

2:00pm - 2:40pm

Block Y, Room Y303

Presentation Title: Catering for the Needs of International Students from 2010

Presenter / Co-presenters: Mrs Linda MAK, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Dr Marshall Warren YIN, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Abstract

When local universities are planning for the new 4-year curriculum, the main focus is normally on the local F.6 graduates, on how to stream them according to their language abilities and develop courses to help them to meet the academic needs at university. However, local universities are also trying to internationalise by recruiting students from local International schools, China & other countries abroad. Overseas student intake rose progressively from 14% in year 2006 to 38% (92 students) in 2009 at HKUST.

Generally speaking, these students are fluent in spoken English, but still have room for improvement in their writing, especially academic writing skills. What should they learn in the foundation year? Do we simply exempt their English courses and let them take Chinese courses so that they can fit into the Hong Kong culture faster, and be able to communicate with the local students more effectively? Or shall we offer a short compulsory English course and then free language elective courses?

This presentation will investigate some of the key issues faced by the Language Centre at HKUST regarding the international students. It will also summarise the opinions of some language instructors, professors from other Departments and interviews of international students.

Biodata

Linda Mak has been a language instructor at CUHK and HKUST for over 15 years. At HKUST, she has taught English language proficiency and business communication courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. She has also coordinated business communication courses for mainland students in China. Her research interests include: Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Computer-Mediated Communication, Web-based teaching and so on. She's married with 3 children, one graduated from and two studying in local international schools.

Marshall Warren Yin is currently an Instructor at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Language Center. He has taught adult ESL in Hong Kong, USA, and the UK. He has also taught special needs and at-risk children. Marshall's interests include the promoting of intercultural communication in the language classroom, the experiences of Chinese born and raised overseas now studying in Hong Kong, and the development of special needs learners.