

# COMING FULL CIRCLE

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**Not everyone has the opportunity that HKUST has given me to return a favor. I earned my undergraduate degree from this university and I have been able to come back, PhD in hand, to teach new generations of undergraduates.**

My experience earning a doctorate abroad provided me with a global outlook that dovetails perfectly with Hong Kong's impending 3-3-4 Curriculum Reform. I benefited from HKUST's growing internationalism as a member of its first class of undergraduates, and I embrace the university's role in elevating Hong Kong's higher education system to world-class standards. Although I was born and raised in Hong Kong I am not Chinese, but I've never felt more at home than I did in my UG days here. I've come home to give something back to the school that launched my career.

## As students...

As one of HKUST's first undergraduates, I experienced some of the university's growing pains. When I wanted to make a phone call, for example, during my first orientation evening I gave up because of the long queues that would form by the one and only phone line in the entire student hall. How times have changed! These little inconveniences mattered little to me then because I felt privileged to have been admitted to any Hong Kong university to earn what was then the rare honor of a local undergraduate degree. I so enjoyed and prospered intellectually here at HKUST that I remained to earn an MPhil degree from the Division of Social Science

before embarking on my doctoral program at Cornell University in the US. I bring to my teaching and scholarship a long-term perspective that spans the history of UG education at HKUST. As a teacher I now am able to extend the university's best traditions of geniality and cooperation, which remain mainstays of the undergraduate experience, to my own students.

## As teacher...

I so enjoy teaching here because the same values that enriched my undergraduate experience endure: academic excellence, a broad-based curriculum with an international outlook, and teamwork. The breadth of courses offered at HKUST shaped my career path, as I became interested in social science thanks to the undergraduate requirement to take general education courses outside of my home school (Business Management). My success as a teacher and scholar reflects a tradition of interdisciplinary learning at HKUST that not only remains but is a hallmark of the policies proposed by President Chan, who likes to say that you can have a 'crossover' education here. This crossover idea is especially characteristic of my field, science and technology studies (STS).

## The things I like most...

One of the things I like most about this university is its tradition of warm relations among students and between students and faculty. I, for instance, had the privilege of personally knowing and being inspired by HKUST's founding President, Chia Wei Woo, who left a deep impression on me as regards his vision for the development, mission and goals, of HKUST: a vision that strongly included the value of teamwork. It is enormously rewarding for me to create a culture of

teamwork and civility in my classes. I suppose I am able to do this because I remember what it was like to be a student here. I am able to put myself in my students' shoes because I walked in them myself.



