

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

1st SBM UG Student Representative Meeting 2020-21

Confirmed Minutes

Date and time of meeting:	Oct 14, 2020, 6:00pm – 7:40pm
Minutes Prepared by:	Maggie Yim
Attendance of SBM UG Programs Office:	Prof Allen Huang, Ka Yee Lee, Maggie Yim
CUP Faculty Members	Prof Tat Koon Koh
Attendance of UG Student Representatives:	Eugina Chan, John Chan, Gordon Cheng, Michael Cheng, Paco Cheng, Vanessa Ching, Phyllis Chu, Luke Del Core, Sherry Ding, William Dong, Aayush Gala, Deevansh Gupta, Alexis Ho, Zoe Lai, Horus Leung, Gavin Li, Flame Lim, Saras Sutedja, Annie Tam, Winston Ye, Vinnci Yeung
Absence with Apologies:	--
Absence:	Donald Chan, Kenny Sze

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 4th Meeting held on May 20, 2020 was confirmed.

2. Information Items

Introduction to New Members about the UG Student Representative Committee

The Chair presented an overview of the Committee and highlighted that the major role of a Student Representative is to act as a liaison person between students and the program administrators/ SBM UG Programs Office to express students' opinions on issues relating to their programs or learning experience. Student representatives can form sub-committees or working groups to follow up on issues and propose suggestions for actions and relay the discussions with the School to the students that they represent.

Members are recruited by various channels like program nomination, AAAC nomination and open nomination with a wide range of student background and admission types. Members from SBM Committee on Undergraduate Program (CUP) would also be invited to join the meeting. He thanked Prof Tat Koon Koh, the new director of the GBUS program and a CUP member, for joining this meeting. The Chair also introduced some of the achievements that

the Committee has made over the past few years, such as Dean Search and the development of the online student feedback form.

2a Membership of Student Representative Committee for Fall 2020-21

There are 23 members this term. The Chair welcomed the eight new members for joining the Committee and thanked those 15 students who continued to serve on the Committee. The Chair expressed that there would be four meetings every academic year with two meetings per term. In order to accommodate most of the schedules of students, the first meeting is scheduled at evening hours while the second meeting is held in the afternoon during study break. The Chair also mentioned that before the pandemic, light lunch or dinner would be arranged for members before the meetings. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, meetings this term would be going online.

2b Major Selection Information Sessions and Timeline in Fall 2020-21

Members were informed that the Fall 2020-21 Major Selection Information sessions were held online via Zoom on Sep 22-24, 2020 in view of COVID-19. All Zoom sessions were recorded and uploaded on SBM UG website so that students could watch them anytime afterwards. Members also noted the major selection timeline in Fall 2020-21. Departments were reminded to submit grades promptly for major selection.

2c Graduation Statistics 2019-20

Members were informed about the graduation statistics in 2019-20, including the SBM graduates' major and minor combinations by degree/program and the distribution of Majors for SBM graduates in 2019-20. The Chair expressed that before he assumed the role of Associate Dean, he was not aware that there were so many students who excelled in many different majors.

2d 2020-21 Admission Updates

The Chair updated members on the 2020 intake with their background and qualifications and mentioned that the new intake was less diverse than previous cohorts.

3. Discussion Items

3a Mixed-mode teaching in Fall 2020-21

The Chair briefed members that the Fall term 2020-21 commenced on Sept 7, 2020 with real-time online mode. As the pandemic situation improved and allowed, from Sept 28 (for UG classes while TPg and RPg programs might have different schedules), except for Language classes and classes with enrollments greater than 75, classes would be delivered in "mixed-mode" format so that students who are in HK and wish to come to class have the opportunity to do so. Student representatives shared their views on mixed-mode teaching in Fall 2020, as summarized below:

General comments

- The majority of students prefer online mode because of its flexibility and the fact that they could save a lot of transportation cost and time.

Pros for mixed-mode learning

- Some students liked mixed-mode teaching since they were often distracted when having online classes, in face-to-face (f2f) classes, they could actively engage in the conversation/ discussion. They could also get a chance to come to campus to catch up with friends and attend classes with them. Some prefer to attend classes and study in the Library or in the LSK building.
- Some students commented that they could hear clearly those who spoke inside the classroom and online on Zoom. Also, it would be good for instructors to use visualizer to display their handwriting instead of using the whiteboard.
- A member indicated that the class worked well if students who attended the f2f classes brought their notebook and joined the class via Zoom so that both online and offline students could engage in discussions with each other in class.

Difficulties/ Challenges for mixed-mode teaching

- Some students reflected that they were asked to register to indicate whether they would attend the class in person. The Chair replied that registration was needed in order to comply with government's measure in social distancing and to have contact tracing of any confirmed COVID-19 cases.
- It was also noted that some instructors asked students who signed up for attending f2f classes to attend all classes in person throughout the whole term. The Chair pointed out that instructors should not totally depend on polling/survey as the rules might change depending on the pandemic situation.
- Online students faced difficulties in seeing the handwritings on whiteboard clearly because the camera was not focused at times. Some online students could not see the faculty as he/she moved outside of the camera which would not follow the instructor's movement. They prefer instructors using annotation tools on zoom/iPad than handwriting on the whiteboard since sometimes handwriting is not legible.
- If the instructors used different applications on multiple screens, those who attended online classes would have a hard time following several screens at one time.
- A student commented that one of her mixed mode classes could not have more than 2 people in a group for discussion and she felt that it was not beneficial.
- Some students commented that since very few students showed up in class, some classes were changed back to online mode, causing confusion about the arrangement. Another student suggested to establish a rule (e.g. a certain percentage of students who preferred mixed mode) to prevent faculty from cancelling mixed-mode class at their discretion. The Chair responded that except for large size class with enrolments greater than 75 which would remain online, instructors should seek the approval from the respective department head if they would like to keep their classes online based on pedagogical reasons. No matter the courses would remain online or in mixed mode, they should be consistent and communicated to students clearly ahead of time to avoid

any confusion. The Chair suggested the student to use the one button feedback form to provide feedback of this particular course as the feedback would be directed to the faculty /department for follow up. Students could leave the name in the feedback form or remain anonymous.

- For discussion-based classes like negotiation, it might be a challenge for online and offline students since these two groups of students are separated for discussion and a student suggested to arrange sessions for purely online and purely f2f students for classes with multiple sessions in future. This would provide options for students and it would also be better for instructors to teach with different groups of audiences. The Chair replied that the University had been discussing about similar arrangements, but the barrier would be the pre-enrolment arrangement as we did not know who wanted to attend f2f or online.
- Another student questioned if mixed-mode could be adopted for MATH1013 tutorial class (only 30 students) since it would be difficult for students to voice out their questions related to calculus in the chat box. She was suggested to channel her feedback to Mathematics Department by using the online feedback form.

Online exams arrangement

- Another student commented that there were always no time's up announcement for online exams while for some exams, students were required to keep their mics on which might cause noises that would distract students during exams. Prof Koh commented that having mic on would be a way for instructors to avoid any forms of cheating and he suggested to lower the volume of the mic on students' side. The Chair also shared that for the online exam of his class last term, students were required to go to a quiet place alone to make sure they would not disrupt others, but it was also understood that it might be difficult for everyone, especially when people were confined to their home to take the exam.
- A student commented that the 'Forward only' rules for online exams on Canvas could bring difficulties for students. In normal written exams, it is common for students to go through all the questions quickly so that they can have ample time to recheck each question. Yet, for the forward only arrangement, it would be difficult for students to manage the time. The student was also not satisfied with the randomized questions as some students might get very difficult questions at the beginning and get stuck and ran out of time at the end. Prof Koh added that this was for academic integrity reason to prevent cheating in online exams. Randomized questions' arrangement was similar to GMAT although there is a logic to control the next set of questions in GMAT while it is not the case for Canvas exams.
- The Chair also added that an exam proctoring software was being piloted in some ACCT courses this term by CEI and there would be reviews at the end of the term to see if it would work.
- A student wondered if more TAs could be deployed for online exams so that more breakout rooms with a smaller number of students could be arranged and TAs could handle the technical problems or monitor the exams. Prof Koh replied that we might not have enough TAs to monitor many breakout rooms.
- Another representative opined that open book exams should be allowed as much as possible since it would be better to assess students' application of the knowledge rather than memorizing the content. The Chair replied that there was no policy for doing a

closed or open book exam as it would be subject to faculty's decision and depended on the subject.

- A student mentioned that there was no session to review mid-term exam questions in one of his classes and he wanted to have more feedback from instructors. He was advised to submit the one-button online feedback form.

Other questions/ comments

- Some students asked if the University could have a centralized policy for classes during typhoon signal No. 8 as one instructor has asked his students to attend classes despite the fact that typhoon signal No. 8 was hoisted on Oct 13. The Chair responded that there was a centralized policy which clearly stipulated that all classes (including online) during typhoon signal no. 8 should be cancelled and a message was sent out the day before Oct 13. It seemed not all faculty have read emails.
- There was a question about reduction on tuition fee due to online teaching. Prof Koh replied that students should approach SFAO if they have financial needs as it would not be possible to reduce the tuition fee.
- A student questioned if Pass/Fail grading option would be available for this Fall semester like the last Spring term 2019-20. The Chair replied that there would be no such option available this time.
- A student suggested to have a system for students to login with their SID to indicate whether they would join the class f2f or online and they could change their preferences any time. The Chair said that the idea was great, but in terms of implementation, it would be hard to enforce as there would always be changes unless a penalty system could be imposed to ensure the accuracy.
- Another member reflected that the teaching pace for two sections taught by two different instructors for ECON3133 was very different. The student was worried that his class might not be able to catch up. He was suggested to use the online feedback form for course instructor's follow-up.
- It was reflected that the workload for the two one-credit BCC courses (ISOM 2020 & ISOM2600) was too heavy.

[Post meeting notes: The relevant Department Head was informed about the credit load and course difficulty and the course instructors would make adjustment in the next offering.]

The Chair appreciated all the valuable comments received which we would pass onto faculty. Some issues would be explored like the setting up of a central place for students to indicate whether they will come to class and whether there would be separate sessions for f2f and online mode. Members would be updated at the next meeting if information would be available. He again encouraged all members to make use of the University Online Feedback Form to channel feedback as the department/program concerned would monitor the feedback and follow up accordingly.

3b Ideas for new initiatives in Academic Year 2020-21

A student proposed to add more self-paced courses like the Coursera courses so that students could review at their own time. The Chair responded that most of the faculty would

like students to participate in class and engage in discussion. Also, it seemed that the current arrangement already allowed students to review class recordings at their own time.

[Post meeting notes: A student representative suggested to set up a library book return box in LSK building. The UG Programs Office has communicated with the Library with the reply that they had explored this idea with FMO before but it would not be possible because of the budget issue. A drop box was therefore arranged three years ago in Cheng Yu Tung Building which was near LSK. Also, from the statistics of the past three years, the book return usage at Cheng Yu Tung Building was much lower than those at other locations (about 1-2 books per day over the past 3 years.)]

4. Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on Dec 8, 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

November 18, 2020