

Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 70th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 7 July 2021 at 4:00pm online via Zoom.

- Present : Prof Arthur Lau (Chair), Prof Allen Huang, Prof Ronald Lau, Prof Jin Wang, Prof DY Yeung, Prof Carine Yiu, Prof Pengyu Zhu, Mr Kai Chun Clinton Li, Mr Guangsheng Liu, Prof King Chow (Member and Secretary)
- Apologies Prof Ho Bun Chan, Miss Wing Sze Lui, Miss Ritika Upadhyay
- Resource Person : DSTO: Ms Cheryl Lee
PG Representatives: Ms Marie Bernal, Mr Lingfei Lu, Dr Fu Kit Sheong, Mr Yu Wang
- In Attendance : Ms Shirley Wu

Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed new members – Prof Pengyu Zhu, Mr Kai Chun Clinton Li and Miss Wing Sze Lui.

Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

2. Minutes of the 69th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs were confirmed and there were no matters arising.

Report on vMosaic, Graduate Employment and Internships

3. Members received a report from Ms Cheryl Lee on vMosaic, Graduate Employment and Internships. It was reported that 159 employers and 913 students participated in vMosaic (virtual job fair) from 19 to 23 April 2021. As both employers and students strongly expressed that they would prefer in-person job fair, Career Center will try to resume in-person job fair if the situation allows. The feature and function of vMosaic platform would be enhanced and could be used by school/department for their job fair.
4. Ms Marie Bernal inquired if schools could post internal academic jobs such as research assistant on the website. Ms Lee shared that internal academic jobs could be posted on career center job board for HKUST students. It could also be posted on Joint Institutions Job Information System (<https://www.jjis.org.hk/>) for students from other universities.
5. Ms Cheryl Lee reported that according to Graduate Employment Survey 2020, the median salary dropped from 19k to 18.7k, unemployment rate increased slightly from 1.2% to 1.8%

and opting for further studies increased from 13.7% to 19.9%. Prof Ronald Lau inquired about the average percentage of further studies in previous years. Ms Lee shared that usually it was 10%-12% to opt for further studies. Prof DY Yeung supplemented that students were tend to go for further studies when the economy went down.

6. Ms Cheryl Lee shared that the number of internship postings on job board (Jan-May 2021) has grown from 528 to 803, 52% increase comparing with the same period in 2020. As of June 18, the ITC STEM Internship Scheme has earmarked \$10M to HKUST and provided allowance to 364 students for taking STEM internships. For 2021-22, ITC has allocated \$20M to HKUST for STEM internships during summer and winter. Overseas internships were suspended due to COVID-19 but might be resumed in Spring 2022. Moreover, around 40 students took virtual overseas internships last year.
7. The Chair inquired about the internship opportunities for non-local students. Ms Lee shared that for some government internships, only local students are eligible to apply but more and more organizations such as insurance industry and private wealth management opened up their internships/programs to all Hong Kong residents.

Career Support and Student Advising

8. The Chair invited student representatives to share their views and experiences on career support. Mr Clinton Li shared that he applied for the internship at a start-up company but it turned out that the company was not ready to take any intern. Ms Cheryl Lee explained that Career Center had criteria for the company posting on the job board and did some preliminary vetting. If students find any illegal/inappropriate job posts, they could inform Career Center and the job posts would be suspended immediately.
9. The Chair shared some feedbacks from other UG representatives and inquired about specific career advice and coordination with schools/departments. Ms Cheryl Lee shared that Career Center was intended to cover more general career advice for mass students and schools/departments could provide focused and specific career advice to their students as schools/departments have closer relationship with students/alumni and know about their specific needs well. Prof King Chow suggested to strike a balance between generality and specificity, and encouraged school/department colleagues to provide more support on specific career advice to their students. The Chair also encouraged student representatives to express their needs to their departments/programs.
10. Ms Marie Bernal expressed that as an international RPG student with work experience, she got very limited career support from the university. There were rare job opportunities in the job fair/board for RPG students especially in non-science/engineering field. The department could barely offer career advice outside of academia. It would be helpful if the university could provide more advanced career advice to mature students and more career support to international students.

11. Prof Pengyu Zhu shared that PPOL did have communication tutors to provide career support to TPG students but the division might overlook RPG students on the assumption that RPG students would go for academia. Prof Zhu indicated that he would convey the message to PPOL and they could expand the career support to RPG students who look for non-academia jobs such as consulting and think-tank.
12. Dr Fu Kit Sheong further shared that most job opportunities on the job board were for UG students at entry level but quite a number of RPG students looked for mid-level jobs in industry. It was very painful for RPG students without any support to choose between academic path and industry path since the supervisor/program director would provide academic advising only and no suitable consultation from Career Center.
13. Mr Guangsheng Liu suggested to add “City” filter on the job board so that students could identify the job location easily. Ms Cheryl Lee shared that current categories were areas/countries such as mainland China, Macau and Singapore but they could work it out by asking employees to provide city information.
14. Prof Allen Huang shared that with regard to RPG career advice, it varied from department to department. Some engineering departments might have good industry connections to help place their RPG students but others might have academia connection only. Prof Huang suggested that headhunter/consultant service could be considered for RPG students. Prof King Chow supplemented that some graduate schools in US offered workshops on alternative career to RPG students and we could do a bit more career advising to help RPG students think about their suitable career path. The Chair suggested that alumni sharing could be another channel to help RPG students.
15. Mr Lingfei Lu suggested that the university could offer more career support to RPG students such as workshop on how to network at academic conferences, in-depth 1-on-1 career advising.
16. Mr Yu Wang mentioned that TPG students also needed more career support. As many TPG students look for jobs in the mainland China, some alumni career sharing on public or private sector in mainland China could be organized. Mr Wang also suggested organizing company visits for RPG students since they are not allowed to take any internship due to postgraduate scholarship requirement.
17. The Chair suggested that MSSS/GSAA could coordinate with Career Center to organize some career talks for mainland TPG students. Prof King Chow supplemented that with the establishment of HKUST (Guangzhou) campus and career unit in Guangzhou, the career advising on job opportunities in mainland China could be expanded and enhanced.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.