

Communication Studies Department

Departmental Meeting Minutes

4th Departmental Meeting 2019/2020

Date: 29 May 2020 (Friday)

Time: 10:00 – 11:31 a.m.

Venue: CVA1022 & Zoom

Chairperson: Prof. Vivian Sheer (Head)

Participants: Dr. Julie Bilby
Ms. Mariah Chan
Prof. Kara Chan
Dr. Kimmy Cheng
Mr. Henry Fung
Dr. Michelle Huang
Prof. Kineta Hung
Dr. Vivienne Leung
Dr. Florin Serban
Ms. Olivia Tsang
Dr. Eva Zhao
Ms. Nicola Luk (Recording Secretary)
Ms. Mimi Yip

Dr. Jos Bartels
Dr. Terri Chan
Dr. Regina Chen
Ms. Venice Cheng
Dr. Timothy Fung
Dr. Vincent Huang
Ms. Jessie Ko
Dr. Angela Mak
Dr. Jolie Shi
Dr. Dominic Yeo
Mr. Henry Cheung

Apology: Dr. Leanne Chang

I. Matters for Information

The Chairperson briefly reported on the distribution of the virus-protective accessories to faculty members and one-off COMS scholarships to students. She welcomed the new faculty member, Dr. Jos Bartels, who would join the Department in September.

The Chairperson also thanked Dr. Julie Bilby who would leave the Department in June, and Mr. Henry Cheung who would retire from his full-time job very soon, for their contribution and services to the Department. The Department would continue the hiring process for PR replacement and one researcher in technology.

II. Grades Report

Members reported the following courses with irregularities:

ORGC courses

1. Dr. Timothy Fung reported for Dr. Leanne Chang for *COMM2007 (00001) Communication Research Methods*. One student withdrew from the class and two students were graded “F” because they missed many assessments.

AB courses

1. Dr. Vivienne Leung reported for part-time lecturer, Mr. Charlie Fung, for *PRAD3027 Digital Audio and Video Production*. One student got “I” grade because she did not submit any assignment. Mr. Charlie Fung intended to extend the assignment submission deadline for this student.

(Post-meeting note: The student was graded “C-” by Mr. Charlie Fung on 8 June 2020.)

2. For *PRAD4895 PRA Honours Project*, Dr. Vivienne Leung reported that one student got “F” grade because the student never submitted anything including interim report. One student was downgraded from “C+” to “C” due to late submission of project.

One double-dipping case was found on Honours Project under Dr. Eva Zhao’s supervision and final assignment for *PRAD3007 Advertising Design and Visualization*. Dr. Julie Bilby, PRAD3007 course instructor, agreed to allow the students to resubmit the assignment while Dr. Eva Zhao deducted marks for the duplicated part in the Honours Project.

3. For *COMM2007 (00002) Communication Research Methods*, Dr. Vivienne Leung reported that the percentage of “A” grades reached 30.3, which slightly exceeded department regulations, but she believed it was not a big problem.
4. Prof. Kineta Hung reported that one student got “F” grade for *PRAD4025 Branding and Communication* because the student never showed up in class and did not submit any assignment.
5. Dr. Terri Chan reported that one student got “F” grade for *PRAD2007 Principles and Methods of Advertising* because the student did not participate in any in-class exercises and group report. Her overall performance was not up to standard.
6. Dr. Michelle Huang reported that two groups had not finished their projects for *PRAD3105 Strategic Communication Practicum*, so “I” grade would be assigned to the students. The final report would be due on 4 June 2020.

(Post-meeting note: All students for *PRAD3105 Strategic Communication Practicum* completed their final reports and were graded “S” on 8 June 2020.)

PR courses

1. Dr. Angela Mak reported that the percentage of “A” grades for her course *PRAD4045 Advanced PR Writing* reached 30.3. She believed those students deserved “A” grades given the heavy workload of the course.
2. Ms. Jessie Ko reported that one student got “F” grade for *PRAD2015 Principles and*

Practices of PR because the student never showed up in class until the end of the semester. This was the same student who failed in *PRAD2007 Principles and Methods of Advertising*.

(Post-meeting note: Knowing that this student also failed in *COMM2007 (00001) Communication Research Method*, the Department informed the student on 1 June 2020 about the possible consequences by email and recommended her to apply for suspension of studies if needed.)

GE courses

1. Dr. Michelle Huang reported that 18 students were graded “F” for *UCPN1005 The Art of Persuasion* and 31 students were graded “F” for *GCPS1005 Public Speaking* because they did not submit assignments. The overall performance of these two courses had normal distribution.

III. Matters for Discussion

1. Revised course document for PRAD3046
Prof. Kara Chan revised the course document for *PRAD3046 Audience Measurement and Engagement*. The revision was mainly on the course content and list of textbooks and references.

Dr. Regina Chen expressed concern about the overlapping content of this course and *PRAD3017 Strategic Communication and Emerging Media Trends*, and made suggestions on the course content.

(Post-meeting note: Further revision was made on the course document for *PRAD3046 Audience Measurement and Engagement*. The finalized version was endorsed by circulation by faculty members on 10 June 2020 and by School Board on 24 June 2020.)

2. Program Director reports of and the responses to exit surveys

PR concentration

Dr. Angela Mak reported that the statistics and comments were similar to previous years’, although some of the PR students gave very negative comments.

Some students requested for more skill-based courses, especially audio and video production. Dr. Regina Chen suggested the instructor of *PRAD3027 Digital Audio and Video Production* actively promote the course.

AB concentration

Dr. Vivienne Leung reported that similar to PR concentration, AB students also requested for more practical courses. To address students’ comments, starting from AY2019-20, the Department offered design courses every semester.

AB students also commented that there was duplicated content for *PRAD3056 Campaign Planning and Management* and some other courses. To avoid similar comments in the future, the Department had already taken the initiative to revamp the course *PRAD2007 Principles and Methods of Advertising*.

Some AB students requested for more media-related elements. Dr. Vivienne Leung thanked Prof. Kara Chan for revamping the course *PRAD3046 Audience Measurement and Engagement* to address the issue.

ORGC concentration

Dr. Timothy Fung reported that ORGC students were positive towards the curriculum and programme.

One of the student asked for assistance from the Department in career preparation. To accommodate students' need, the ORGC concentration already started the action plan to better prepare students for their career development.

3. Student career development, internships, and placements

The Chairperson reported that *PRAD3106 Strategic Communication Practicum* would merge with *PRAD4007 Strategic Communication Internship* to become *Strategic Communication Internship and Practicum* in AY2020-21. Students could choose either internship or practicum to fulfill the course requirement. Internship would become all year round that allowed students to register at any time. The course would be divided into three sections, AB, ORGC and PR, supervised by three Internship Directors to accommodate different students' need.

Mr. Henry Fung expressed concern about courses registration and grading. The Chairperson would hold a meeting with Internship Directors to clarify the course arrangement.

(Post-meeting note: Meeting was held by the Chairperson on 16 June 2020 with Internship Directors, Ms. Helen Chinag, Ms. Barbara Fu and Mr. Henry Fung, and Practicum Instructor, Dr. Michelle Huang.)

The Chairperson added that the Department would provide 30 students with HK\$4,000 sponsorship each for unpaid internship at good companies. Application for sponsorship had to be preapproved by Internship Directors.

Dr. Angela Mak suggested the Department inform organizations that offered internships to COMS students over the past few years about the internship sponsorship scheme to encourage the organizations to continue offering internships. She also shared the information about a similar internship sponsorship scheme proposed by the Career Centre.

4. RPG admissions and department research areas

The Chairperson reported that certain research methods and theory courses would be added to the School's MA programmes. After taking these courses, MA students could be admitted to the MPhil programme.

In order to tie postgraduation research activities with faculty members' research activities, the list of department research areas had been uploaded onto the newly launched School research website. MA students would know which supervisors to contact for their graduation thesis.

5. Ideas for planning for the new semester

Dr. Regina Chen suggested uploading online workshops and webinars onto the department intranet for students. She also called for discussion between participative management teams at the Retreat to exchange ideas and experiences about e-learning.

Prof. Kara Chan encouraged faculty members to use the teaching videos uploaded onto the library internet for their classes. The videos interviewed practitioners and explored new territories such as design thinking and user experience design. Prof. Kara Chan also encouraged colleagues to apply for teaching development grants, such as the Future Learn Platform, to better equip themselves for online teaching.

6. Report on the System Health Lab

Prof. Kineta Hung updated faculty members that the new Vice President (Research and Development) created 6 new laboratories aiming to put people from different areas to work together. One of the laboratories was the System Health Lab for Health Communication, Science and Sports people. Prof. Kineta Hung was asked to propose some topics of on-going projects, so she pooled faculty members who were working on Health Communication and came up with two topics.

The information had been uploaded to the new research website launched by the University. People who were interested in applying for HKBU could know which areas faculty members were working on.

IV. Adjournment

There was no other business. The meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.