

The University of Hong Kong
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Internationalization of Domestic Students

Internationalizing the student population has been one of the major regimes in the University strategic planning in the past years. The HKSAR government has also put her emphasis on this aspect by encouraging the institutions in the territory to this direction. In 2009/2010, the University admitted around 3,500 undergraduates in which over about 27.6% are international students*. Although most of the domestic students are Chinese in origin, with the increasing population of non-Chinese international students, the University is now facing the challenge of innovating new ideas to internationalize the domestic student population on one hand, and allow the overseas students to know more about the Oriental culture on the other.

The University of Hong Kong is committed to nurturing its students as global citizens and to provide them with as many international education opportunities as it can during their study at the University. To this end, the University has developed academic links with over 300 universities and research institutions worldwide. With the inception of the HKU World Wide student exchange programme in 1998, over 800 undergraduate students have the chance to study abroad each year nowadays, either in summer, on one semester or one full year. The goal that each student has the chance to study abroad during his/her 3-year study period at HKU is now being achieved. However with the challenge aforesaid in mind, new initiative such as overseas internship, community services etc will be introduced in the coming years.

The importance of nurturing global leaders is also the intrinsic idea in the recent curriculum reform of the University. Students are encouraged and required to take common core course in these four areas: Scientific and Technological literacy, Humanities, Global Issues, China: Culture, State and Society. Experiential learning is another fundamental element of the new undergraduate curriculum. All faculties provide a variety of opportunities to learn in the field which now basically become a prerequisite for graduation. It is hoped that through the curriculum reform, students are able 1) to develop a broader perspective and a critical understanding of the complexities and the interconnectedness of the issues that they are confronted with in their everyday lives 2) to cultivate the appreciation of their own culture and other cultures, and the inter-relatedness among cultures. 3) to see themselves as members of global as well as local communities and to play an active role as responsible

individuals and citizens in these communities 4) to develop the key intellectual skills that will be further enhanced in their disciplinary studies

The University also provides the hardware in enhancing the student exchange in campus. The Global Lounge (www.als.hku.hk/globalounge) is the ideal place to enhance the cultural and intellectual exchange. In addition, the Learning Commons, which are one of the key features of our Centennial Campus, will further enhance this kind of student exchange without travelling abroad.

*student holding foreign passports, excluding all exchange students