

Annual Letter 2016



Dear Communication Alumni,

The year of the Monkey is just around the corner and with it we have much news to share. Thanks to the combined efforts of faculty, staff and students, and the unfailing support of our alumni and friends, the School has had a fruitful year in which we have realised many of our goals.

Our School has continued to internationalize our programmes. Over the past year, more than 50 professors and experts from abroad came to participate in various workshops, master classes, conferences and seminars organised by the School, Academy of Film, Department of Communication Studies and Department of Journalism. Professor Peter Golding, a world renowned expert in the field of communication, will be our speaker for the HKBU 60th Anniversary Shun Hing Distinguished Lecture Series to be held in late February.

Our long term tripartite collaboration with Leipzig University in Germany and Ohio University in the United States has continued apace, with the goal of facilitating as many student exchanges as possible. So far, about 80 undergraduate and postgraduate students from HKBU have attended classes at the other two universities. Dr. Yusuf Kalyang, Director of Ohio University's Institute for International Journalism, is a visiting scholar in the Journalism Department this semester. Soon, students from Leipzig and Ohio will come to our School to begin their exchange experiences. We strongly promote such interactions in the belief that they will broaden the horizons of participating students, enhance their cultural competency, and strengthen their communication skills. Students will benefit by becoming informed global citizens ready to meet the challenges of an inter-connected world.

The School has made much progress in raising our research profile. One measure of our progress is that a rising number of our academics' applications for UGC research grants have been approved in recent years. In the last round of awards, HKBU, with seven awards, was the most successful university in the field of communication. We are also very pleased that some of our research proposals were ranked "world leading", of which 75% were deemed "internationally excellent."

Since last semester, about 70 undergraduate students have gone exchange to Australia, Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan, Korea, the Mainland, the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States. Besides, more than 200 undergraduate and postgraduate students took part in beyond-the-classroom learning through participation in different study tours, including one to Taiwan to observe the presidential and legislative elections, and others to Cambodia, France, Germany, Japan and the United States. Some of our public relations and advertising students had a unique experience working with peers from the University of Missouri's School of Journalism on a campaign project for a client at the Hong Kong office of McCann and Spencer, the world-class advertising company, last summer.

The year 2015 was hectic but also fruitful. Three scripts (one for feature film and two for micro films) by film graduates were selected by "studio i" of the Academy of Film. The awardees will get financial support, filming equipment and professional guidance from the Academy to turn their works into real productions. A faculty member of the Film Academy was chosen to exhibit his artworks in an international exhibition; a communication faculty member was awarded "Top Three Faculty Papers" at an international conference; a symposium on micro-blogging and journalism was organised by the Centre for Media and Communication Research; and an international conference on media literacy was held by the Department of Journalism.

Some of our students' achievements have also been recognised in various ways. A PhD student received the Award for Young Artist (Arts Criticism) at the Hong Kong Arts Development Awards. A journalism student was awarded The Women's Foundation Hong Kong Scholarship, valued at about HK\$400,000, to support her MPhil studies at the University of Cambridge.

We are particularly grateful for the invaluable support of our alumni and friends. The School received a generous donation of HK\$1 million from Mrs Helen Yu, wife of the late Professor Timothy Yu, founder of the Department of Communication, to establish the Timothy Yu Communication Education Fund to support our teaching and research development. To celebrate the 60th anniversary of HKBU, a homecoming day for alumni and the presentation ceremony for the Chang Kuo-sin Award for Aspiring Young Communicators will be held in September. We look forward to seeing you all at these events!

Albert Einstein once said, "A person who never makes mistakes has never tried anything new". Let's embrace the Year of the Monkey with a commitment to renewed courage and faith.

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Professor Ringo MA
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