

# 香港浸會大學教職員工會

## Hong Kong Baptist University Faculty and Staff Union

團結 • Solidarity

自主 • Autonomy

公義 • Justice

### Newsletter (89)

#### Responses from Council Election Candidates to Our Queries

Dear Colleagues,

Please find below, for your perusal, the two candidates' response to the concerns and queries we sent them last week.

1. *Apart from your official responsibilities, do you participate in any faculty and staff activities and university affairs in general?*

#### Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:

I participate in **both the "official" and the "non-official" activities** of the university. I am an elected staff representative of the Court, the Supreme Advisory of the University. For the latter, I am the Vice-Chairman of the Staff Association which organizes popular activities, from the Health Week to Disneyland visit. As a founding member of the preparatory committee of the Faculty and Staff Union, I have played an active role in the Union's ongoing programs in striving for justice in university policies and in particular in issues concerning the pay and reward structure. **I Believe That The Division, If Any, Can Be Bridged. ALL I ASK FOR IS TO BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO PROVE THAT IT IS POSSIBLE.**

#### Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:

Yes, I do, as much as time allows.

2. *What do you think is the most serious problem(s) and challenges(s) for the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) in the years to come?*

#### Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:

I think we should strongly maintain our vision of whole-person education, the need for solidarity and a sense of fair play in university policies. **Whole-person education is not a dogma. It is the living philosophy that informs us to live out the sense of**

**humanity by which we conduct rational analysis, stand by core values, pursue public interest, seek self-fulfillment and care for the underprivileged.** However, growing competition and commercialism in higher education today may distract our attention and erode our holistic concern for humanity in our educational endeavor. If we are not to compromise this founding ideal of the university, we must work this principle out in university decisions and daily practice. It is not to evade the challenge of reform but a gentle reminder to **preserve the first principle of education** in our search for a new modus operandi.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

The single most important issue for the university as a whole in the coming two years, as I stated in my election platform leaflet, is the searching for and appointment of two new Vice-Presidents and a new President/Vice-Chancellor.

3. *Do you think HKBU is practising the ideal of "professors ruling the university"?*

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

**The University is an intellectual community.** We should not only welcome different ideas but also build a system to encourage public discussion of university affairs and input them into the policy decision process. "Professors ruling the university" is a catch phrase to capture this spirit of **DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY**, not merely to mean the occupation of senior administrative positions by academics. I am of the opinion that deliberative democracy should work at all levels of decision-making. **The Council, as the highest decision-making body, should set an example in this regard.**

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

Professors are not rulers, so they do not and should not "rule" the university. However, they should participate fully in setting the academic direction of the University and have a high sense of responsibility in upholding the standard and quality of teaching and research in the University. We are not doing enough in this regard for a number of reasons, and there is much room for improvement.

4. *If the university should act as the conscience of our society, do you think we have been doing enough?*

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

I have high expectation of the university **acting as a prophet seeking truth, defending justice and caring for the underprivileged.** I understand some of our colleagues have been striving hard for these honorable goals in various fronts of our

society. The university could build on this strength and render institutional support to colleagues in promoting its prophetic role in systematic and rigorous ways.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

All universities in Hong Kong are doing poorly in this regard.

5. *What should be done to improve the governance of HKBU?*

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

**It should be reformed in the direction of greater openness, higher transparency, and better accountability.** For good university governance hinges on (a) academic integrity on the part of decision makers, (b) an openness to new and different ideas, (c) a willingness to face difficult situations, (d) its reflective ability to rethink what has gone wrong, (e) the courage to change mistaken policies, and (f) a genuine concern for the adversely affected. **The principles of openness, transparency and accountability are conducive to making good these six elements of good governance.**

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

There should be better communication among all quarters of the university. There should be forum, like the Staff Assembly, that all faculty and staff should make an effort attend and have dialogue with one another and with "senior management". There have only been a few times that I saw a "full-house" in staff assembly in these few years. There should be more.

6. *Will you hold regular meetings to consult colleagues on university affairs and policies if you are elected?*

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

Yes. It will form an integral part of my work. I have agreed to hold **OPEN FORUMS** and to issue **E-Reports** (like the Blogs I have issued in this campaign) so as to enhance openness and transparent governance.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

I do not give "made-for-breaking" promises such as to hold monthly consultative meetings. Even the word "regular" can be easily abused (once every year can also be deemed regular). I shall consult my colleagues as often as needed, not only through meetings, which many colleagues are too busy to attend, but also through e-mails or some other effective methods.

7. *For the New Pay and Reward Structure,*

- (a) *Do you agree that some non-teaching staff should be laid off to alleviate the University's financial stringency?*

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

No. Financial burden should be evenly borne by all stakeholders.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

No, I do not agree. I believe that we should treasure both academic and non-teaching staff. Not a single one of them should be laid off for financial reason of the University.

- (b) Do you agree that cost-of-living adjustments paid by the government should be automatically given back to faculty and staff?

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

Yes. What government pays for university employees must be given back to them in full.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

Yes, I think they should be given back to faculty and staff; they should not be used to upgrade computers or for starting another academic programme, etc.

- (c) Do you agree that the university should adopt a 360-degree assessment so that not only supervisors can appraise subordinates but also vice versa?

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

Yes. Apart from fair play, 360-degree assessment is a reliable mechanism to better understand how the management and the university in general work.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

Yes, I do. In fact, as Head of Department, my performance as Head is evaluated by my Dean, by other Heads, and by many of my Department's colleagues.

- (d) Do you agree that any pay-level consultancy report which the university uses to determine the pay for faculty and staff should be made available for public scrutiny?

**Responded by Dr. Kenneth Chan:**

Yes. It is simply fair to make sure that those affected are informed as well as involved in the process of the pay-level survey if we care about credibility and consensus.

**Responded by Prof. Lo Ping-cheung:**

Yes, it should be made available as much as feasible without violating the right of privacy and disclosing personal data.

Thank you for your attention. If you are one of the eligible electors, please remember to vote for the candidate you support this Wednesday or Thursday. It is important that you have a voice to represent you in the Council!

Yours sincerely,

Executive Committee  
HKBU Faculty and Staff Union

CC: Mr. Moses Cheng, Council Chairman