

From Teacher to Teacher-Educator, Scholar-Teacher and University Leader

Dear Council Chairman and Members, Distinguished Guests, Colleagues and Students, and Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand here with great honour and humility as the sixth President of The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK). I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Council Chairman, Dr David Wong Yau-kar, and Council Members for entrusting me with this monumental responsibility, and I am committed to fulfilling my duties with passion and dedication.

My Roots in Education

Many of you may not be aware that my first job was as a secondary school teacher. Since then, my passion for teacher education has never waned. Teaching to me is like a fish swimming in the water – so natural and such a pleasure. I enjoy teaching to the extent that I continue to find time to teach, whenever possible.

Inspired by my mother, who was a kindergarten teacher, I realised very early on that my vocation in life would involve teaching, learning and education – nothing more, nothing less. In the late 1980s, I served as a lecturer at Sir Robert Black College of Education. My urge to become a better teacher grew stronger over time, as I was fortunate to be encouraged by many good teachers and mentors to

make a greater impact. I studied for a doctoral degree while working as a lecturer at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). I was eventually elected and appointed Dean of the Faculty of Education at CUHK. My career path crossed with the University's predecessor, The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), when I witnessed the launch of a joint bachelor's degree programme with the then Institute.

Step by step, I walked along the path that led me to this podium today. When I reflect on my 13-year journey at HKIEd and now EdUHK, I feel most privileged to have worked with a team of committed and capable colleagues under the remarkable leadership of two former Council Chairmen, Dr Pang Yiu-kai and Professor Frederick Ma Si-hang, as well as two former Presidents, Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung and Professor Stephen Cheung Yan-leung. They have laid a solid foundation upon which we build our future.

As a young and vibrant university with more than a century of educational heritage, EdUHK has been widely acclaimed for its excellence in educational research and innovation while also making major strides in the humanities and social sciences. Education is the cornerstone of progress. We must continue to work hard not only to transmit knowledge but also to nurture growth, enlighten minds and transform lives to contribute to Hong Kong, the country and beyond.

A New Era of Education

Teaching and learning have long moved from chalk and talk and are no longer confined to a specific space or time. International organisations, such as UNESCO and OECD, have challenged us to rethink the existing schooling systems and called for reflection on the changing nature of work and curricula.

As an education hub connected with the rest of the world and with the added advantage of enjoying strong support from our country under the principle of ‘One Country, Two Systems’, Hong Kong’s extensive network, international outlook and enriched heritage in Chinese culture are invaluable assets for academic collaboration, student exchange, research and policy advocacy.

Against this macro backdrop, we have formulated a host of new initiatives. Among them is the establishment of two new Academies, namely the Academy for Educational Development and Innovation, and the Academy for Applied Policy Studies and Education Futures.

The first Academy focuses on areas such as classical Chinese and Chinese language education, intangible cultural heritage, spiritual and values education, education of the elderly, professional and vocational education, and special needs education. The second Academy will serve as a hub of excellence in the diverse areas of artificial intelligence and metaverse education, STEAM, legal and Basic

Law education, applied policy and entrepreneurship, and other fields to expand the scope of our academic development and research.

Under the national strategic development direction, EdUHK is committed to gaining a foothold in the rest of the Greater Bay Area (GBA). Our initial plan over the next few years is to develop a joint research institute or centre with a partner university in the GBA, operating research and education programmes and setting up a centre to promote teacher, professional and vocational education.

Curriculum Review

In response to the Education Bureau's Guidelines on teachers' professional conduct, the University has undertaken a curriculum review of its teacher education programmes, which has led to the enrichment of our relevant curriculum and co-curricular activities. Effective from the 2024-25 cohort, a new set of exit requirements incorporating input from our partner schools, will be in place to ensure the professional readiness of prospective teachers. Our emphasis is on nurturing students to become teachers with professional ethics and virtues who can live up to the expectations of our community and country.

We plan to set up a centre dedicated to promoting national education and national security education at the University and in the wider community.

Using Technology Effectively and Ethically

As for educational technology, EdUHK has pioneered the effective and ethical use of AI-enabled tools through the promulgation of the ‘6-P’ pedagogical approach, which facilitates the assessment of self-regulated learning while upholding academic integrity. In essence, students are expected to demonstrate their ability to **p**lan, **p**rompt, **p**review and **p**roduce their coursework with the support of AI. They are also expected to reflect on and polish their content through **p**eer review and **p**ortfolio tracking. We have forged alliances with renowned local and Mainland universities to keep abreast of technological developments related to AI in education and stay ahead of the curve.

Traditional Virtues through the Development of New ‘Six Arts’

In the pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty, we take pride in Chinese culture and traditional virtues. Starting from the 2024-25 academic year, we will introduce a new component related to the new ‘Six Arts’ (新六藝) under the General Education domain for all undergraduate students. Through the rejuvenation and modernisation of the traditional ‘Six Arts’ from socio-historical and contemporary perspectives, the new ‘Six Arts’ (新六藝) connect Chinese culture and values to students’ daily lives through the crossover of expertise and the

application of AI, coding education, e-sports, and STEAM education.

The University recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Qufu Normal University (QNU) in Shandong, the birthplace of the teacher for all ages, Confucius. Part of the agreement is for the University to establish a Joint-Base for Teacher Ethics with QNU, representing our first major step in this direction to foster exchange and research on the topic.

Concluding Remarks with a Sense of Gratitude

There are many plans in store, and I will find another time to share with you our initiatives and endeavours. I would now like to invite you to join me in paying tribute to our dear teachers, who have shared with us many fond memories, left an indelible mark on our lives, and carved us into the people we are today. Let us thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

In closing, I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude to my teachers, mentors, friends, and collaborators over the years for their inspiration, wisdom, guidance, and support at different stages of my life.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my mother, a dedicated kindergarten teacher, who was my first role model in education. My gratitude also goes to one of my primary school teachers, Mr Mak Chi-kwong, and my supervisors, Mr

Fung Yee-wang and Professor Wong Hin-wah. I am indebted to Professor Ruth Hayhoe, Professor Zhong Binglin, Professor Brian Caldwell, Professor Michael Connelly, Professor Christopher Day, Professor Henry Levin, Professor Michael Williams, Professor Kerry Kennedy, Professor Jin Yule and many others for their generous wise counsel, and to the students and colleagues from HKIEd and EdUHK, as well as the support and encouragement from friends and colleagues from the Education Department/ Education and Manpower Bureau/ Education Bureau, education sector and various organisations during my academic journey. I am also grateful to The Most Reverend Andrew Chan Au-ming, Reverend Dominic Chan Chi-ming, Dr Lee Yiu-fai (Yee Kok), Principal Lam Chor-ying, and the late Mr Kwok Tsun-kee and the late Dr Joseph Kwong Kai-to.

I would like to thank the Principals, Vice Principals, and colleagues of the then Sir Robert Black College of Education, former Deans, Heads, colleagues and students at the Faculty of Education, former Heads and colleagues of United College and Morningside College of CUHK, and former Presidents and Vice-Chancellors and Pro-Vice-Chancellors / Vice-Presidents of CUHK, in particular, Professor Arthur Li Kwok-cheung and Professor Ambrose King Yeo-chi.

Last but not least, I am greatly indebted to my wife Irene and my family for their patience, assistance and love, which is indispensable to the pursuit of my ideals in life.

To our students, I want to assure you that your success, personal development and well-being are at the forefront of my priorities.

To my fellow colleagues and our collaborators, friends, and supporters, I am deeply honoured to work with you to advance the transformative power of education and amplify our impact for Hong Kong, the country and beyond. Together we will build upon the rich legacy of our University and shape a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

Thank you very much.

Note: Major references are excluded.