

Hong Kong's 3-3-4 Reforms: An Introduction

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The 3-3-4 Reforms: From British to “American” Model

Structure

- Secondary education: 4 year to 3 year
- University undergraduate education: 3 year to 4 year

Purpose

Enhance workforce development

Promote long-term economic competitiveness

Position Hong Kong as economic gateway to Asia, the
bridge between east and west

Align HK with the Mainland, the U.S.

Timeline

Planning: eight year transition

Implementation: 2012

Secondary education

- From ability level curricular tracking (the “A” level), including elite “Math/science” track to multiple tracks, emphasizing liberal studies
- Eliminating 7th form high stakes examination
- Democratising access to university education

Overview of University System

- **History:** Three HK universities (CUHK, HKBU, Lignan) with historical experience with general education and/or four-year undergraduate degree vs remaining five with no such experience
- **Mission:** Research intensive institutions (HKU, CUHK, HKUST) vs. non-research intensive institutions (2 technical universities, 1 Baptist institution, 1 liberal arts institution, 1 teacher-training institution)

Overarching Questions

- What is (or should be) the connection between the secondary and university reforms?
- How can general education be designed to prepare students for life and work in a multi-cultural and multi-linguistic society bridging east and west?
- What is the role of the liberal arts in a business-oriented, global economy?

Immediate Challenges

- Re-organizing admission and advisement from program to faculty and/or institutional level
- How to use an added year of undergraduate study
- At the front end, designing a first year experience that helps students transition from secondary to university education, that focuses on HK heritage as fulcrum where East meets West
- At the middle and back end,
 - preparing students for global citizenship via foreign exchange /service learning
 - for workforce via internships
 - Integrative capstone experience

Current panel

- Prof Ming Fai Pang (University of Hong Kong): “Articulating Reform Between the Secondary and University Levels”
- Prof Mei Yee Leung (Chinese University of Hong Kong): “Building a Multi-cultural General Education program”
- Prof William Lee (Lingnan University): “Carving Out a Niche for a Public Liberal Arts College in a Business Oriented Economy”