

**The University of Hong Kong**

**POSTGRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

# **Annual Report**

# **Executive Committee**

# **Session 2018-2019**

## 1. Preface

Founded in 1993, Postgraduate Student Association of the University of Hong Kong (HKU-PGSA) is the only official postgraduate students' union organization on campus and is also the oldest of its kind in Hong Kong SAR. We aim to enrich the extracurricular life for the postgraduate students and promote their rights on campus. We have devoted to representing the community and voice for it for over 26 years.

In this year of operation, the Executive Committee Session 2018-2019 have made extra efforts in dealing with university affairs, enhancing student career development and academic development opportunities, increasing students' involvement in university policy-making process, strengthening our publication power and engagement with the community, taking more care of the marginalized ethnic groups on campus, developing our financial security, improving internal institutional construction, team building, and archive reserving, and trying our best to contribute to the surrounding society with our extra capacity.

Nonetheless, problems remain in various aspects, including the clarification of internal duties and responsibilities, the management relationship with the sub-organizations, the unsolved problem in university housing and accommodation policy-making with the Senior Management Team of the University, as well as the long lack of personnel and the high turnover ratio.

The future Executive Committee will keep working on traditional tasks as well as solving the problems remaining. We shall keep devoting ourselves to make PGSA not only the representative of the PG students at HKU but the model of self-governing student organizations in the greater China area.

Cheers,

Li Jingxian  
President 18-19  
Postgraduate Student Association  
July 2019

## 2. Basic information

### 2.1 Quick Stats

Region 地區	Taught Postgraduate 修課式研究生	Research Postgraduate 研究式研究生	All Pgs 全部研究生	% Taught Postgraduate 修課式研究生 百分比	% Research Postgraduate 研究式研究生 百分比	% All Pgs 全部研究生 百分比
Hong Kong Local 香港本地	5,540	666	6,206	59.82%	23.53%	51.32%
Mainland China 中國內地	2,706	1,757	4,463	29.22%	62.06%	36.91%
International 國際學生	1,015	408	1,423	10.96%	14.41%	11.77%
<b>All 總計</b>	<b>9,261</b>	<b>2,831</b>	<b>12,092</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table shows the composition of the background of PGs in HKU. The data is collected from the HKU website of the 2017-2018 academic year. Local students and Mainland Chinese students are the majority group for TPg and RPg, respectively. International students take about 12% of the total population.

### 2.2 Executive Committee

Position	Name	Curriculum	Faculty
President	Mr LI Jingxian	MPhil	Social Science
Deputy President (resigned by 20 Jan 2019)	Dr CHEN Jie	PhD	Medicine
Vice-President (Executive)	Mr ZHANG Runzhi	PhD	Engineering
Vice-President (External)	Ms WEI Yichen	PhD	Engineering
Vice-President (Internal)	Ms ZHENG Huili	PhD	Education
General Secretary	Ms PAN Zhijun	MSW	Social Science
Treasure	Mr ZHU Bohao	PhD	Engineering
Secretary of University Affairs	Dr WANG Yuchen	PhD	Medicine
Secretary of Archive	Ms FENG Ye	PhD	Law
Secretary of Publication	Ms SHI Jingjing	PhD	Medicine
Secretary of Information & Technology	Ms LIAN Zhihui	MA	Arts
Secretary of Membership & Alumni	Mr YU Zhige	PhD	Busi & Econ
Secretary of International Liaison	Mr FENG Zechu	MEd	Education
Secretary of Career Development	Ms ZHANG Naiwen	MSc(LIM)	Education
Secretary of Social Programme	Ms DENG Shuyu	MSW	Social Science
Secretary of Recreation & Cultural Development	Mr WU Di	PhD	Science
Secretary of Student Welfare	Mr ZHANG Zhening	MArch	Architecture
Secretary of Academic Development	Ms HAN Chen	PhD	Education

Five positions of the Executive Committee were elected from the last Annual Election (President, Deputy President, Executive VP, External VP, and Treasurer). The rest of the Executive Committee was established in the early second semester through the Mid-term Recruitment. Besides, Deputy President Dr Chen Jie resigned in the early second semester.

The executive team, including all the officers, has 62 members. Most of them were recruited in September's massive recruitment. Some of them were recruited at the beginning of the second semester. Executive members include people from all Faculties and include both TPgs and RPgs.

### 3. Operational Report

#### 3.1 University Affairs

One of the core business of the Association is to participate in the University's policy-making procedure and promote for the postgraduate students' rights. During this year, the Association has conducted a Survey on Campus Life, sent student representatives to various Student Affairs Committees, held a meeting and a forum with the President and the Senior Management Team of the University, and initiated a Task Force on the accommodation/housing issue for the postgraduate students.

#### ***University Authority Participation***

Executive VP Mr Zhang Runzhi was elected as Councilor of HKU Council, and Deputy President Dr Chen Jie was elected as Senator of HKU Senate. 14 members were nominated by the Association to 13 different Student Affairs Committee. This year, catering vendors were changed for many canteens on campus. The quality of the food and services has been complained by the students. Our representatives have raised complaints on the Committee on Catering and pushed the University to conduct a comprehensive investigation over the catering quality. The Graduate House Committee of Management has proposed to rejuvenate the Graduate House in summer 2020. Our representative has expressed concerns about how the House will accommodate the current students and will follow up with this project. The Committee on Halls discussed to establish “quite zones” at traditional halls (12:00 am – 7:00 am, in living area). Our representative has supported this suggestion.

<b>HKU Council</b>	<b>Representative</b>
Councilor (Postgraduate Student)	Mr ZHANG Runzhi
<b>HKU Senate</b>	<b>Representative</b>
Senator (Postgraduate Student)	Dr CHEN Jie
<b>Board/Committee (PGSA Nomination)</b>	<b>Representatives</b>
Committee on Student Affairs	Mr LI Jingxian
Careers and Placement Committee	Miss WEI Yichen
Committee on Catering (2 places)	Mrs MA Rongzhen Mr Alexander Fedorov
Committee on Halls	Mr Wang Yuchen
Committee on Health, Safety and Well-Being	Dr MA Muzhi
Committee on Personal Development and Counselling	Miss JIANG Kailun
Committee on Student Amenities*	Mr TANG Xin
Committee on Student Finance*	Dr CHEN Jie
Equal Opportunity Committee	Mr ZHANG Runzhi
Graduate House Committee of Management	Mr LI Jingxian
Information Technology Advisory Committee	Miss FU Jingyuan
Library Committee	Mr Lau Kwok Yan
Policy Board of Postgraduate Education	Mr LI Jingxian

*\* The Committee on Student Amenities and the Committee on Student Finance are going to be merged into the Committee on Campus Life in the coming academic year.*

### ***Meeting with the President & VC***

On Oct 24, 2018, the Association held the Meeting with the President and VC Professor Zhang Xiang. Postgraduate student representatives from all Faculties attended this meeting, including local, Mainland, and international students. During the meeting, we raised questions on the University's strategy in attracting international students, drawbacks in the current conference grants, and the limited University residence space. The President introduced the University's general policy towards the postgraduate students, especially RPg students, and responded to the above questions. From this meeting, we have successfully urged the Senior Management Team to comprehensively investigate the Postgraduates' accommodation/housing situation, which led to many follow-ups.

### ***Survey for Life of PG Students at HKU***

From Feb 1-28, 2019, the Association conducted a comprehensive survey for life of PG students. Questions regarding catering, accommodation, scholarship, conference grant, and graduate school courses were covered. The result of the survey was presented on the latter President Forum with PG students.

### ***President Forum with PG students***

The President Forum with PG students was held on Feb 28, 2019. All postgraduate students were allowed to attend the forum and express their concerns and questions to the Senior Management Team. The forum covered the issues in accommodation, RPgs' relationship with their supervisors, and scholarship. After the forum, a Task Force on PG accommodation was established (formed by representatives from all Faculties), and a proposal was given back to the Senior Management Team. In that proposal, we listed the current circumstance for PG living on- and off-campus and the drawbacks of the current University residence system. We proposed that the University should guarantee first-year RPg student with University residence and was accepted by the University. We also proposed a bursary of \$2,600/month, which is provided to undergraduate students, for RPgs who failed to apply for University residence. As the postgraduate student has an extra burden in doing research, we proposed to remove activity participation as a criterion of the re-admission evaluation (only for those residential halls/colleges that have this policy).

## **3.2 Career Development**

Career development is another core business of the Association. Since the majority of the postgraduate students are TPgs whose programs are mainly one year, there is a large demand for job seeking. As many of the postgraduate students are non-local, career training about the Hong Kong style of resume writing and interview skills are also very needed.

During this year, about 30 different campus recruitment talks, interview, and resume writing training, and job fairs were held. The campus recruitment talks include company recruitments and university recruitments. Those university recruitments that hire postdocs, young researchers, and young professors are very welcomed by final-year RPg students. The number of career development events did not include career development events that only asked for promotion but were not hosted by us. The major proportion of sponsorship comes from career development cooperation.

### **3.3 International Student Affairs**

The Association has made efforts to engage with international students and wish to help them better integrate into the PG community. The most remarkable program we conducted this year is the Go Go Mandarin program. On campus, there has been a lot of Cantonese class offered by various entities, and non-degree language courses offered by the University, but there is not a Mandarin course program. Therefore, we designed a tutor/tutee program that asks students who are native Mandarin speaker to be tutors and students who wish to learn or practice Mandarin to be tutees. This program lasted for nearly two semesters (Oct 22 – Apr 14, 2019) that attracted about 120 native Mandarin speakers to be tutors, and over 60 international students to be tutees. Each pair of tutor and tutee was required to have an appointment every week for language training. On April 14, 2019, we held the closing ceremony for this program and let tutees present their learning outcomes. On the same day, we held the first International Student Festival and let students from different cultural background share the specialties of their hometowns.

### **3.4 Academic Development**

#### ***Zhi Zhi Forum***

The Association has been working on academic development for postgraduate students. Zhi Zhi Forum (致知論壇) is a brand established by PGSA to hold high-level academic seminars. This year, we invited Professor Jin Canrong from Renmin University and Professor Lau Chi-pang to talk about the international relationship (Feb 23, 2019).

#### ***Interdisciplinary Research Competition***

Interdisciplinary Research Competition is another traditional program that is held by PGSA, Graduate House, and Graduate School, together. The competition requires postgraduate students to form teams with people from at least two different departments, and the judges will review their research proposal. This year, a total of 18 teams participated in this Competition, and 8 of them entered the final round. The first three teams were awarded cash prizes sponsored by Graduate House (Apr 17, 2019).

### **3.5 Student Welfare**

Student welfare mainly involves the welfare giftpacks distributed to our Full Members. Each year, the Orientation and Weeks of Welcome are held in the last week of August and the first week of September. Anyone who joins PGSA as a Full Member will be given a New Student Giftpack automatically. In January, we held the Welfare Week, which has been suspended for two years, to distributed giftpacks to all Full Members (not only new registers). From the Annual Financial Report, the total membership fee collected in this year was less than the expenses in student welfare, which means more value was rewarded back to our Full Members than what they have paid.

### **3.6 External Liaison**

The Association has participated in a series of external liaison activities to strength relationship with companion student organizations. External liaison activities consist of external visiting, external reception, and external participation.

### **External Visiting**

This year, the Association has paid two external visiting projects, one was to visit the graduate student associations of National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technology University (NTU) in Singapore (Apr 4-7, 2019), the other was to visit the graduate student associations of a bunch of universities in Taiwan (Apr 19-22, 2019). For each project, 8 members of our ExCo attended. The two graduate student associations in Singapore impressed us by their higher level of internationalization. The integration of students from different cultural backgrounds at Singapore universities was better than HKU. In Taiwan, we have had a conference with postgraduate student leaders from Taiwan University, Tsing Hua University, Chiao Tung University, Chengchi University, and Yang Ming University. Most of the student associations were all more actively participating in social affairs and movements than us.

### **External Reception**

External reception mainly involves liaison events with postgraduate student associations from other universities on the HKU campus. Organizations that pay visits to HKU were normally be received in meeting rooms of Graduate House and communicate with PGSA representatives. During the year, organizations from the following universities have come to visit us (in time order): City University of Hong Kong, Jilin University, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Yangzhou University, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Taiwan University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Tsinghua University Shenzhen Graduate School, Peking University Shenzhen Graduate School, Jinan University, and Baptist University.

### **External Participation**

External Participation mainly involves the participation of academic forums, summits, high table dinners, or inaugurations held by postgraduate student associations of other universities. During the year the Association has participated in various events held by postgraduate student associations from the following universities (in time order): Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, University of Macau, Shenzhen University, Nanjing Aerospace University, Hehai University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Peking University, Tsinghua University Shenzhen Graduate School, Jinan University, Baptist University, Macau University of Science and Technology, City University of Macau, and Peking University Shenzhen Graduate School.

### **3.7 Sub-organizations**

The Association currently has 9 registered sub-organizations. In this year, with the establishment of *The Financial Regulation for the Affiliated Societies*, more supports were able to be given from the Association to the sub-organizations. During the year, one society was newly established (Xin Jia Society, a student Christian worship group). Hongson Arts Society has changed its name to Arts Society. Vedas Heart and Soul Society has operated well in its yoga class. Fieldtribe Society has successfully held many hiking and camping activities. Robotics Society has formed a team to attend the Robot Competition held by DJI. The Soccer Team experienced a reformation and has

standardized its management and training rules. Also, the Basketball Team has attended the games across 6 universities and has won good prizes.

However, the lack of definition of sub-organization in our Constitution has hindered the Association from striving for equal rights and resources from the University. Therefore, in the drafted Constitution, we defined the nature of sub-organization and its relationship with the Association.

***List of sub-organizations:***

1. Arts Society
2. Basketball Team
3. Campus Dining Society
4. Civil Engineering Graduate Association
5. Fieldtribe Society
6. Robotics Society
7. Soccer Team
8. Vedas Heart and Soul Society
9. Xin Jia Society

### **3.8 Social Work**

Besides serving the postgraduate students on campus, we have also made efforts to contribute to the local communities. Two social work activities were conducted during the year, which are Food Angel volunteering (Dec 14, 2018) and Sai Wan street cleaning (Jan 20, 2019).

### **3.9 Publication**

The Association uses various means to engage with our members. The bulk email system is provided by IT Service of HKU. The Association is illegible to send out emails to all current postgraduate students. In this year, a total of 112 issues were sent out to all PGs. The Association's official website ([www.pgsa.hku.hk](http://www.pgsa.hku.hk)) is the official platform for us to publicize official documents. Facebook is a major social media we use. During the year, 1044 followers were attracted. Our WeChat public account has attracted over 3600 new subscribers (a 40% increase) this year. To be pointed out, the newly opened YouTube account has successfully absorbed 13k subscribers mainly because of the video of the Zhi Zhi Forum.

### **3.10 Institutional Improvement**

In this year, the Association has legislated three regulations to standardize our daily operations. *Internal Regulation of Collective Resolution* stipulated the rules of holding regular meetings and the ways of making internal collective resolutions. *The External Cooperation Guideline* clarified the rules in making external cooperation. *The Financial Regulation for the Affiliated Societies* set the rules of the sub-organization funding application.

### **3.11 Other Recreational Events**

#### ***Bus Tour Hong Kong, Sep 8, 2018***

During the Orientation and Weeks of Welcome, we hold the Bus Tour Hong Kong that attracted a

lot of international students who has never been in Hong Kong before. The bus traveled all the way from Central to the Kowloon Peninsula and traveled back to view the splendid night view of Hong Kong. This has been the most welcomed part of our orientation activities.



### **Single Day Party, Nov 11, 2018**

The Single Day Party is held every year on “11.11”. It was held in PG Hub, Graduate House, and about 100 people attended. People were grouped in pairs and play games. Some of them actually managed to find their boy/girlfriends through this event.



### **Christmas Feast, Dec 21, 2018**

The Christmas Feast was also held in PG Hub, Graduate House. Many non-local students who did not leave the University during the Christmas holidays came to celebrate Christmas together.



### ***Hiking Festival, Dec 22, 2018***

The first Hiking Festival across 8 universities in Hong Kong was initiated by our Association. About 120 students from 8 different universities went hiking in Sai Kung on Dec 22.



### ***Graduation High Table Dinner, Apr 28, 2019***

The Graduation High Table Dinner (HTD) is our largest event every year. This year, 400 postgraduate students were hosted in Loke Yew Hall to celebrate their graduation. Professor Chen Zhiwu and Dr Ji Chao were invited to be the keynote speakers of the HTD.



### ***Tsinghua SEmotion A Cappella Concert, May 17, 2019***

The SEmotion Vocal Band from Tsinghua University came to HKU to hold an A Cappella concert. About 400 people came to the concert in Yuet Ming Auditorium.



## 4. Conclusion and Expectation

Overall, the Executive Committee Session 2018-2019 has outperformed in many aspects than the past few years. The 17 Executives have contributed their spare time and enthusiasm to serve the Association and the postgraduate students.

Nonetheless, there are a lot of improvements to be made. For university affairs, different student representatives were nominated to each Student Affairs Committee. This does not help information integration. In the future, a smaller group of executives are suggested to be nominated to attend these committees in order to better gather information for strategy making. Also, the survey on campus life should be conducted year-by-year to facilitate horizontal comparison. The issues and proposals raised by the Executive Committee 18-19 should be followed up by the future Executive Committee.

For international student affairs, we should make more efforts to engage with international students, such as using Facebook to share experience to the new arriving international students, hold culture salon to let international student from different background make friends, etc. There is an American HKU alumnus recently posted an article *Was I too part of HKU?*, showing an unfriendly environment for international students at HKU. The Association can always do more in this area.

For academic development, the current forms of events are limited. The next Executive Committee can think of any new forms of events can be held to enhance our contributions in academic development.

For sub-organizations, the nature and the relationship between sub-organization and the Association should be clarified in our Constitution so as to guide the management of the sub-organizations. We should keep notifying our sub-organizations for the funding policy we have to encourage and support them to hold better activities.

The Postgraduate Student Association is still a young organization. This is only the 26<sup>th</sup> year of its operation. Each Session of Executive Committee only makes a very small step of progress. However, as long as we make a small step of progress every year, the Association will eventually become mature. Here, I wish the future Executive Committee Members can follow their original intentions and keep their idealism. Despite the frustrations and difficulties you may meet in the coming year, you should still have a dream, which is to make the Association how it ought to be.

Wish PGSA a brighter future!