Reporting of thesis examination result further strengthened

The Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS), in response to a request initiated by one of the Schools, endorsed at the March meeting a revised Report on Examination Result for Research Degree.

Starting 1 May 2006, each internal thesis examiner will need to complete a simple yet comprehensive assessment report on the thesis and the thesis examination. The Chairman of a thesis examination committee will, based on information provided in the individual reports together with the agreement reached at the thesis examination, prepare the overall assessment on the thesis and the thesis examination.

A new kind of students – Associate PG Students

As Hong Kong develops itself into a knowledge-based community, the need for management as well as professional personnel to update themselves in their field of work is becoming increasingly important. Because of this, enquiries have been received from our alumni as well as others about the possibility for them to enroll on individual PG courses that may suit their professional needs. Until now, the University has made no such provision.

To help meet the lifelong learning needs as well as to enhance the career development prospects of members of the Hong Kong community, University Senate has at its 12 October 2005 meeting endorsed the recommendations made by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS) to introduce a new student category entitled “Associate PG Students”.

Starting Fall 2006, Associate PG Students may enroll on individual, self-financing, credit-bearing PG courses without registering for a degree or diploma program. In order not to dilute the composition of regular students in these self-financing PG classes, CPS stipulates that the number of Associate PG students in any one class must be kept small, normally no more than 10% of the course enrollment.
2006/07 PGS Terms and Conditions now available

All faculty members and continuing RPgs should have by now received a copy of the Terms and Conditions of PGSs 2006/07 issued to departments in mid-February by the PG Secretariat. If you haven’t seen it, please contact your departmental general office or download it from http://www.ust.hk/vpaao/pg.

While the standard PGS rates remains unchanged, the good news is that programs may decide to offer a small number of PhD students who have passed their qualifying examination and have done exceptionally well in their research work and studies a slightly higher monthly PGS starting 2006/07. It is important to emphasize that this is not an entitlement or automatic arrangement for all PhD students who have passed their qualifying examination. Apart from academic performance, the availability of funding is also a factor affecting the topping-up reward.

New arrangements for on-campus PG residence 2006/07

Demand for on-campus PG residence has been on the rise in recent years as the number of full-time PG students steadily grows. To temporarily solve the PG housing shortage problem, Student Affairs Office will introduce the following new measures starting the 2006/07 academic year:

- All full-time PG students who wish to take up on-campus PG accommodation will need to apply.
- Campus lodging for Year 1, non-local RPgs will be guaranteed on application.
- A new allocation system for on-campus PG accommodation will be introduced.
- The supply of PG hall places will be modestly increased if demand is high.

Please refer to SAO’s email announcement of 3 March for details of the new arrangements on PG housing.

PG program leaflets go online

Beginning the 2006/07 admissions exercise, to save costs and paper, the printing of the set of A5 size PG prospectuses has stopped. In place of the prospectuses, a set of full-color PG program leaflets has been published to provide potential applicants with essential information on the research focuses of the unit, the lists of PG programs offered and the general admissions requirements.

A Web portal for PG programs (http://www.ust.hk/pgstudies) has been created to guide potential applicants to access detailed information on the PG programs, as well as research focuses, facilities, courses, academic staff and profile, admission requirements, financial assistance, and application procedures.
**PG programs break new ground at Nansha**

Thanks to the very generous donation of HK$800 million by the Fok Ying Tung Foundation, the University will use a significant portion of the donation on developing research and teaching initiatives at Nansha. The construction work of the Nansha campus is to be completed in 2008. As a pilot scheme, subject to the approval of the Ministry of Education of the PRC, the University is planning to offer the following three PG programs jointly with Zhongshan University at Nansha in September this year:

- MPhil in Computer Science
- MSc in Computer Science and Technology
- MSc in Electronic Technology

The Working Group on Academic and Research Programs of the Nansha Campus Task Force convened by VP-AA has reviewed eight proposals since early December 2005. The Working Group will continue to review the rest of the submissions in the months ahead.

**Travel subsidy for RPgs who attend JCAS courses off-campus**

RPgs who have registered for a course offered under the Joint Centre for Advanced Study (JCAS) Scheme and who need to travel to other campuses for the associated classes and examination(s) in the current semester may apply for a travel subsidy.

The subsidy is currently paid at the rate of $20 per journey taken. Please read the notes on the travel subsidy claim form available at [https://www.ab.ust.hk/arr/reg/an/an_std_announce/jcas.html](https://www.ab.ust.hk/arr/reg/an/an_std_announce/jcas.html) to check your eligibility before filing an application.

The travel subsidy is not available to TPgs or UGs who attend JCAS courses held at other campuses.

**Talk to someone when in need**

Life is full of twists and turns. Pursuing PG studies at HKUST may not be smooth sailing at all the time. If you, as a PG student, are running into problems related to your study or other personal matters, you should seek help from someone. Find out from Section 20 of the Handbooks for Research Postgraduate Studies the appeals and grievance channels the University has to offer.

**COMMENTS WELCOME!**

This newsletter has been prepared by the PG Secretariat, Office the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Please jot us an email at pgsec@ust.hk if you have any feedback or suggestions on this newsletter.