to be another boring course that emphasised studying and memorising, Professor Chan surprised me with not only his teaching method but also the course design itself, and it turned out to be a course I really enjoyed.

Besides lectures and examinations, Professor Chan arranged presentations and lab practical sessions that required us to study how the principles of genetics are reflected in many daily-life examples, like how genes cause different shapes and colours of vegetables, how cats get their fur colour, etc. These interesting examples have further inspired my interest in studying genetics. Professor Chan is also a caring and supportive teacher. After lectures, he would always stay to answer students’ questions, even drawing figures to better illustrate difficult concepts. He would also give useful feedback on our assignments to help us improve.

As the supervisor of my final year project, Professor Chan often discusses my project’s progress, asks if I have encountered any difficulties in experiments or if the workload is too heavy, and makes adjustments according to our abilities and schedule. Overall, I would say it has been an amazing experience and a great pleasure to attend Professor Chan’s courses and work in his laboratory.

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David LIU Yuk Sing  
BSc, current student
My heartfelt congratulations to Frank for receiving the Early Career Teaching Award 2023!

Frank is one of the most compassionate and supportive educators I have had the honour of working with and learning from. As both his research assistant and student in his Geography class on regional development and technological change, I have witnessed his exceptional dedication to his research team members and students. Every lecture he delivers is infused with great passion. His ability to incorporate lively examples highly relevant to the complex ideology and foster a positive learning environment with engaging teacher-student interactions, even in the context of online learning, is truly remarkable.

Aside from teaching, Frank is a strong mentor for research and personal development. He is always willing to set aside time to offer individualised feedback. During my final year of undergraduate study, his unwavering support and warm encouragement were indispensable in guiding me through all those important decisions for my future path and academic journey.

Frank’s tireless commitment to nurturing students’ growth is something I will forever cherish. His unwavering support and guidance have profoundly influenced my academic and personal growth. I am very grateful to have him as my teacher and mentor. Once again, my deepest congratulations on his well-deserved award.

Congratulations to Frank on the well-deserved Early Career Teaching Award. He stands out as an exemplary educator, dedicated not only to students’ academic growth but also to their overall well-being. My initial encounter with Frank was in GEOG1012 Economic and Social Development in an Urbanizing World in 2020, conducted on Zoom during the pandemic. Frank’s unwavering passion for teaching and his commendable pedagogical approach transformed lectures into interactive sessions, connecting theories to real-world examples.

Enrolling in Frank’s GEOG2128 Economic Geography course deepened my interest in the discipline. Frank’s dedication was evident as he willingly devoted post-class hours to assist with course content and assignments. His responsiveness and commitment to my academic success were further demonstrated through organised Zoom meetings prior to exams.

Our paths crossed again in GEOG4001 during an overseas field trip, revealing another side of Frank’s character. Beyond the professor-student dynamic, he became a cherished friend engaging in discussions about future career plans, offering valuable mentor-like guidance. This intricate bond highlights Frank’s profound influence, extending beyond conventional dynamics.

In essence, Frank’s immeasurable contributions to my academic and personal growth, his passion for teaching and unwavering support have indelibly marked my university experience, for which I am profoundly grateful.

Humans are born to move. Kinesiology examines the intricacies of our moving bodies and explores how our physical actions can impact our health and well-being. This dynamic and multidisciplinary subject introduces students to healthy life habits and teaches future healthcare professionals alternative ways to advocate for patients or clients. As an instructor of Kinesiology, I see myself as a guide helping students discover their intrinsic motivation to learn about movement and to adopt lifelong practices of positive well-being. Moreover, I have the unique opportunity to teach students from all healthcare professional programmes about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and regular activity, thus impacting all levels of the healthcare system in Hong Kong and beyond.

For the past five years at HKU, I have been developing courses in the Kinesiology minor and the Exercise and Health tutorials offered to MBBS students. One of the most important learning outcomes of these courses is that students acquire the knowledge and skills to improve their own lifestyle and health. Most of my students know that exercise is beneficial, but just like any human, there are barriers. To stimulate students to evaluate and do something about their own lifestyle, I always incorporate the “self” component in lab-based teaching. I try my best to provide students with experiential learning experiences that are most relevant to their own health. For example, a classic example in the courses I teach is to ask students to monitor their number of steps over four weeks, followed by reflection questions that require them to analyse and comment on their own data.

I believe that healthy doctors make healthy patients. My recent Teaching Development Grant aims to implement new teaching and learning activities to better equip our future doctors with confidence and skills to advise patients about physical activity. By nurturing health professionals who value the importance of physical activity both for their patients and themselves, I am contributing to building a healthier healthcare workforce and a healthier population.

Students’ Words of Appreciation

Vinci CHEUNG Ying Jia  BEd&BSc 2023; PhD, current student

Abbie CHAN Lok Tsang  BSocSc, current student

Dr Joni H ZHANG
Assistant Lecturer
School of Public Health
Dr Zhang’s lectures are insightful and knowledge-filled. With various real-life examples, group discussions
and presentations, students are able to enhance their understanding and application of the subject. She
also keeps up with the most recent findings and developments in the field and introduces them during
lectures. It can be seen that she possesses a profound and comprehensive understanding of the subject
and has a passion for her teaching.

Additionally, Dr Zhang provides enriching learning experiences through field trips to related NGOs.
Through field trips, students are able to engage with the community and make connections between what
they have learnt in the classroom and what they are experiencing first-hand. It definitely deepens students’
understanding and widens their perspective on the field. Moreover, these opportunities allow students to
explore and provide valuable insights into their future career paths.

To sum up, Dr Zhang is definitely an outstanding educator. Her enthusiasm towards her field and her role
as an educator can fully be seen.

Anissa CHEUNG Tsz Wing  BSc, current student

Since students came from different faculties and programmes, they had varying depths and breadths of
knowledge. In EXSC2009, the topic of biomechanics included aspects of physics that were difficult for
some students to grasp, me included. Dr Zhang was very attentive to this matter and created a positive
learning environment by carefully guiding her students. The same could be said for EXSC3019, where
biology-related content was covered. Dr Zhang’s care and attentiveness to my learning experience
surpassed my expectations, and a supportive learning space is one thing I took away from those courses.

It is evident that Dr Zhang teaches with passion, and this translates to a stimulating learning environment.
On top of that, Dr Zhang is very committed to creating a nurturing environment for students to thrive and
she actively extends her help by providing valuable guidance to all.

I am grateful for the privilege of being taught by Dr Zhang. Her dedication, expertise, and genuine care for
students has left an indelible impact on my educational experience. Thank you for all that you do!

NG Wing Laam  BBiomedSc, current student

Introduced in 2020–2021, the HKU Innovator Award is a university-level award established to recognise
outstanding faculty members whose innovations demonstrate exceptionally high potential impact (legacy
or projected legacy) with transformative results to foster development.

The HKU Innovator Award will carry a pecuniary award of HK$250,000. There will be at most one
awardee each year.

Nominations for the HKU Innovator Award 2023 were considered by a Selection Committee comprising
the following KE Executive Group member and co-opted members from senior academics:

- Professor Max SHEN (Chair), Vice-President and Pro-Vice- Chancellor (Research);
  Acting Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Professor Anderson SHUM, Associate Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
- Professor Stephanie MA Kwai Yee, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Professor David BAKER, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Mr Paul WANG, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Professor TANG Hei Wai, Victor and William Fung Professor in Economics,
  Faculty of Business and Economics
Metal ions play a crucial role in various life processes and metal compounds have long been used in clinics for diagnosis and therapy. Professor Sun and his team have been working on metals in biology and medicine for over 20 years. They designed novel metallodrugs and repurposed them for emerging infectious diseases such as COVID-19 and widespread antimicrobial-resistant superbug infections.

During the outbreak of the pandemic, his team invented a cocktail therapy which effectively suppresses the replication of the SARS-CoV-2 virus from bench to bedside, offering domestic options for the treatment of this life-threatening issue. Their inventions have attracted wide attention from local pharmaceutical companies to media coverage including Reuters and CGTN, actively fostering collaboration among government, university, and industry.
Professor Tang graduated from the University of Hong Kong with an MBBS and subsequently MD and PhD degrees. He was trained in kidney medicine (nephrology) at Hong Kong’s Queen Mary Hospital and then in basic science research at King’s College London in the UK and the University of Washington in the USA. He joined HKU’s Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine in 2006 and is currently Chair of Renal Medicine and Yu Professor in Nephrology in the Department of Medicine.

Professor Tang’s research focusses on kidney disease arising from diabetes and IgA nephropathy, which are the most common causes of kidney failure and primary glomerulonephritis (kidney inflammation) around the world respectively. He participates in clinical trials on novel treatments for patients with chronic kidney disease and leads a research laboratory to unveil the molecular mechanisms of proteinuric kidney diseases. He has published over 300 research and review articles in these areas and written numerous book chapters in the realms of IgA nephropathy and diabetic kidney disease (DKD) in widely circulated textbooks of nephrology. Together with students, his group is among the first in the world to show the association between innate immunity and disease progression in DKD. He is a recipient of the Outstanding Researcher Award of HKU in 2017 and Croucher Senior Medical Research Fellowship in 2019, and he is ranked among the world’s top 2% scientists in 2023 by Stanford University.

As a clinician-scientist and educator, Professor Tang supports and encourages his research postgraduate students through structured guidance while preserving their autonomy in exploring research questions. He believes such interaction confers the right chemistry in fostering the quest for knowledge and could result in unimagined scientific discoveries.

Data science has recently been gaining attention from all sectors. The huge volumes of data collected from governments, companies and individuals are the main driving force of AI, prediction and decision-making. Professor Cheng’s research focusses on high-performance algorithms for big data – probabilistic databases, big graphs and crowdsourcing. His work on pattern extraction on large data networks received a Research Highlight Award from the Special Interest Group on Management of Data (SIGMOD) of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). He is also engaged in ‘Data Science for Social Good’, involving the development of data-driven solutions for elderly and family care sectors in Hong Kong; these works have resulted in two Hong Kong Information and Communications Technology Awards and an HKU Engineering Knowledge Exchange Award.

Professor Cheng was conferred as an ACM Distinguished Member in 2023. He was listed by Stanford University among the world’s top 2% scientists in 2022 and recognised as a 2023 AI 2000 Most Influential Scholar. Such achievements would not be possible without the hard work of his research students. He believes that every student has strengths, and he is devoted to unleashing their potential, improving their intellectual thinking, furnishing their research skills, and ultimately supporting their success. His students have become faculty members at Nanyang Technological University, University of Science and Technology of China, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen etc. pursued PhDs at overseas universities from UC Berkeley, Cornell to Oxford, or joined big tech companies such as Microsoft, Google and X after graduation.
Professor Wong obtained her BSc from the University of British Columbia in Canada, MSc from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and PhD from the University of Hong Kong. She undertook postdoctoral training at Johns Hopkins University in the USA. She has received the Croucher Innovation Award, Outstanding Young Researcher Award of HKU, and Excellent Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macau) from the National Natural Science Foundation of China, and is an elected member of the Hong Kong Young Academy of Sciences.

Liver cancer is a prevalent and lethal malignancy that has no promising curative treatment, with FDA-approved drugs offering only modest clinical benefits. This underscores the urgent need for more effective therapeutic options. Professor Wong’s research focuses on two fundamental aspects of liver cancer: metabolism and immunology. Her work explores the intricacies of the related mechanisms, aiming to uncover novel treatment approaches that can disrupt the metabolic machinery of liver cancer cells and activate the immune system, ultimately leading to rapid but durable effects in suppressing liver cancer. Another important translational endeavour of her team is to understand why some liver cancer patients respond better to treatments than others. Her ultimate goal is to improve the treatments and outcomes of patients with liver cancer.

Professor Wong believes mentoring is crucial for scientists and that the future of science depends on the nurturing of young minds. She fosters her students’ curiosity, providing a supportive learning atmosphere. With unwavering commitment, she guides and encourages them, promoting a collaborative approach. Recognising their unique strengths, she tailors mentorship to their goals, inspiring self-motivation and passion. She deeply appreciates her phenomenal mentors and mentees, who inspire and support her as she navigates the vast sea of knowledge.

The Teaching Innovation Award aims to encourage pedagogical innovation. This year’s award goes to the following teachers and teams:

**INDIVIDUAL AWARD**
- Professor Kristof CROLLA, Department of Architecture
- Ms Susanne Elisabeth TRUMPF, Department of Architecture

**TEAM AWARD**
- Dr John FUNG Tai Chun (Leader), School of Nursing; Dr CHAN Siu Ling, School of Nursing; Dr Vichy HO Wai Chi, School of Chinese; Mr CHAN Chun Kit, School of Nursing; and Dr Alice YAU Hoi Ying, Centre for Applied English Studies
- Dr KHONG Mei Li (Leader), School of Clinical Medicine; Professor Julian Alexander TANNER, School of Biomedical Sciences; Dr LAU Fat Man, Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre; and Professor Gary LAU Kui Kai, Department of Medicine, School of Clinical Medicine
- Professor George Lim TIPOE (Leader), Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine; Professor Fraide Jr Agustin GANOTICE, Bau Institute of Medical and Health Sciences Education; Dr Jannie ROED, Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre; Professor Linda CHAN, Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care, School of Clinical Medicine; and Dr YANG Jian, School of Biomedical Sciences
One of the most significant changes in architectural practice today is the dramatic expansion of the available toolset with which architects operate. Digital technology is changing the way we design, fabricate, build, and think at an increasing pace. This puts the teaching of architecture in an unusual situation, as students need to be prepared for operating in a currently unimaginable near future. Therefore, rather than teaching specific toolsets currently in vogue, it is essential to craft a productive attitude amongst students that allows for continuous lifelong learning and that helps them to confidently and constructively explore the broad unforeseeable changes they are about to encounter throughout their career.

The main challenge for teaching this is that the areas of study are continuously new. Unlike e.g. architectural history, to which all faculty have been extensively exposed during our studies, digital technology is a continuously developing topic that only relatively recently has been introduced to curricula worldwide. Hence, only a relatively small portion of staff have had training and teaching experience in digital technology for design, especially when it comes to the latest evolutions. The few staff members operating in this field, therefore, must take various strategic actions to work through these transition periods, and creatively use resources to assist in the ‘heavy lifting’ of introducing an entire student body to relevant topics. Additionally, as our ‘digital design toolbox’ expands, knowledge retention throughout generations of students becomes challenging and available time for both colleagues and students to focus on specialised, advanced, or novel applications is limited.

By developing and making a database of tools widely available, the project for which we received the honours of this award aspires to become an essential, internationally used, online learning platform that assists and supports teachers and students in navigating and meaningfully engaging with the rapidly increasing volume and specialisation of digital technology. The Building Simplexity Lab tutorial website currently already facilitates faculty-wide integration of computation and digital learning and is on its way to becoming an invaluable long-term industry-focused resource for teachers, students, and graduates, both locally and internationally.
Ms Susanne Elisabeth TRUMPF
Senior Lecturer
Department of Architecture

TAL-L (Taxon-Archive-Lab – Library) – A Materials Archive for Landscape Architecture

My teaching innovation aligns with my belief that self-motivated and inquiry-driven learning leads to the most enduring and impactful results. My pedagogy in this project is guided by two core principles: integrating the acquisition of knowledge with action-oriented learning, and facilitating and fostering student-led innovation.

The core topic, sustainable material approaches in our built environment, has been a focal point of my work in landscape architecture for many years. Throughout my own practice, I have consistently observed unsustainable and uninformed material decisions being made in the field. In response to this concern, I have established a disciplinary materials library to provide my students with the necessary tools to not only excel as practitioners but also to question and transform existing practices, leading the landscape architecture discipline into a newly defined future by rethinking what we have built.

I have established the physical and digital archive TAL-L (https://tall-materials.org/) which grants students access to material-related knowledge, tools, and instructional support for my courses. The archived material samples and coursework in the database encourage active participation and collaboration within the learning community, as different cohorts contribute to its entries. I have found that sharing and discussing previous cohorts’ prototypes has significantly enhanced the quality of students’ material prototypes, as they are able to build upon existing knowledge.

Experimentation and fabrication are integral components in every course, as I encourage independent student-led study and innovation. The concept of ‘making’ in my courses extends beyond mere ‘crafting’ but encompasses a comprehensive and disciplined method of experimenting with materials and fabrication processes, which has positively impacted students’ learning experiences.

The creation of workflows that allow students to go beyond their comfort zone and creatively reference interdisciplinary research is what I consider the most significant achievement in my teaching. It is gratifying to see students utilise the curated resources in TAL-L as inspiration to delve into multiple disciplines and navigate their complexities. Witnessing the accumulation of student projects and innovations over the years has been immensely rewarding.

I have experienced several courses, including my master’s thesis, under Susanne’s supervision. She always encouraged me to think beyond conventional methods, such as utilising a material’s unique characteristics to guide my design process. Her elective course Landscape Materials – Local Investigations further broadened my understanding of materials used in landscape design and inspired me to choose discarded soils for my thesis topic. Throughout all courses, I witnessed Susanne’s unique grasp of landscape design, and her innovative teaching methods have inspired me.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend her for her in-depth knowledge, innovative teaching methods, and her guidance and support throughout my academic journey. She has shown me a positive and rigorous image of a female scholar.

Jerry HAN Jinrui BA(LS) 2020; MLA 2023

Susanne has had a significant impact on my design education since I started my Postgraduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (PDLA) in 2021. She was my instructor in Landscape Media II, a course that focussed on material experimentation and fabrication technology. The course was demanding, but Susanne’s extensive professional experience guided us, enabling us to learn from our mistakes and hone our design abilities. It is well-known among students that Susanne maintains high standards when it comes to the quality and precision of design work. Her students are encouraged to pay attention to details, consider the rational aspects of their designs, and most importantly, adopt an appropriate attitude toward professional practice as future landscape architects.

Recently, I have had the fortune of experiencing Susanne’s work ethic and professional teaching attitude as her teaching assistant. Supporting Susanne’s dedication to education and her students is genuinely an honour for me.

Eddie CHAN Shu Fai PDLA 2022

Since 2018, I have had the pleasure of attending Susanne’s courses throughout my bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Susanne has consistently motivated me to cultivate design skills and concepts rooted in my intuition, even when my aspirations were ambitious, as I recall from my first studio project.

Fast forward six years, as a graduate master’s student in her class, I was motivated by her critical and innovative perspective on landscape materials – an underexplored realm in Hong Kong. Susanne’s platform TAL-L is a powerful and promising support that opens opportunities for students to pursue their interests in developing new local material practices. Her insights continue to shape my thinking and exploration in my current studies at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. I am truly grateful to have been her student.

William WEI Gongqi BA(LS) 2020; MArch(Design) 2023

Students’ Words of Appreciation

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Apart from that, there are annotations which highlight the key areas of assessment criteria of the tutorial discussion while students demonstrate. With the progress bar, we can also follow the discussion much more easily. All in all, it is a great experience to use such high technology 360-degree video as we can also zoom in on the students’ gestures and eye contact throughout the discussion, which is beneficial to our speaking tutorial.

The fabulous innovation evoked a sense of urgency and purpose, pretty much like a real-life situation. Reminding the students to take the simulation as a real ward environment also helped get us in a mindset that allowed us to maximise our participation and learning. I learnt to identify signs that lead up to life-threatening conditions. During the debriefing, we reflected on those signs, and discussed how recognising them and acting upon them could prevent aggravation of the patient. In clinical practice, rationalising every nursing action has been a major challenge for me, but the nature of simulation facilitates this kind of training. Furthermore, doing the simulation as a team really tested our teamwork skills and showed us how teamwork is essential in life-saving procedures. The simulation provided me with a safe, controlled environment for practising clinical judgment and skills before going into real practice. Receiving timely and objective feedback from experts regarding our performance is also a unique feature that simulation provides. Most importantly, being a novice in clinical practice, it increased my confidence to face similar situations, if they were to ever arise.

Students’ Words of Appreciation

"The boundary-free nature of 360 VR technology motivates learners to venture beyond their comfort zones, cultivating a mindset of curiosity and continuous improvement."

"The underlying philosophy of 360 VR in education revolves around innovation and transformation. It challenges traditional pedagogies and embraces a future where learning is dynamic, interactive, and universally accessible. In line with HKU's vision, incorporating 360 VR technology into learning management systems demonstrates a dedication to creating a future where education transcends physical and disciplinary boundaries, empowering students to become global citizens and leaders of tomorrow."

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The educational philosophies that inspired the approach of students as co-designers evolved over time. It began with the modernisation of the HKU MBBS programme. Much learning across the MBBS pre-clinical curriculum was converted into flipped classrooms. We hoped that the revamped learning environment would create more interaction opportunities within the entire cohort (~300 students), which would in turn provide students with more space to reflect, learn, and flourish. Thus, in summer 2020, students were invited to contribute to and refine the blended learning developments. This increased learning engagement. If driving curricular modernisation was filled with questions, we discovered that the best answers came from the students themselves – hence, the need for student-educator partnership (SEP).

Another priority has been how best to teach across disciplines. A challenge for students was seeing how disciplines needed to be integrated for their future clinical practice. In summer 2021, again we invited students to develop innovative pedagogies. Students and educators from different disciplines came together, developed new ways of teaching and learning (T&L), and created learning modules that reflected the interdisciplinarity of healthcare practice. This experience affirmed how interdisciplinary collaboration precedes innovation – hence, the need for partnerships across disciplines. Every year, students ask, ‘How is basic science relevant to my future clinical practice?’ Throughout 2022 and 2023, we further invited students to work with the Faculty and educators. This time our initiative was conducted on a larger scale across both preclinical and clinical years. We worked with community and field experts to integrate real-life observations into learning content. Clinicians began to provide clinical attachments and content advice. Community and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) elaborated on the importance of ethics, law, and humanities. We realised the value of connecting learning with reality – hence, the need for partnerships in practice.

As the approach of students as co-designers grows in scale, it is also transforming institutional T&L culture. Moving forward, we hope to bring student-educator partnership, partnership across disciplines, and partnership in practice to new contexts.

"I joined the team in 2019, when e-learning and other new ideas were just introduced into the MBBS curriculum – it has now been five years, and the project has now evolved into the ‘Students as Co-Designers – Formalising Student-Educator Partnerships in Curriculum and Pedagogy Co-Creation’ project, with both an innovation arm responsible for modernising the curriculum with student-teacher co-designed projects, as well as a research arm to evaluate the impact of our initiatives on the student body. It has been very rewarding to be part of this project since the beginning – to see the fruits of our efforts actually help preclinical students grasp difficult topics and acquire clinical skills quicker and more effectively. But myself have also gained so much from the project: from learning how to create good teaching materials, to better understanding my own weaknesses as I mentored later generations of student co-designers. It has been such a marvellous experience working together with both preclinical teachers and clinical doctors, and I hope we can continually partner to improve the learning experience for medical and health professional students, across disciplines." - Clement HO Ka Chun, MBBS, current student

"I have been a student collaborator in the ‘Students as Co-Designers – Formalising Student-Educator Partnerships in Curriculum and Pedagogy Co-Creation’ project for over two years. Being my first-ever opportunity of exposure to the back end of teaching-learning activities, the project has engendered insights into considerations of curricular design, including relevance, suitability, and practicality. Cooperating with teachers and fellow students has not only improved my leadership and teamwork but also fascinated me by the potentiality of student co-inputs to enhance the efficacy of teaching sessions. The innovation, having thrived for a brief period of two years, has reformed the learning culture shared by medical students like me. Didactic teaching, which used to be the sole backbone of the medical curriculum, has been reinforced by new interactive activities co-designed by teachers and students that permit closer and bidirectional teacher-student communication, hence clarification of misunderstandings and consolidation of knowledge. Students are encouraged to give teachers feedback; therefore, teachers are empowered to offer students more precise feedback. As the project continues to prosper, it will only synthesise more innovative and effective teaching-learning ideas with close collaborative effort from both teachers and students. The extent of future impact will only reach further and cannot be underestimated." - Justin NG Ka Yu, MBBS, current student
I am lucky to have crossed paths with great educators who not only simplified complex topics, but also gave me the drive to question and explore their fields further. As these experiences helped foster my own deep interest in optimising teaching and learning, I was delighted to realise the Faculty of Medicine offered students the opportunity to teach within the curriculum.

My time as a Near-Peer Tutor (NPT) in Interprofessional Education (IPE), e-Problem Based Learning (PBL) and anatomy dissection classes has enabled me to guide students towards the achievement of their learning outcomes, whilst simultaneously deepening my own understanding of the subject area. As an NPT, I have the advantage of establishing temporal closeness with my students, as I frequently teach content that I have only recently learnt, to a group in the same age demographic. The freshness of the acquired knowledge is crucial, as NPTs easily recall what made a concept difficult, thus devising effective strategies to help students understand.

Furthermore, as a student currently in the newly formed STaR Programme, I am both excited and motivated to be a part of this inaugural cohort and working towards receiving an Associate Fellowship of Advance HE. This will not only be a formal recognition of my contributions to higher education, but also provide me with a solid foundation in reflective teaching with which I will continue to systematically improve my own teaching methodology.

As we believe that teaching is a collaborative and transformative process, we highly value and actively seek feedback from our students, using it to continually refine our programme. The ultimate goal is to provide students with a transformative educational experience in an inclusive and engaging learning environment, and equip them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving world. With an unwavering commitment to teaching excellence, we try our best to ensure that students receive the best possible education, preparing them for success in their future careers and beyond.
The Knowledge Exchange (KE) Excellence Award is a university-level award to recognise outstanding KE accomplishment that has made significant non-academic (economic, social, environmental or cultural) impacts to benefit society. Any Faculty KE Awardees in the current and past years may be nominated, provided each Faculty may only submit one nomination each year.

The KE Excellence Award will carry a pecuniary award of HK$250,000 to undertake further KE work. At most one award will be bestowed annually.

Nominations for the KE Excellence Award 2023 were considered by a Selection Committee comprising the following KE Executive Group member and co-opted members from senior academics:

- Professor Max SHEN (Chair), Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research); Acting Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Professor Anderson SHUM, Associate Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
- Professor Stephanie MA Kwai Yee, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Professor David BAKER, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Mr Paul WANG, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Office
- Professor TANG Hei Wai, Victor and William Fung Professor in Economics, Faculty of Business and Economics

Fast urbanisation in China has deteriorated urban environment conditions, which can be featured by weak urban ventilation, poor air quality and reduced urban visibility. As sustainable urban development has become more widely recognised in China over the last decade, decision-makers and planners have requested scientific-based evidence to support their urban planning and design.

Dr Ren and her team have conducted a series of cross-disciplinary collaborative research revealing how to evaluate urban ventilation for planning purposes and develop the wind corridor plan in urban design and planning exercises since 2006. This is the first study to investigate and quantify the effects of major planning and development proposals on urban ventilation in the world. Based on remote sensing (RS) and geographic information system (GIS) techniques, it developed scientific protocols to assess potential wind dynamics and detect wind corridors. Its scientific evidence and findings were used to optimise design flexibility, building height relaxation, better building disposition and urban morphology control at multi-scale levels.

The developed method and techniques have been implemented into master city plans, urban designs and wind corridor plans of over 40 Chinese cities and also adopted into the development of local urban design guidelines, technical notes and legal documents, including China's national technical guide ‘Specifications for climatic feasibility demonstration – Urban Ventilation Corridor’. This national guide has been endorsed by the Ministry of Natural Resources of China and implemented into the city master planning exercises in all Chinese cities since 2019. It has helped address the call of the territory development control plan, construction of ecological recovery and civilisation, environmental pollution control and also the response to climate change at the city scale.

At the international level, the research has led to several practical research and government consulting projects in cities across Asia and Europe and influenced city planning exercises and climate change adaptation policies. The research findings were noted in Chapter 10: Asia, in Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability, Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and three guides issued by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
Professor Li obtained his BSc in Chemistry from Fudan University in 2003, and his PhD in Organic and Bioorganic Chemistry in 2008 from the University of Hong Kong. He then moved to New York to conduct his postdoctoral training in chemistry and cell biology at Rockefeller University. In 2011, he returned to HKU to start his independent career as an Assistant Professor and later was promoted to full Professor in 2020.

Professor Li’s research is at the interface of chemistry and biology. His laboratory develops chemical approaches to address key questions in epigenetics, a new and exciting research area linking multiple hereditary and environmental impacts on human health. His most important contribution to the field of epigenetics is the development of a variety of new and robust chemical tools and methodologies for the comprehensive identification of proteins that are responsible for ‘writing’, ‘erasing’ or ‘translating’ histone post-transcriptional modifications (PTMs). This helped to unravel the biological roles played by specific histone modification and to clarify how the histone PTMs are interpreted in normal physiology and disease pathogenesis. He has been recognised by multiple prizes and awards, including the Tetrahedron Young Investigator Award, CAPA Distinguished Faculty Award by the Chinese-American Chemistry & Chemical Biology Professors Association, Excellent Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macau) by the National Natural Science Foundation of China, and Early Career Award by Hong Kong’s Research Grants Council.

The intricacies and sophistication of life deeply intrigue Professor Li. His background as an organic chemist has given him distinct perspectives for approaching and solving biological mysteries. Professor Li advocates for scientists to remain open-minded and willingly embrace new challenges so they can delve into unfamiliar areas of study.
Professor Ma obtained her BSc and MSc degrees from the University of British Columbia (Canada), and graduated from the University of Hong Kong with a PhD of outstanding ranking that was awarded the LKS Prize for Best PhD Thesis of that year.

Professor Ma's team are dedicated to better understanding how a more stemness and undifferentiated state in cancer can contribute to therapy resistance and tumour recurrence, making significant contributions towards better comprehension of functional markers and properties that regulate cancer cell plasticity in gastrointestinal tumours, and identifying potential novel treatment therapies. She is recognised as a leading researcher in the field, with papers in top journals including *Cell Stem Cell*, *Nature Reviews Gastroenterology & Hepatology*, *Gut*, *Gastroenterology*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation* and *Journal of Hepatology*. In her field, she has been listed by Clarivate as a top 1% most-cited scholar (2010–2018) and by Stanford University as a top 2% scientist worldwide (2022, 2023). Her prestigious awards include the 2008 Hong Kong Young Scientist Award in Life Sciences by the Hong Kong Institution of Science, 2014 Croucher Innovation Award, 2017 Alumni Builder Award by the University of British Columbia, 2021 RGC Research Fellowship, and 2023 Croucher Senior Research Fellowship. She is a Founding Member and current Vice-President of the Hong Kong Young Academy of Sciences. She is also a Director at Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks.

While Professor Ma reflects that her return to Hong Kong during a time when pursuing a career in scientific research was uncommon, she is encouraged by the region’s increasing support and emerging opportunities. She firmly believes that no dream is too big or step too small if there is motivation to progress. Her greatest sense of fulfilment comes from seeing her students and staff succeed, and she feels fortunate to collaborate with a team of dedicated and fearless young researchers who share her passion.

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**OUTSTANDING RESEARCHER AWARD**

Professor Stephanie MA Kwai Yee 馬桂宜教授
Professor School of Biomedical Sciences

Professor Ma's team are dedicated to better understanding how a more stemness and undifferentiated state in cancer can contribute to therapy resistance and tumour recurrence, making significant contributions towards better comprehension of functional markers and properties that regulate cancer cell plasticity in gastrointestinal tumours, and identifying potential novel treatment therapies. She is recognised as a leading researcher in the field, with papers in top journals including *Cell Stem Cell*, *Nature Reviews Gastroenterology & Hepatology*, *Gut*, *Gastroenterology*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation* and *Journal of Hepatology*. In her field, she has been listed by Clarivate as a top 1% most-cited scholar (2010–2018) and by Stanford University as a top 2% scientist worldwide (2022, 2023). Her prestigious awards include the 2008 Hong Kong Young Scientist Award in Life Sciences by the Hong Kong Institution of Science, 2014 Croucher Innovation Award, 2017 Alumni Builder Award by the University of British Columbia, 2021 RGC Research Fellowship, and 2023 Croucher Senior Research Fellowship. She is a Founding Member and current Vice-President of the Hong Kong Young Academy of Sciences. She is also a Director at Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks.

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The Outstanding Teaching Award is granted to teachers who have demonstrated excellence in adoption of learner-centred approaches to engage and inspire students, curriculum design, renewal and innovation, and leadership in teaching. The Panel is deeply impressed by the significant contributions made by Dr John FUNG Tai Chun of the School of Nursing in teaching and learning and proudly presents him with this award.
Embracing the ethos of the University of Hong Kong, my teaching philosophy is deeply rooted in the principles of Internationalisation, Innovation, Interdisciplinarity, and Impact (3+1 Is). These pillars guide my approach to education, where I combine experiential learning and Socratic questioning to foster an environment of inclusivity, nurture, and care. As a product of HKU’s nurturing ground, I am imbued with a profound sense of gratitude and humility, recognising the privilege of positively impacting my students.

In the dynamic landscape of education, I advocate for a pedagogy that respects students as adult learners, drawing upon the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory. This approach ensures that I do not spoon-feed information but rather facilitate learning experiences that encourage students to stretch their capabilities while providing support when necessary. It’s a delicate balance between guidance and independence, allowing students to explore, make mistakes, and learn from them – thereby embodying the essence of experiential learning.

‘In the pursuit of knowledge, every day something is acquired. In the pursuit of wisdom, every day something is dropped.’ This philosophy underpins my teaching, emphasising the importance of humility and the continuous thirst for knowledge and understanding. I constantly remind my students that in this era, being open to learning and unlearning is crucial for personal and professional growth.

HKU’s vision of 3+1 Is resonates with my commitment to creating an inclusive classroom environment where every student, regardless of their background, feels valued and empowered. By integrating international perspectives, fostering innovation, encouraging interdisciplinary learning, and focussing on the impact of education, I strive to prepare my students for the complexities of the global landscape.

As I reflect on my journey and the influence of HKU, I am motivated to contribute to the evolution of teaching, making learning a transformative experience that prepares students not just academically but as compassionate, critical thinkers ready to make a difference in the world. As Socrates once said, ‘Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.’ In line with this philosophy, I see my role not as a mere transmitter of knowledge but as a guide, helping students ignite their passion for lifelong learning.

Dr. Fung has been an incredible inspiration for me as I embark on this new academic journey. Being his student has been a tremendous privilege and I am overflowing with gratitude for the impact he has had on my life. He possessed a remarkable passion for nursing and a genuine desire to nurture the next generation of healthcare professionals. And he has a special talent for integrating topics that capture students’ interests into the teaching process, thereby fostering greater engagement and dynamics in the classroom.

Ever since the very first lesson, Dr. Fung has consistently stressed the importance of not performing tasks perfunctorily and always prioritising patient outcomes. These lessons have made a lasting impression on me. He was also the first person who encouraged me to ask more questions and never stop seeking the reasoning behind every step. His influence on my attitude towards nursing and overall learning has surpassed my expectations, serving as motivation for me to pursue excellence in every aspect of my life.

Dr. Fung is an inspiring teacher who connects theory to practice. He includes applicable real-life examples during classes and by far one of the most effective methods was the introduction of virtual reality simulation. I recall he conducted a flipped classroom exercise using VR simulation for one of our health assessment lessons. The 360 VR video included a scenario where a student nurse performed a thorough Lung and Thorax examination, and we were required to judge whether or not they performed the skill accurately and comprehensively. We could comment on the video with timestamps on VedioVox to make it more convenient for discussion afterwards. Allowing us to play the role of assessors gave us a clear and firm grasp of the concept. It was an excellent way to practise this skill because we were about to have a practical examination on the same topic.

I genuinely appreciate how Dr. Fung’s classes challenged me to think critically about the course content. Through discussions, I was consistently inspired to consider how the material related to my nursing career in a more practical manner. Another 360 VR simulation example I can remember is of a scenario showcasing CPR skills. Dr. Fung is a motivating instructor. He leads by example, always attempting to achieve his best and never settling for less. His mantra is ‘Be the best at what you do, but be humble.’

Dr. Fung is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Nursing at the University of Hong Kong. His teaching philosophy is deeply rooted in the principles of Internationalisation, Innovation, Interdisciplinarity, and Impact (3+1 Is). These pillars guide his approach to education, where he combines experiential learning and Socratic questioning to foster an environment of inclusivity, nurture, and care. As a product of HKU’s nurturing ground, he is imbued with a profound sense of gratitude and humility, recognising the privilege of positively impacting his students.

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Dr. Fung has been an incredible inspiration for me as I embark on this new academic journey. Being his student has been a tremendous privilege and I am overflowing with gratitude for the impact he has had on my life. He possessed a remarkable passion for nursing and a genuine desire to nurture the next generation of healthcare professionals. And he has a special talent for integrating topics that capture students’ interests into the teaching process, thereby fostering greater engagement and dynamics in the classroom.

Ever since the very first lesson, Dr. Fung has consistently stressed the importance of not performing tasks perfunctorily and always prioritising patient outcomes. These lessons have made a lasting impression on me. He was also the first person who encouraged me to ask more questions and never stop seeking the reasoning behind every step. His influence on my attitude towards nursing and overall learning has surpassed my expectations, serving as motivation for me to pursue excellence in every aspect of my life.

Dr. Fung is an inspiring teacher who connects theory to practice. He includes applicable real-life examples during classes and by far one of the most effective methods was the introduction of virtual reality simulation. I recall he conducted a flipped classroom exercise using VR simulation for one of our health assessment lessons. The 360 VR video included a scenario where a student nurse performed a thorough Lung and Thorax examination, and we were required to judge whether or not they performed the skill accurately and comprehensively. We could comment on the video with timestamps on VedioVox to make it more convenient for discussion afterwards. Allowing us to play the role of assessors gave us a clear and firm grasp of the concept. It was an excellent way to practise this skill because we were about to have a practical examination on the same topic.

I genuinely appreciate how Dr. Fung’s classes challenged me to think critically about the course content. Through discussions, I was consistently inspired to consider how the material related to my nursing career in a more practical manner. Another 360 VR simulation example I can remember is of a scenario showcasing CPR skills. Dr. Fung is a motivating instructor. He leads by example, always attempting to achieve his best and never settling for less. His mantra is ‘Be the best at what you do, but be humble.’

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The Distinguished Research Achievement Award is the highest honour and award for excellence in research bestowed by the University. It gives recognition to academics who have exceptional research achievements of international distinction and are at the forefront of their discipline. Up to two awards can be made in each exercise, which is conducted on an alternate year basis. Winners of the Distinguished Research Achievement Award receive a monetary award of up to HK$2 million per year for up to three years as recommended by the Selection Committee.

Nominations for the 2022–2023 Distinguished Research Achievement Award were considered by a Selection Committee comprising the following members:

- Professor Max SHEN (Chair), Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- Professor David Makram BISHAI, School of Public Health
- Professor CHEN Zhiwu, Faculty of Business and Economics
- Professor Vivian YAM Wing Wah, Department of Chemistry
- Professor Anthony YEH Gar On, Department of Urban Planning and Design

His research ranges widely across time and space – quite literally – from cosmological concepts of music in ancient Chinese texts to NASA’s Golden Record, which is currently barreling beyond our solar system strapped to the Voyager spacecraft. More down to earth, Professor Chua is also known for his work on Beethoven, Stravinsky and the intellectual history of Western music. Unifying his diverse interests is his relentless questioning of the fundamentals of musicological thought, breaking down barriers within his discipline in order to broaden the understanding of music in the sciences and humanities. Among his many publications, he has written five monographs: *The ‘Galitzin’ Quartets of Beethoven; Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning; Beethoven and Freedom; Alien Listening: Voyager’s Golden Record and Music From Earth; and Joy! Music Lessons on the Good Life*. As the first non-European President of the International Musicological Society (2017–2022), Professor Chua is a champion and pioneer of ‘global musicology’, a new approach that is beginning to shape music studies across the globe (naturally).

At HKU, Professor Chua is an advocate for the arts and humanities as the chief means for achieving the educational goals inscribed on the shield of the University: ‘Sapientia et Virtus’ (wisdom and virtue). He believes that students should not just get an education but also get a life at university, and that the ‘extra’ in ‘extracurricular’ is not extra but essential for a student’s mental, social and moral well-being. To this end, Professor Chua has been instrumental in founding various projects at HKU, including the Cultural Management Office with its MUSE concert series, the Centre for Humanities and Medicine, Faith and Global Engagement, and Lead for Life.

Professor Chua feels his time at HKU has been extremely fruitful and enjoyable, and with a shared birthday of March 16 (HKU’s Foundation Day), perhaps this harmonious partnership was destiny. He lives happily in HKU staff quarters with his wife, two teenage children, a poodle and a cockapoo.
In pursuit of the University’s mission to achieve excellence in teaching and learning, Faculties have established their own teaching awards to recognise staff who have made outstanding contributions to the enhancement of students’ disciplinary studies. All award winners have demonstrated a strong commitment to and an outstanding track record of teaching and learning.

**Faculty of Architecture**

- Faculty Teaching Awards
  - Professor Guillaume Laurence OTHENIN-GIRARD, Department of Architecture
  - Professor Lidia RAFOI, Department of Architecture

**Faculty of Arts**

- Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards
  - Professoriate Staff Category
    - Professor Brian Walter KING, School of English
  - Academic-related Staff Category
    - Dr Winnie YEE Lai Man 余麗文博士, School of Humanities
  - Teaching Innovations in E-learning Category
    - Dr Vichy HO Wai Chi 何偉幟博士, School of Chinese

**Faculty of Business and Economics**

- Faculty Outstanding Teacher Award
  - Undergraduate Teaching
    - Professor Alex CHAN Wing Ho 陳永豪教授, Faculty of Business and Economics
    - Professor David LEE Seungwoo 李鎔教授, Faculty of Business and Economics
    - Dr Christina NG Yeuk Mei 吳若薇博士, Faculty of Business and Economics
  - Postgraduate Teaching
    - Professor Christine CHAN Man Kuen 陳文娟教授, Faculty of Business and Economics
    - Professor TIAN Feng 田豐教授, Faculty of Business and Economics
    - Professor WANG Zhengli 王政力教授, Faculty of Business and Economics
  - Faculty Teaching Innovation Award
    - Dr DING Chao 丁超博士, Faculty of Business and Economics

- Faculty Special Contribution Teaching Award
  - Professor Anna WONG Wai Kwan 黃慧群教授, Faculty of Business and Economics

**Faculty of Education**

- Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award
  - Dr Vincent WONG Wai Lun 王偉倫博士, Faculty of Education

**Faculty of Engineering**

- Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award
  - Teaching Innovations in E-learning
    - Dr Ryan WONG Cheuk Pong 黃卓邦博士, Department of Civil Engineering

**Faculty of Law**

- Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award
  - Outstanding Teaching Award
    - Professor Julius YAM Shi-rong 任石榮教授, Department of Law
    - Ms Darcy Lynn DAVISON-ROBERTS 戴韻詩女士, Department of Professional Legal Education

**Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine**

- Faculty Teaching Medal
  - Dr Polly CHAN Siu Ling 陳小玲博士, School of Nursing
  - Professor Patrick CHUNG Ho Yu 鍾浩宇教授, Department of Surgery, School of Clinical Medicine
  - Professor Joshua HO Wing Kei 何永基教授, School of Biomedical Sciences

**Faculty of Science**

- Award for Teaching Excellence
  - Dr Rocky LAW Chau Sing 楊就成博士, Faculty of Science

- Excellent Teaching Assistant Award
  - Dr Isab Aline Clemence QUIBERT, School of Biological Sciences
  - Miss Even LEUNG Yee Man 梁倚汶小姐, School of Biological Sciences

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

- Social Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award
  - Dr David Rees BIRKS, Department of Politics and Public Administration
  - Mr Ulrich GAULKE, Journalism and Media Studies Centre
  - Professor ZHANG Hongsheng 張鴻生教授, Department of Geography
RESEARCH OUTPUT PRIZE

Faculty of Architecture
Pandemic urbanism: Infectious diseases on a planet of cities
By Professor S. Hans ALI, Professor Crichton Paul CONNOLLY* and Professor Roger KIEL, published by Polity, 2022, 262 pages

Faculty of Arts
By Professor John WONG Dick On 王道揚教授, published by Harvard University Asia Center, distributed by Cambridge University Press, 2022, 228 pages

Faculty of Business and Economics
‘Redeemable Platform Currencies’
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Faculty of Education
‘Empowering Students Through the Construction of a Translanguaging Space in an English as a First Language Classroom’
By Professor KEN TAI Hai 邓嘉辉教授*, and Professor CATHY WONG Chiu Yin 吴心妍教授*, published in Applied Linguistics, 44, 6 (2022), 1100-1151

Faculty of Engineering
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By Dr FEI Yunge 费永杰博士, Dr ZHAO Zhanheng 赵振衡博士*, Dr Timothy D. SEARCHINGER, Professor Alan D. ZIEGLER, Dr WU Jie 吴杰博士, published in Nature, 603, 7902 (2022), 693-699

Faculty of Law
‘Transforming Industries: Empowering Organizations through Big Data Analytics’
By Professor Richard SU Yuexun 苏旭东教授, Professor of Dentistry
‘Revolutionizing Jaw Reconstruction through Computer-Assisted Surgery: Delivering Excellence with Patient-Specific Solutions’
By Professor WEN Kai 王恺博士*, and team members – Pan CHUN 王春博士, Dr XU Peng 徐鹏博士, Published in Nature Sustainability, 5 (2021), 444-451

Faculty of Medicine
‘Application of MGF Artificial Intelligence for Abnormal Detection for Saving Lives’
By Professor SHAHAL ALI, Department of Law
‘Advancing the Global and Regional Impact of the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration’

Faculty of Pharmacy
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‘Urban Ventilation Assessment and Wind Corridor Plan for Chinese Cities’

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