

**THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT**

2nd SBM UG Student Representative Meeting 2019/20

Confirmed Minutes

Date and time of meeting:	Nov 27, 2019, 6:00pm – 7:30pm
Minutes Prepared by:	Maggie Yim
Attendance of SBM UG Programs Office:	Anirban Mukhopadhyay, Emily Nason, Ka Yee Lee, Maggie Yim
CUP Faculty Members	---
Attendance of UG Student Representatives:	Donald Chan, John Chan, Vanessa Ching, Phyllis Chu, Alexis Ho, Anna Moon, Tasneem Muchhala, Christine Poon, Cyril Tong, Sara Yau, Rex Yeung
Absence with Apologies:	Stanni Chandra, Caroline Eleonora
Absence:	Daniel Chan, Gordon Cheng, Wan-Yun Chou, Anson Mak, Jason Ng, Anushka Srivastava, Lotus Yu, Isabella Zhou, Kathy Zhu

This meeting was conducted online using the Zoom platform.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

As no further comment was received, the minutes of the 2019/20 1st Meeting held on October 2, 2019 was confirmed.

2. Information Items

2a Exchange Updates

In view of the current societal situation and the ongoing social unrest, the Chair stated that there would be many uncertainties and the School could not assure its exchange partners that the campus would be normal in the coming Spring term. In this light, all exchange-in would be cancelled in Spring 2019-20. On the other hand, most of the exchange partners were very supportive to HKUST as our students scheduled to exchange out this Spring term would go on exchange as planned despite the cancellation of incoming exchange.

2b Major Selection Updates

Due to the cancellation of face-to-face classes on the Clear Water Bay campus from mid-November in Fall 2019, the Major Selection Information week scheduled for Nov 12 to 14 on campus was cancelled. The Chair updated members that the Information sessions would be made online via the platform Zoom on December 4–5, with presentations by different programs followed by Q&A sessions. Besides, PowerPoint slides for the presentations had

already been posted, and video recordings of the presentations would also be uploaded on the SBM UG website when available.

As regards the timeline for Fall Major Selection Exercise (MSE), the School would continue with the same timeline as planned. The application period would be from Dec 20, 2019 to Jan 1, 2020 while interviews, if applicable, would be held on Jan 6-7. Results would be announced on Jan 9, 2020.

Prof Emily Nason reflected that there were a number of enquiries relating to MATH requirement for GBUS Major Selection in which the program required applicants to have C+ above in their MATH course (B or above in ISOM2500 for those who fail to meet the Math course requirement). Since some MATH courses like MATH1003 allowed students to opt for Pass/ Fail grading and the final exam would be arranged at the beginning of the Spring term, Prof Nason clarified that an Incomplete (I) or Pass (P) grade in the MATH course would not be counted as fulfilling the requirement, and students should therefore use ISOM2500 as an alternative to fulfil the requirement. She added that since there would be no GBUS course in the Year One Spring term, students would not be disadvantaged if they applied for GBUS in the Spring term.

[Post-meeting notes: The online Major Selection Information Sessions were held via Zoom on December 4–5 and the video recordings and PowerPoints were uploaded on the SBM UG website.]

3. Discussion Items

3a Student Feedback on the Online Class Arrangements

Despite the challenges and disruptions caused by the ongoing social unrest, the Chair appreciated all the dedicated efforts of students, faculty, and staff to minimize disruptions to our educational and research activities. The School was planning for make-up arrangements for examinations, grading, major selection, etc. Student representatives shared their views on the online class arrangements, summarized as follows:

Experiences for Online classes via Zoom, RVC or PowerPoint voiceover

- Some members commented that the online classes were going well and it would be convenient for students to get the missed information from the online lectures and review the recorded video online at their own time. Some members also mentioned that they had good experiences in classes which were conducted using RVC or PowerPoint with voiceover.
- A student reflected that at the class conducted via Webinar in Zoom she engaged in, everyone was muted and the Webinar function allowed the lecturer to speak while attendees could use the “raise hand” function to speak in order to minimize the background noise. The Chair supplemented that there were two meeting settings available for the Zoom platform: Meeting and Webinar respectively. The University has purchased license for classes to be conducted online through the Webinar in Zoom. Yet, the Meeting function (included in the license) which allows both attendees and the host to speak suits SBM courses better for its interactive nature. The Chair added that there was still room for improvement and this could be treated as a learning experience.

- Another student member reflected that he had a blended learning course about Programming and students often faced questions about coding in computers which would be easier to be explained in person, so he would prefer face-to-face class. He wondered if it would be possible for the lecture to be conducted at UST campus and those who wished to join could come while others could join the online lecture at the same time. The Chair responded that the University was adopting a safety first approach, and all classes were switched to online mode. The Chair added that the School would have a meeting with the Provost and Associate Provost the following day and would convey this feedback to the University management for consideration. He hoped that classes would resume normalcy from February onwards.
- A student raised a minor problem with Zoom that the internet connection might not be stable, which would be distracting as students might miss a few points of the lecture. As such, she preferred RVC or PPT with voiceover.

Possibility of extra classes in Winter term

- A student wondered if extra classes could be offered in the coming Winter term since some students would choose to late withdraw from some courses this Fall and would like to retake a few classes in the Winter term. The Chair responded that the School would monitor which types of courses (i.e., required or elective courses) were withdrawn after the application deadline and would forward the information to the respective programs. He mentioned that students who submitted late withdrawal requests should seek advice from their AAACs or program advisors on their academic progression. He added that the offering of extra courses in Winter term might be constrained by the instructors' availability since many of them might be travelling in January.

Conference function at Canvas

- A student reflected that he had a Spanish class using the conference function in Canvas in which the screen showed their faces and students could do the worksheet together. Another student also concurred with this point and said the conference function in Canvas was convenient for students to share PowerPoint together and could let students participate online actively. The Chair responded that the School had sought the advice from CEI who did not recommend using Canvas in view of the possibility of crashing. He thanked members for this feedback and would share it with faculty.

Concerns about cheating during online exams

- Another student expressed a concern regarding how the University would minimize cheating during online exams. The Chair responded that a number of recommended measures have been collected and circulated to all faculty who would try to figure out the best way to conduct their exams online and the best mechanism to guard against cheating. He reiterated that none of them were fool-proof, and cheating also occurred even in offline exams. Though there were many uncertainties about the online exams as it would be equally new to everyone, he believed that the majority of students would recognize cheating was not in their best interest for many reasons. One would be for the integrity as a student; the second would be the pure game theory in which it would not help anyone if everyone cheated. The third is pragmatism as the incremental benefit in CGA had to be weighed against the cost of getting caught. The Chair also

supplemented that this issue would be brought up at the meeting with the Provost the following day.

- A student also commented about a few measures that could minimize cheating such as different sets of questions for the students, not being able to go back to the previous questions once students finishing a question, etc.

Grading system in Fall 2019-20

- A student representative raised a concern about the grading this Fall term. In view of the fact that other courses might allow the Pass/Fail option for students while SBM courses would keep the original grading system, she would like to clarify if absolute grading was in place for SBM courses.
- The Chair clarified that SBM's decision regarding the Pass/Fail option was made after several detailed discussions amongst SBM community and with the University administration who recognized that each School faced different situations and had distinct offerings. SBM believed that continuing courses online was viable for all our courses and it would be the best way to satisfy the two key goals of safety and learning for our students. Furthermore, with a strong commitment to fairness and consistency, we did not want to put students in a difficult position when varying rules applied to different SBM UG programs, year groups, courses, or even different sections within the same course. Given all SBM courses were able to continue online without physical presence of students, our decision could apply uniformly across all SBM courses. In fact, as of the date of the meeting, a large proportion of courses in the University would not allow P/F option. The Chair also added that another important matter for SBM was that our major selection application was in December and grades for major foundation courses were essential for selecting a major for most SBM students while other Schools' major selections were mostly in June/July. The Chair stressed that the School was trying to come up with a uniform and the least bad solution to the situation. Since students might have difficulty keeping up with course work due to the current situation, we have allowed late course withdrawal request with no limits on the number of courses to be withdrawn. Also, AAACs or program advisors would be well placed to provide support to students for enquiries on their study pathways and academic progression.

The Chair thanked members for all the feedback and encouraged all members, who represent different groups of students, to express their views via email or discussion thread at Canvas, and the School would respond to each person one by one. Echoing the Provost's email sent earlier, the Chair appealed to all members to join hands and put our best foot forward in difficult times. Prof Emily Nason also took this opportunity to thank Anna Moon, who was the team leader in the Summer Camp this summer for her great help.

4. Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held in March 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.

January 6, 2020