

2014

## Faculty newsletter (Vol. 2, Iss. 1)

Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University

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### Recommended Citation

Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University (2014). Faculty newsletter, (2)1. Hong Kong: Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University. Retrieved from [http://commons.ln.edu.hk/osl\\_faculty\\_news/4](http://commons.ln.edu.hk/osl_faculty_news/4)

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# FACULTY NEWSLETTER

“Serving to Learn, Learning to Serve”

Fall 2014 • Volume 2, Issue 1

## Get a Start in S-L

### SERVICE-LEARNING 101

Ms. Cathryn Berger Kaye, International Education Consultant and recent Service-Learning Visiting Lecturer, asks, “Why does service matter?” It matters, she says, because “with service learning ideas becomes a reality, the excitement becomes palpable.”

Service-Learning goes beyond what is learned in the classroom; it is valuable and applied experience. Through working with the community, students gain new skills, including communication, team-building, critical thinking and decision-making, as well as building their self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.

The possibilities are extensive and enliven your curriculum. It is an opportunity for you to deepen your community research interests and teaching strategies, while beginning network connections through community partnerships.

Getting started in Service-Learning is facilitated through the Office of Service-Learning. OS� is happy to act as the “match-maker,” connecting your research interests with community partners. Here’s the process in 8 steps:

1. *Design your course curriculum*
2. *Explore community needs*
3. *Choose a community partner*
4. *Develop a project*
5. *Integrate S-L into curriculum*
6. *Student practicum*
7. *Evaluate, present, celebrate!*
8. *Assessment: Group response, reflective journal, etc.*

OSL will support you in every step, providing further assistance with the Faculty Mini-Grant (HKD \$30,000 to be used towards research, course enhancement, teaching assistant, etc.); the Faculty S-L Award (HKD \$60,000); the S-L library, resources for publication; workshops and trainings; and the US Delegation Trip, an opportunity to explore S-L in American universities. ■

## Nurturing your TA

### A SHORT GUIDE TO MENTORING

The OS� offers the Service-Learning Teaching Assistants Program (TAP) for students to participate and help with Service-Learning projects. The TAP scheme develops students leaders to support your project.

TAs are wonderful for logistical support with your Service-Learning project. But to get the most out of our TA, remember to approach the relationship as a team. Here are some tips to make the partnership work.

#### Communicating

Be clear and specific. More than likely, you do not have the time to share and discuss the lessons with your TA; however, it is essential to discuss the lesson plans, expectations, and the overview of the curriculum in order to build a relationship with your TA and enable them to anticipate what you and the students need throughout the semester.

#### Empowering

Encourage your TA to be active in liaising with community partners and students. Students will be motivated by both the professor and the TA’s support, and this will lessen the teaching burden. Eventually, your TA will lead reflection. Your TA will appreciate your encouragement as they develop their project management skills.

#### Building on your TA’s strengths

Learn about your TA’s experiences and academic knowledge. The TA will have a background that correspondence with your discipline area. Calling upon your TA’s strengths will enable you to get the most out of your TA. Through this process, you can further enhance their discipline knowledge.

#### Feedback

Your TA will expect constructive criticism. Share with your TA what about their work style is great, and where they may need to improve. Help your TA see the bigger picture of what you are trying to achieve in your setting.

While your TA can support you, remember to help them reach their own goals. Understanding your TA’s motivations will help you to work with them and effectively guide them in their personal and academic goals. ■

## - Upcoming Faculty Events -

Faculty Mini-Grant: rolling

October

Practitioners’ Circle

*Please anticipate email invitations.*

November

Faculty Retreat

*Please anticipate email invitations.*

December

Book Launch: “Higher Education in the World 5”

Speaker: Dr. Rajesh TANDON,

Date: 2 December, 2014 (Tuesday)

Venue: Library Lobby, Lingnan University

## Faculty Spotlight

INTERVIEW WITH PROF.  
MICHELLE HUANG, VISUAL  
STUDIES



Before embarking on the US Delegation Trip in June 2014, Professor Michelle Huang Ying Ling, already felt committed to the Service-Learning mission and model. “Service-learning is about touching [the student’s] heart and about moral education,” Professor Huang notes. She elaborates: “It’s how you make people understand and serve the needy,” while at the same time instilling in students “the passion and letting our students resonate these morals.”

The US Delegation Trip spent 10 days in Michigan, United States, visiting 9 universities and met with the Michigan Campus Compact, overseers of Service-Learning statewide. From Lingnan University, 14 staff members and 3 students attended presentations and trainings; met with different stakeholders; and engaged in discussions about Service-Learning and the US liberal arts college model.

Professor Huang was inspired: “The whole campus was integrated, there was a clear direction, and in general, top management had quite a clear understanding and was full of enthusiasm.” The faculty she met on the trip were “very generous,” sharing syllabi, contracts, and ideas about teaching methods.

The summer after the trip, Professor Huang had an occasion to add Service-Learning to “Understanding Museums.” The class has an exceptional opportunity to work with the Hong Kong Maritime Museum and

its partner for the spring 2015 exhibition: *Hong Kong: Our City, Our Stories*. Students will collect 140 5-minute interviews with native Hong Kongers, and then provide a brief video caption in English and in Chinese. Students will understand aspects of art administration and learn about Hong Kong culture.

“It will be a transformative experience,” Professor Huang says. If the museum and partner continue the Lingnan relationship, the S-L project will repeat. “Next semester’s students will see the outcome of this experience. They will see what their classmates have done and they will be confident to do the same.”

Lingnan students typically think Service-Learning is “heavy.” But Professor Huang points out “this is an excellent project---the partner is very professional.” The museum and the agency partner have provided travel stipends and new equipment. “This is a once-in-a-life chance. I can see the value and benefit for the students and the university. If the students accomplish their goals,” Professor Huang says, “I gain.” ■

## Student Sharing



Douglas Yiu (pictured second from the left), joined by the elderly he worked with during his service-learning course in Tai Hing Estate.

### STUDENT TRANSFORMATION

Douglas Yiu Man Hon, a 3<sup>rd</sup> year BSS student admits he had “no idea what service-learning” was before he took “Social Welfare & Social Problems in Hong Kong” last fall. The course covered aspects of elderly care and aging in the local Tai Hing Estate. He thought: “What is the main purpose [of service-learning]? How can I apply the knowledge in the real world?” At first, like many students, he viewed it as “boring and not that interesting or meaningful to me.”

A year later, Douglas has been strongly affected by service-learning. Upon completing that course, Douglas took “Health, Illness and Behavior” in the spring semester, a research survey interview through the Youth Carer Navigation Scheme in Elderly Services (YCNSE). During the summer, he engaged with the OSL Student Leadership Summer Practicum with the People Service Centre, helping to assess information and provide services to the community.

Working with the elderly, he notes that he and the other students “learned they are willing to communicate with others, as long as we provide the services.” With the Salvation Army, the students organized events for the elderly to meet with each other. Douglas learned event management skills, such as promotion.

“As long as we show we care and are open to their needs, they are willing. It [the S-L] experience really changed my idea about the elderly. My stereotypes.” He saw that the elderly want to participate in their community, but often lack the resources to do so. Douglas adds with a smile, “If we provide the opportunities, they can be more active than us [students]!”

The second course, Douglas and his group conducted a survey with YCNSE. He used the knowledge Dr. Carol Ma provided the class: “She told us what to observe and pay attention to,” such as, “what frequency indicates and some requirements and standards.”

Douglas still found the research “quite difficult” because of the time limitations and confidential data. However, during his summer practicum, Douglas built on the knowledge he had applied in his earlier service-learning course. “The research methods I learned helped me a lot. I realized, ‘Sure---it takes a lot of time,’ but I’m happy and satisfied that I completed this research.” He adds, “It was worthwhile.”

Talking with Douglas, it is evident he is more confident in applying the skills he learned. His mindset, too, about service-learning have changed. “I plan to work in the community, whether social work or some community-based organization.” Douglas is still exploring what he wants to do, but he feels “service-learning has helped to decide my future.” Douglas can see “what I’m good at, and what I need to improve.” He points out: service-learning is a chance to “review myself.” ■