

**The Impact of Hong Kong's
New Education System for Caritas Francis Hsu
College**

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report

Submitted to the Faculty

of the

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelors of Science

by

Todd Bitner

Erin McLean

Hilal Tetik

Date: 26 February 2007

Professor Karen Lemone, Major Advisor

Professor Creighton Peet, Co-Advisor

Sponsored by Caritas Francis Hsu College, a partnering organization of Caritas – Hong Kong

Project Liaison: Dr. Thomas Chan, Office of the President Caritas Francis Hsu College

Abstract

This report was compiled for Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) to determine the opinions and concerns of their students, teachers, and parents towards Hong Kong's upcoming educational reform. Various viewpoints and apprehensions voiced by these parties were obtained through interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. The team presented these data together with suggestions to CFHC on how to best prepare for possible problems that could present themselves during the transition to the new educational system.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank CFHC, Prof. Reggie Kwan, and Dr. Thomas Chan for giving us this opportunity. The project would not have been such a success without Dr. Chan's constant encouragement and help. Our team would also like to extend a thank you to all CFHC faculty, staff, and students for cooperating in our research. Oscar Chan, Emil Li, and Madeline Tsoi in particular have been very helpful and friendly throughout this process.

The WPI group also wishes to thank Mr. Vincent Wong, Mr. Stephen Lee, Cecilia Yu, and Mrs. Susan J. Roller for their interviews which provided us with very useful information. We also extend special thanks to Mr. Wong and Mr. Lee for distributing our teacher and student questionnaires in their schools for us. We would also like to thank all CCVC and CWCC students and teachers who participated in our questionnaires.

We would like to thank the HKPU students, Chow Wing Fai, Leung Yuk Yee, and Yuen Sai Kit, who have helped us through our time here. Lastly, we would like to thank our advisors Professor Karen Lemone and Professor Creighton Peet. Their guidance and suggestions throughout this project have given us the ability to successfully complete all of our goals.

Authorship Page

The Acknowledgments, Abstract, Executive Summary, and Appendix A sections were written by Erin McLean.

The Background section was written by Hilal Tetik and Todd Bitner.

The Introduction, Methodology, Results and Analysis, Conclusions and Suggestions sections were written as a joint effort of all members of the team. The appendices were also assembled in a joint effort.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Authorship Page	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Table of Figures	vi
Executive Summary	1
1 Introduction	4
2 Background	7
2.1 Transition Oversights in Countries Undergoing Similar Education Reform	7
2.1.1 <i>Education Reform in Singapore</i>	7
2.1.2 <i>Education Reform in Kenya</i>	8
2.2 Academic Curriculum Employed in HKSAR Secondary and Tertiary Education	9
2.2.1 <i>Comparison of Current Curriculum to Proposed Future Curriculum</i>	10
2.2.2 <i>Impact of the 3+3+4 Reform on Post Secondary Education</i>	10
2.3 Classroom Mentality and Extent of Training of Hong Kong College Teachers	11
2.3.1 <i>Comparison of Current Teacher Requirements to Future Requirements</i>	12
2.4 The Need for Alteration of Current HKSAR Regulated Assessment Tests	13
2.4.1 <i>Comparison of Current Assessment Tests to Future Methods of Assessment</i> ..	13
3 Methodology	15
3.1 Determine the opinions of CFHC teachers towards the upcoming educational reform	15
3.2 Determine the opinions of CFHC students towards the upcoming education reform as well as their level of awareness	16
3.3 Determine the opinions of the parents of CFHC students towards the upcoming educational reform	17
3.4 Determine teachers' and students' opinions of the current assessment methods	17
4 Results and Analysis	19
4.1 Determine the opinions of CFHC teachers towards the upcoming educational reform	19
4.2 Determine the opinions of CFHC students towards the upcoming education reform as well as their level of awareness	27
4.3 Determine the opinions of the parents of CFHC students towards the upcoming educational reform	33
4.4 Determine teachers' and students' opinions of the current assessment methods	35
5 Conclusions and Recommendations	39
5.1 Teacher Concerns and Suggestions on How to Address Them	39
5.2 Students' Opinions on the Reform and How to Raise Their Level of Awareness of the Upcoming Changes	40
5.3 Parents' Opinions on the Reform and How to Get Them Interested in the Reform	41
5.4 Teachers' and Students' Opinions of the Current Assessment Methods	42

References	44
Appendix A: Background Overview of Caritas Francis Hsu College	47
Appendix B: Teacher Interview Transcriptions	49
Appendix C: Student Focus Group Transcriptions	63
Appendix D: Administration Interview Transcriptions	70
Appendix E: Sample Copy of the Teacher Questionnaire	81
Appendix F: Simplified Results of the Teacher Questionnaire	82
Appendix H: Sample Copy of the English Student Questionnaire	90
Appendix I: Simplified Results of the Student Questionnaire	91

Table of Figures

Figure 1: CFHC Teacher Support for the Upcoming Educational Reform	20
Figure 2: Support for Reform from Teachers with Less Than Five Years of Teaching Experience	21
Figure 3: Support for Reform from Teachers with More Than Five Years of Teaching Experience	21
Figure 4: Teacher Agreement with Aspects of the Reform	22
Figure 5: Percentage of Teachers who Believe that the Government Has Given Them Adequate Time to Adapt to the Reform	23
Figure 6: Is the Government Keeping You (CFHC Teachers) as Informed about the Reform as You Would Like?	25
Figure 7: Teachers' Perceived Knowledge of the Reform	26
Figure 8: Students' Perceived Knowledge of the Reform	28
Figure 9: Percentage of Students Who Are in Favor of the Reform	29
Figure 10: Student Agreement with Aspects of the Reform	30
Figure 11: Percent of Students Who Believe There Should Be More Course Options..	32
Figure 12: Have Parents Expressed Concerns about the New System to Teachers?	34
Figure 13: Have Parents Expressed Concerns about the New System to Students?	35
Figure 14: The Likelihood of Teachers Changing Their Assessment Methods Due to the Upcoming Educational Reform	37
Figure 15: Students' Agreement with Assessment Methods	38

Executive Summary

Hong Kong is reforming its educational system to adjust to the globalization of the city. Secondary schools will be drastically changed in many areas ranging from their curricula to the number of years students spend in senior secondary. Through these changes, students will ideally become life-long learners who can think independently. Many students will go on to tertiary level schools where they can specialize in various fields. Following the reform, tertiary students will spend four years at the tertiary level as opposed to the current three years. This is the only aspect of the educational reform which directly affects these tertiary schools. There is little information on the indirect effects on tertiary schools.

Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) is a tertiary school that is concerned about the potential problems that may result from the reforms. Our goal was to provide CFHC with detailed summaries of the opinions of their teachers, students, and parents about the upcoming educational reform and suggestions on how best to address any problems. In order to accomplish this, we separated the problem into four objectives. We have determined the opinions of CFHC teachers and students towards the upcoming educational reform as well as their level of awareness of the reform. We also determined the opinions of the parents of CFHC students towards the reform. Our team also identified potential changes to CFHC's assessment methods. The project was undertaken in an attempt to bring CFHC more in line with an interactive curriculum and be prepared for students who have undergone a different type of educational system in secondary school.

A three-step methodology was created to address these issues. First, student focus groups and teacher group interviews were conducted. The results from these were used to devise two questionnaires, one for teachers and one for students. The team distributed the questionnaires to students and teachers at CFHC and surrounding Caritas secondary schools. All information was presented to CFHC administrators. Their reactions were taken into consideration, and our suggestions were adjusted accordingly.

Our findings indicate that teachers did not have a set opinion about the value of the reform, yet they were very positive towards the individual aspects of it. They felt informed mainly through news media rather than through the government. By contrast,

students did not feel they knew much about the reform, but were in favor of it. According to the teachers and students, parents did not voice many opinions. Both secondary and tertiary students found their teachers' assessment methods satisfactory. Tertiary school teachers did not feel they would have to change their assessment methods when the reform is enforced; secondary schools teachers, however, believed otherwise.

Once all opinions were determined, the team assembled a list of suggestions. We suggest that teachers should be kept up to date as possible with each step of the reform as it develops. In order to do this, administrators should create some form of media (handouts, online information on the website) to inform the faculty when any news having to do with the reform or changes at CFHC surfaces. Open forums, faculty meetings and a teacher representative council can also be arranged to inform teachers. This will create trust between faculty and administrators as well as increase awareness of the impact of the reform. Similar suggestions were made for students. Though tertiary students will most likely not be nearly as interested or motivated to learn about the changes, we feel it is important to attempt to raise awareness and make information available. Posters to peak interest can be placed around the school and more information can be made available in the library for concerned students.

Many students and teachers reported that the parents seemed to be unconcerned about the topic. We believe the school should take steps to help parents understand all aspects of the reform before the changes occur. A "Parent's Day" may be used to gather parents at the school and inform them of their children's progress as well as the changes that will be happening at the school. Teachers will be able to quell many fears some parents may have about changes in the classroom. Information posted on CFHC's website will provide easy and fast access for parents who have questions.

The assessment methods of CFHC teachers are close to those required in the reform. Many classes include a large amount of continuous assessment¹; therefore, CFHC will easily be ready for the students who have undergone the new educational system. Students unsure of their grades would be aided by more online assessments and feedback

¹ Continuous assessment evaluates students' abilities through projects, presentations and interactive group work as opposed to standardized memorization-based examinations.

systems. Through these suggestions, CFHC will be well informed and equipped for implementing changes during the educational reform.

1 Introduction

The increasing importance of globalization has placed pressure on many countries to redevelop their education systems in order to meet a changing market. Countries with increasingly global economies concentrate on improving two aspects of their education systems: life-long learning and university education. Life-long learning is realized through the utilization of a basic skills²-oriented curriculum beginning at a young age. Under this system, students are taught with a method that encourages critical thinking - a quality that will help them succeed at a university and throughout their careers. By requiring four or more years of university education, students can excel in the specific fields they are pursuing.

In 2004, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China began a complete reform of its education system. Hong Kong is transforming its education system to one which will concentrate on life-long learning and university education. This reform requires moving up one year of senior secondary education to allow for a four-year tertiary education. It also mandates changes in curricula, teaching requirements and assessment tests at the secondary level. Government regulated assessments will be less frequent, and it will now be the teachers' responsibility to provide feedback to students on their strengths and weaknesses. Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) provides continuing tertiary education leading to higher diplomas and associate degrees for students having completed forms five or seven³ and will be mostly indirectly affected by the reform. CFHC teachers may need to adapt to students who will be accustomed to a new teaching and assessment style.

The majority of studies about educational reforms have found that teachers were the main deterrent of these transitions. The administrators did not often consult teachers before school-wide reforms occurred; yet teachers were expected to institute the changes. The government has provided workshops in the past to better educate teachers about the upcoming reforms; however, tertiary school educators have been given low priority

2 "Basic skills" is the ability to read, write and speak in a language and to use mathematics at level necessary to function at work and in society in general. – as defined by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)

3 Each year of secondary school is called a form. The HKCEE is administered after form 5 and the HKALE is administered after form 7.

during this information process. Some of the issues that surfaced from previous reform attempts resulted from the incomplete information process and affected the speed and efficiency of the changes to the HKSAR education. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC) failed because there was minimal teacher support to comply with the changes. Studies have shown that the TOC system may have failed due to the lack of feedback from teachers and parents. The government was unaware of the teachers', students' and parents' feelings towards this new approach and was not able to make adjustments that may have been necessary to make the system successful by gaining all parties' support.

At the beginning of our project, CFHC administrators were unaware of the opinions of their students, parents, and teachers about the upcoming changes. Most of the teachers and students had heard about educational changes through the media, but individual responses to such changes remained unclear. Much of the research into educational reform conflicts had concentrated on primary and secondary institutions, resulting in a lack of information on how tertiary institutions would be affected by the 3+3+4 system changes. CFHC felt it necessary to obtain the students' and teachers' feedback to address potential issues regarding the implementation of this system. In addition, there are still some uncertainties about when the curricular changes in different subjects will take place because the government continues to adjust the time line.

The goal of this project was to provide CFHC with detailed summaries and analysis of the opinions of their teachers, students, and parents about the upcoming educational reform and to provide suggestions on how best to address any problems. To accomplish this goal, we identified four objectives. Our first objective was to determine the opinions of CFHC teachers towards the upcoming educational reform. The second objective was to determine the opinions of CFHC students towards this reform, as well as their level of awareness of the reform. Our third objective was to determine the opinions of the parents of CFHC students towards the reform. Our final objective was to identify potential changes to CFHC's assessment methods in pursuit of making them more in line with an interactive curriculum. In order to complete these objectives, a three-step methodology was conceived. Our team used a series of student focus groups and teacher interviews, student and teacher surveys, and interviews with secondary and tertiary school

administrators to collect information about the opinions of the various persons involved. This project helped raise awareness about the obstacles surrounding the current education reform. Our results will ultimately help CFHC transition their school smoothly into the new system and achieve their goal of being fully prepared for their new students as they arrive.

2 Background

The British system of post-primary education follows a 5+2+3 year breakdown (Dowson, 2003). A student who completes a university degree will spend five years in junior secondary, two years in senior secondary and three years in university (Fok, 2001). This education system is currently employed only in the United Kingdom and former British colonies. It is slowly being replaced by systems that concentrate on longer university education. The system is highly reliant on assessment tests to determine a student's scholastic abilities. For this reason, Morris states that the teaching style and curriculum are geared towards passing advancement tests rather than learning basic skills. In recent years, independent countries featuring the British system of education have begun to shift towards a 3+3+4 year breakdown.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) was under British control until 1997 when sovereignty was transferred to the PRC. There has been a recent government push to change the system to a 3+3+4 year breakdown similar to that of Mainland China (Dimmick, 1998). Exceptionally high dropout rates and a difficulty teaching English proficiency at a high level has resulted in a decrease in the number of qualified employees available to fill jobs that require English fluency. The Hong Kong government hopes that the new education system will result in major improvements to secondary and tertiary education.

2.1 Transition Oversights in Countries Undergoing Similar Education Reform

Hong Kong is one of many countries to alter the basis of its education system in the past ten years. By understanding the difficulties presented by similar transitions, principally from a British system of education to the International Baccalaureate (IB) system, the HKSAR may prepare itself for potential obstacles.

2.1.1 Education Reform in Singapore

Like Hong Kong, Singapore felt the need for educational reform after experiencing a shortage of educated, qualified employees who could thrive in the competitive market. Singapore began its educational transformation in the mid-eighties with the founding of independent schools, inspired by their predecessors in the United States and the United

Kingdom. However, because these schools were found to be too elitist in nature, the government started supporting and encouraging “autonomous schools”. These schools were more accessible to the public, but had more governmental control than independent schools.

To support educational equality, schools were ranked on an annual basis to foster competition. This encouraged development of existing programs. In order to continue this reform, Singapore has undergone three curricular transformations since 1997. The “Thinking Schools, Learning Nation” movement was meant to revise assessment techniques. The “Masterplan for Information Technology in Education” incorporated IT tools into classroom learning. Finally, university admission criteria were adjusted to consider students’ overall abilities and extracurricular activities apart from their test scores on the General Certificate of Education (Advanced) Level examination.

As Tan states in his article, Singapore has yet to discover if these reforms will significantly improve the quality of education overall as opposed to only in select independent schools. Certain deficiencies in these programs have already been exposed. Schools that are ranked well attract the best students and teachers, while other schools are neglected. Tan also adds that, Singapore must overcome the fundamental challenge present in all reforms, of altering teachers’ attitudes and belief in the new system as well as providing advanced teacher training. Singapore has yet to resolve these discrepancies, which must be dealt with before the prepared curriculum shift towards life-long learning.

High educational achievements must be sustained without misuse of competition amongst schools. In this way, every student may receive an equal opportunity to benefit from the Singapore’s recent educational reforms.

2.1.2 Education Reform in Kenya

Since the independence of Kenya from British rule in 1956, there have been two educational reformations (IEQ Project, 2002). The first occurred in 1964 when a 7-4-2-3 year system was employed. At the time only 29% of Kenyan students moved on to secondary school and there was an obvious discrepancy between the educations provided for blacks as compared to whites. To ensure equal education the government took control of all schools and declared that there would be no school fees until the sixth year of

primary education. The number of primary graduates grew at an extreme rate, leading to an overload of potential secondary students. The government was forced to hire untrained teachers to meet demand and quickly opened new secondary school across the country. Christian Harambee schools developed across the nation to provide secondary education to those who could not afford government schooling. These schools were understaffed and poorly funded. The Harambee schools produced an inferior education, which created a new class and race line. The Kenyan government moved to disband all Harambee schools, but was met with resistance from parents whose children could not attend government schools.

The Kenyan government also set up governing bodies for teaching and assessment examinations. These were the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). Unfortunately, the councils held no power and were often ignored by politicians.

In 1985, the Kenyan government instituted an 8-4-4 system that was to provide educational equality. The new system would ensure that all graduates obtained scientific knowledge through a practical-oriented curriculum. The implementation of the new system had its share of issues. The transition was rushed, taking four years from conception to completion. This meant there was no time for pilot testing on a small scale, especially of value in secondary schools. There were inadequate funds, which left most of the fiscal responsibility on the parents. Also, during secondary education a student could study upwards of thirteen subjects before specializing in eight. The excessive number of subjects is mainly due to the attempts of the government to integrate trilingual learning. The approach of the Kenyan government is similar to that of the HKSAR government, because it is geared towards patch working the system rather than transforming it to become more efficient.

2.2 Academic Curriculum Employed in HKSAR Secondary and Tertiary Education

The planned academic transformation will alter the curricula taught throughout secondary schools and therefore alter the knowledge base of the students entering tertiary schools. Hong Kong intends to switch to a system similar to the International Baccalaureate (IB), which would encourage a higher emphasis on language skills and a

more diverse curriculum than in the current system.

2.2.1 Comparison of Current Curriculum to Proposed Future Curriculum

The new curriculum proposed by the Hong Kong Curriculum Development Center (CDC) is similar to that found in the IB currently employed by international schools (Peterson, 1971). The IB has an expanded curriculum of six primary subjects (for specifics please refer to Appendix C). Students then choose three subjects to specialize in and three secondary subjects. This system provides uniqueness among students as they branch into different specialties earlier in their education. Activities such as art, music, drama and specialty crafts are emphasized, an aspect which is mostly lacking in Hong Kong's current education.

This revised system will emphasize life-long learning, indicating a shift from memorization-based learning to a project-based learning style (Law, 2005). Students are first exposed to a core curriculum to acquire basic skills and then branch off to elective courses that fit their interests and aspirations.

2.2.2 Impact of the 3+3+4 Reform on Post Secondary Education

Tertiary educational institutions need to update their curricula to adapt to the ever-changing technologies and complex processes in many sectors; including information technology, service and manufacturing. Universities have to reorganize their curricula in traditional areas of study to produce students who are competitive employees in the more complex and interdependent fields. Following the 3+3+4 reform in secondary schools, tertiary level institutions will also need to undertake transformations in structure, curriculum, and methods of evaluation to better suit the needs of students and prepare them to be competitive in the job market. According to Salmi, online training and evaluation methods are becoming more prominent in helping students become lifelong learners. Tertiary schools will need to utilize online tools to update their educational methods and to foster interactive learning. Therefore, faculty will need to update their knowledge on technological learning tools to be able to provide the new students with pedagogical support.

How well tertiary educational institutions adapt to the indirect impacts of the 3+3+4 system also depends on how much bureaucracy they need to go through to realize curricular and structural changes. Universities may design new curricula and new programs to better suit the students needs, however they may also need to endure long administrative processes before realizing structural and curricular changes. In his article, Salmi talks about the example of the United States, where a certain institution (Haas School of Business- University of California) had to wait several years to get approval from the educational board for their new financial engineering program. In Hong Kong, tertiary level institutions also have to go through inspection and testing to be able to administer internal changes. These institutions are inspected by the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) every three to four years. HKCAA's mission, as stated on their website, encompasses the evaluation of "an institution's ability to conduct programs quality- assured by itself, subject to periodic reviews conducted by the Council." If there is a change to be undertaken in a certain schools' curriculum, the plan needs to be approved by this council first before it can be immediately realized.

Hong Kong's tertiary schools will be affected by the 3+3+4 reform in a way that they will need to adapt to the new students needs and expectations. After going through a system with interactive School Based Assessment (SBA), students will need to be trained further in post-secondary schools to fulfill their potentials and challenge their intellectual capabilities. SBA is the method of assessing students through their teachers' observations of their knowledge, which will be complementing a government based examination in order to produce a complete analysis of a student's abilities. According to Dr. Patrick Werquin in his presentation, tertiary institutions are pressed to produce students that satisfy the labor market need for innovative and creative employees. The goal of Hong Kong tertiary schools will be to educate students and enable them to thrive in a more competitive global environment.

2.3 Classroom Mentality and Extent of Training of Hong Kong College Teachers

The current Hong Kong teaching structure is more a reflection of its surrounding culture than government regulations. Teaching is not considered a professional field in Hong Kong, resulting in poor education training programs. Progressive teachers are

chastised by their colleagues and are met with resistance from traditionalist parents. The government must first look to institute a shift in the typical conception of a “teacher” before progress can be made in education.

2.3.1 Comparison of Current Teacher Requirements to Future Requirements

The teaching degrees produced by colleges have not been regulated and have been declared by the HKSAR government to be sub-par (Morris, 2004). In 2002 a thorough evaluation of degree programs was administered and all sub-degree teacher education courses were shut down. All teachers will be required to receive a three-year college certificate. Minimum entry-level requirements have been implemented to ensure proper education of teachers (Morris, 2004). All teachers are required to have five total passes on the HKCEE along with two language passes. Any language teacher must also pass a language proficiency attainment test (LPAT) (Morris, 2004). In 2003 the test was administered to 643 English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. Out of those tested, 333 failed the test including several native English-speaking teachers.

Dimmock proposes that the traditionalist mindset of Hong Kong must be altered. Parents want their children’s education to be a strict syllabus full of homework and assessment tests. Typical secondary and tertiary school administration and government educational organizations have agreed with this method of teaching for decades, leading to the isolation and degradation of constructivist teachers that move outside of the accepted linear classroom framework. These teachers provide students with group projects and peer assessment opportunities for their classes. Administration must provide support and encouragement of alternate learning methods that create a positive classroom attitude.

The HKSAR government will need to get involved in cementing the professionalism of teachers. They have been wary of providing a governing body for the teachers’ union in order to avoid a region-wide teacher movement (Carless, 2005). The enactment of the Advisory Committee on Teachers Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) is a good start. This is the first council of its kind that is not politically oriented and will raise the level of awareness throughout the professional field. However, the council is appointed by the government and serves as an advisory board only.

2.4 The Need for Alteration of Current HKSAR Regulated Assessment Tests

As education becomes a reflection of basic skills knowledge as opposed to memorization, government regulated assessment tests will have to make the same content shift. Tests will be less frequent yet more extensive, covering a broader curriculum.

2.4.1 Comparison of Current Assessment Tests to Future Methods of Assessment

Hong Kong has made a push to reduce the number of government controlled assessment tests necessary for progression through the education system. Constant assessment tests force teachers to create strict syllabi that examine only the material that will be covered on these exams. This method ignores strengthening basic skills necessary for employment (Carless, 2005). Students are required to take the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Exam (HKCEE) following completion of Form 5 in order to attend college and the Hong Kong Advancement Level Examination (HKALE) following Form 7 in order to attend university. These assessment tests will be restructured into a format similar to the International Baccalaureate (IB) exams so that they measure basic skills instead of learned knowledge (Pennington, 1999). The exams will test all six major subjects included in the curricula, emphasizing the three subjects that the student has chosen as a specialization.

Additional assessment will fall on the individual teachers. This may be the hardest aspect of the program to implement. In the 1990s, in an attempt to provide students with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses before assessment tests the SAR government enacted a system referred to as Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC) (Carless, 2005). TOC asked teachers to write down a student's proficiency in different skills and file their scores. In theory the teacher would then give each student this feedback, which would lead to the student's personal growth. However, teachers found that there was no opportunity for feedback and the extra work they were doing was going unused. Teachers and parents both felt uncomfortable with the students being evaluated by any method other than assessment tests. TOC was scrapped in 2001 and considered a failure. Teachers may be reluctant to take a chance on any system that reminds them of this failed effort, so the government must be willing to recognize their past mistake and distance itself from all similarities (Dimmock, 1998). Peer and teacher evaluations are necessary

for any classroom growth and evaluation of basic skills, but it is predicted that the resistance to this method of assessment, especially from parents, will be intense.

Many educational reforms have come across similar problems that hampered their smooth implementation. By looking into documented cases of past reforms, these common problems may be anticipated and addressed before they overwhelm the reform process. Unfortunately, not all reforms are the same. Every situation has various factors that do not apply to other educational reforms. Because of this, each case will have its own individual problems that have not been addressed before. With a base knowledge of past reforms, we can prepare for common obstacles while searching for CFHC's unique situations.

3 Methodology

The goal of this project was to provide the sponsor organization, Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC), with detailed summaries of the opinions of their teachers, students, and parents as they pertain to the upcoming educational reform. In order to obtain the desired information, the team defined four objectives. These objectives have been ordered by their importance to the host organization. A three-step methodology was conceived in order to address each of the objectives. The team conducted student and teacher group interviews at CFHC, distributed student and teacher questionnaires, and interviewed administrators from Caritas schools. We used the collective data from these three steps to provide CFHC with a report highlighting suggestions to help them adjust to the new education system.

3.1 Determine the opinions of CFHC teachers towards the upcoming educational reform

Teachers in tertiary institutions in the HKSAR will be asked to make many changes in the coming years. If all aspects of the reform prove effective, students entering CFHC will be accustomed to a discussion-oriented teaching style and project-based assessment. This contrasts with the current system that involves memorization-oriented teaching and exam-based assessment. The teachers who do not currently use the methods supported by the education reform may be asked to adopt a new teaching style. Additionally, the amount of time necessary to obtain a post-secondary degree will be lengthened by a full year. CFHC administration is interested in determining the opinions voiced by their faculty about the educational reforms.

We performed group interviews containing one to three teachers sampled from different departments at CFHC. These teachers served as a voice for their colleagues at CFHC and the surrounding tertiary schools. The faculty's opinions of the new system versus the current system, both positive and negative, were compiled. All interviews were set up by the project liaison, Dr. Thomas Chan, and were conducted under strict confidentiality standards. Transcriptions of these interviews can be found in Appendix B.

We created a questionnaire that included teacher concerns brought up during the interviews. These questionnaires were distributed to all CFHC teachers, as well as sample

populations of teachers from surrounding Caritas secondary and tertiary schools. We determined the population samples by convenience sampling, as only a select group of teachers were available to complete the questionnaires on the day of each visit. The results of the survey were compiled and analyzed to detect possible trends. The team interviewed CHFC administrators to determine their reactions to the questionnaire results. Transcriptions of these interviews can be found in Appendix E.

3.2 Determine the opinions of CFHC students towards the upcoming education reform as well as their level of awareness

The current curriculum in HKSAR secondary schooling is designed to cover a pre-determined amount of course material. This form of teaching is intended to enhance memorization skills necessary for future government assessment tests. The predominant goal of the HKSAR educational reform is to nurture a more interactive classroom where students converse with teachers and peers in an attempt to strengthen basic skills learning. CFHC administration is interested in determining the opinions and level of awareness of their student body towards the upcoming educational reform.

We performed three student focus groups, each containing four to eight students. These students were asked by their teachers to volunteer in our research. This forum led to open-ended discussions about the perceived good and bad aspects of the upcoming reform. These students represented their peers at CFHC and the surrounding tertiary schools. Transcriptions of these focus groups can be found in Appendix C.

Using opinions generated from these focus groups, we produced a student questionnaire. We offered this questionnaire in both English and Cantonese for the convenience of the participants. The entire CFHC student body and select groups of participants at Caritas secondary and tertiary institutions in the surrounding area were asked to complete the survey. It was impossible for the team to administer the survey to all students at participating Caritas schools other than CFHC due to a limited time frame. Therefore, we chose to use convenience sampling methods by leaving the number of questionnaire returns to the discretion of the institutions' presidents. The results of the survey were compiled and analyzed to detect possible trends. The team interviewed

CHFC administrators to determine their reactions to the questionnaire results. Transcriptions of these interviews can be found in Appendix D.

3.3 Determine the opinions of the parents of CFHC students towards the upcoming educational reform

Parental support is essential to the successful transformation of Hong Kong's education system. A discussion-oriented teaching style may draw criticism from parents. Without parental support, teachers may have trouble shifting from the standardized memorization-based system. The team chose to use the student and teacher surveys as a medium to determine the parents' opinions. This meant there would be limitations to the accuracy of the information gained. All data are second-hand, and are the students' and teachers' understanding of the parents' opinions.

We performed four student focus groups, each containing four to eight students. This forum led to open-ended discussions about parents' opinions on the upcoming reform. Using opinions generated from these focus groups, we included two parent-oriented questions in the student survey. We also added a question inquiring whether the participating students had siblings, as parents with younger children who will be educated in the way of the reform may hold different opinions about the new system. The results from the survey were analyzed in the same manner explained in Method 3.2.

3.4 Determine teachers' and students' opinions of the current assessment methods

A low percentage of students who attend secondary school perform well on the Hong Kong Certificate of Educational Examination (HKCEE) necessary for progression to senior secondary or tertiary levels. The two major government mandated tests, the HKCEE and HKALE, will be replaced by one assessment test. Students who go through the new system will be admitted to CFHC based on the scores they obtained from a basic skills assessment of their abilities as well as teacher assessments.

Focus groups and interviews with the students and teachers were conducted to determine the varying assessment styles at CFHC. These forums were conducted and set up as defined in Methods 3.1 and 3.2. We included two questions regarding assessment styles in the teacher questionnaire. A bar graph was generated for the quantitative

question. The student and teacher opinions were intended to determine whether the current assessment styles have any areas that may need improvement.

The results from this three-step methodology include the data needed in order to create a list of suggestions for our sponsor. The focus groups and interviews have provided the necessary initial data for the completion of the student and teacher questionnaires. These questionnaires encompass the majority of the quantitative information we have collected. All suggestions made to CFHC have their base in these questionnaires. The final step gave us feedback from the administrators and refined our suggestions. Our results from these methods, and the analysis we completed on the results, are available in the next section.

4 Results and Analysis

The resulting data compiled from questionnaires and focus groups were analyzed in order to draw conclusions about the opinions of teachers, students and parents at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC). Our results indicated that teachers are very aware of the reform; however, most do not have an opinion about the implementation of it. Our results also indicated that although students were not comfortable with some points of the reform, they supported the new system. Other results showed that students and teachers agreed that parents have not vocalized any concerns that they may have. Finally, teachers at the tertiary level did not feel that they would need to change their assessment methods in contrast to secondary school teachers who were confident that they would be adjusting them with the reform. The graphical representations of the compiled data are included to support our analysis.

4.1 Determine the opinions of CFHC teachers towards the upcoming educational reform

By completing four teacher group interviews, we were able to ascertain a general idea of how the teachers felt about the reform. The eight teachers we talked to had different points and opinions. The principal result that we discovered was that they were all in favor of the changes.

“I am all for the 3+3+4 system.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 1.*

“I think that Hong Kong needs to be reformed and aligned with the education system of mainland China...” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 2.*

From these interviews, we created the teacher survey, which was distributed to teachers at CFHC, Caritas Charles Vath College (CCVC), and Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung Secondary School (CWCC). A sample teacher questionnaire can be found in Appendix E. Fourteen teacher questionnaires were returned from CFHC, twenty from CCVC, and twelve from CWCC.

The results of the teacher survey question “*Overall, are you in favor of the reform?*” mirrored the support shown during interviews. However, this support proved not to be

universal. Overall, only 53% of teachers replied that they agreed with the reform. This number was substantially higher at CFHC, where 64% of teachers replied positively. There was a surprising trend of indifference from secondary and tertiary teachers, as the graph below indicates.

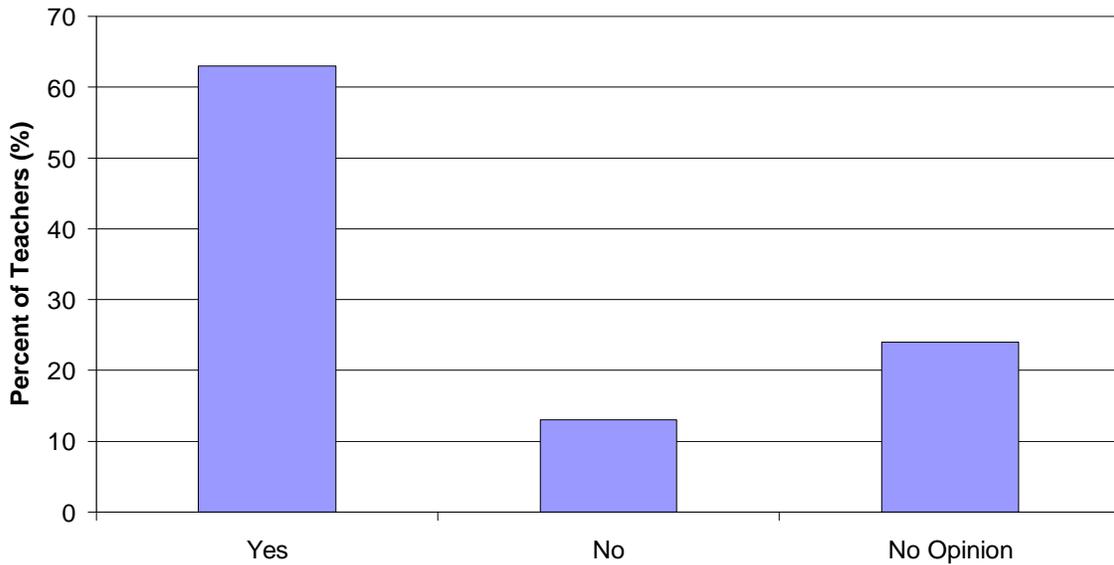


Figure 1: CFHC Teacher Support for the Upcoming Educational Reform

A trend also appeared indicating that a teacher’s experience affected their support for the reform. Only six out of sixteen teachers with less than five years of experience answered the above question positively. Most of these teachers did not express opinions. This statement is reinforced by the graph below.



Figure 2: Support for Reform from Teachers with Less Than Five Years of Teaching Experience

Teachers with greater than five years of experience showed substantially stronger support for the reform. The answers given by more experienced teachers are displayed in the graph below.

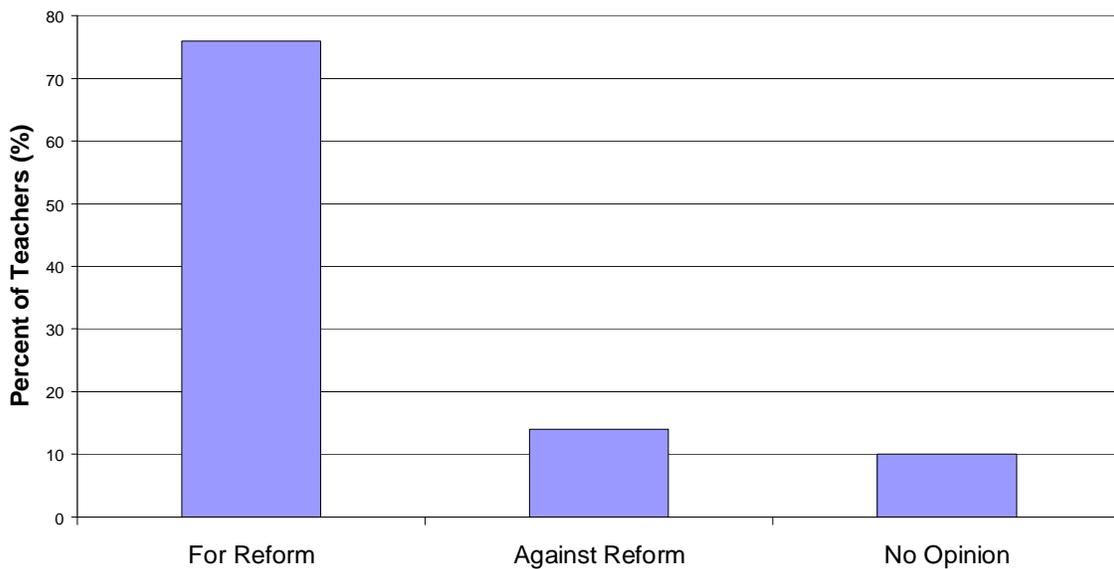


Figure 3: Support for Reform from Teachers with More Than Five Years of Teaching Experience

Teachers were asked which aspects of the reform they agreed with. Each aspect was listed next to a scale from one through five; one represented strong disagreement with that feature and five represented strong agreement. There was support shown for each of these features as evidenced in the chart below that expresses the overall average score on a one to five scale.

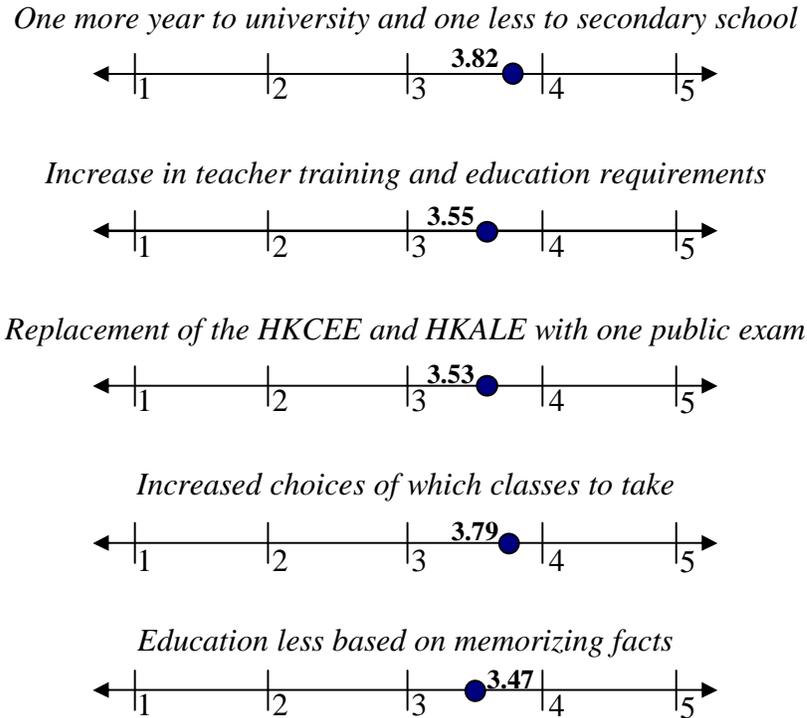


Figure 4: Teacher Agreement with Aspects of the Reform

Though the support for the reform during teacher interviews was universal, a few teachers expressed concern. One point that came up was that the time line that the government had proposed was moving too quickly.

“A longer time would be better, we need to do it but we need a space for us to discuss it.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 2.*

They felt as though there was not enough time to implement all of the changes required of them before 2009. This concern was echoed in our interviews with secondary school administrators. Teacher questionnaire results show that secondary school teachers feel the government has not provided adequate time to complete these changes; however, tertiary

school teachers are split on this issue. The data are displayed in the graph below, the bars represents the answer “Yes” to the question “Do you believe the government has given schools enough time to implement this reform?” on the teacher questionnaire.

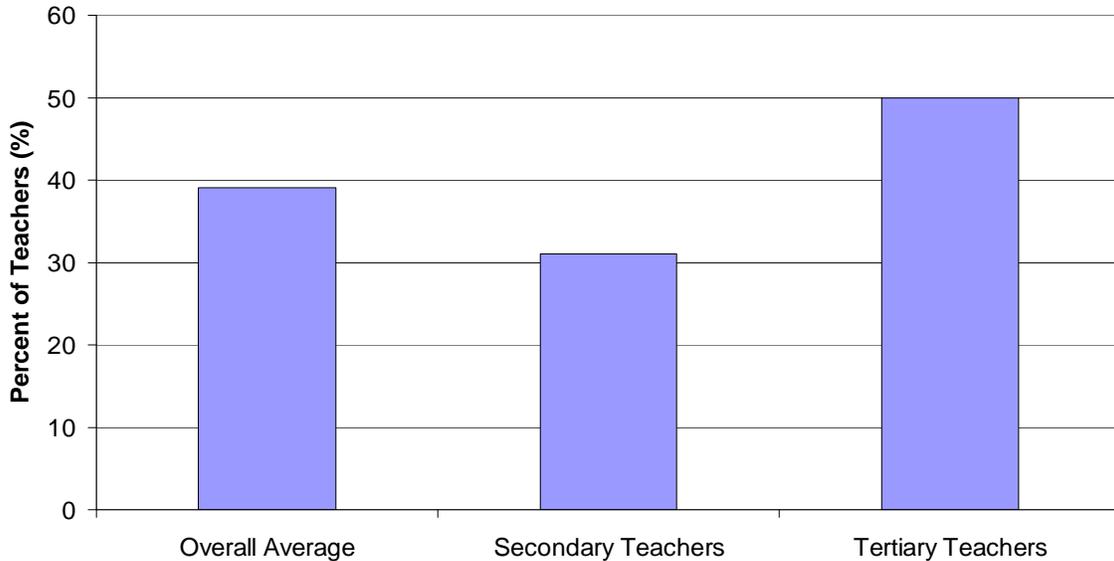


Figure 5: Percentage of Teachers who Believe that the Government Has Given Them Adequate Time to Adapt to the Reform

Some teachers were also concerned for their job security.

“We have students from form 5 and for one year will not have form 5 students. So do we need to close for one year and open later?” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 2*

At CFHC, there are many contract teachers whose jobs are only guaranteed to them for one year at a time. Since CFHC recruits its students from forms five and seven, the two exit points of the current system, there is concern as to how many students will come to CFHC when there is only one exit point. Also, for one year there will not be any new incoming students. This will occur during the first year of the changeover due to the deletion of form seven and all form five students staying in secondary schools one more year than under the current system. Some contract teachers are concerned that they will not be able to renew their contracts if there are not enough students entering CFHC.

We found that a fear for job security was prevalent in secondary school institutions, where nearly 60% of teachers were worried about their career stability, as opposed to tertiary institutions where only 25% of teachers expressed the same fears. This could be linked to upcoming teacher education courses that help to prepare teachers for future curriculum changes. Of the secondary school teachers, 94% thought that they would need to have further education training before integrating the new curriculum into their classes. Tertiary teachers were more confident in their current methods, and only 23% of teachers thought they needed further training. While some tertiary school teachers are concerned about job security, they believe problems will stem from administrative issues, such as the contract teachers mentioned above, rather than educational changes.

A few teachers had theories about the changing student profile and how it was affecting the schools.

“Over the last years, there is a dropping of students' quality since they do not learn much in 6 and 7 as they are preparing for another exam.”

Teacher A, Teacher Interview 1

“Kids are changing because of family size, so the profile is changing. ... For parents, studying was seen as the way out but not anymore. There are too many choices. If I fail here, I can go somewhere else, unless they can lock on to a personal target.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 3*

The teacher quoted in the latter statement felt that the reform in some ways is a bottom-up reform. The schools are adjusting to the needs of the new profile of the students who are in Hong Kong schools now.

We asked a few questions on how well the teachers felt they were being informed, and most said that the information they had on the subject was from the media or self-motivated research.

“They have TV broadcasts and there is information in newspapers.”

Teacher C, Teacher Interview 1

“There should be more dialogue about curriculum and training.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 1*

“[The information that is released] is current but [the release of this material] is not systematic and every time the government decides on a new reform, which is every few years, the principal will pass [leaflets] out and ask for feedback.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 4*

The teacher survey revealed teacher indifference towards government attempts at informing secondary and tertiary teachers about the reform. The graph below reflects a question regarding the amount of information they have received from government agencies.

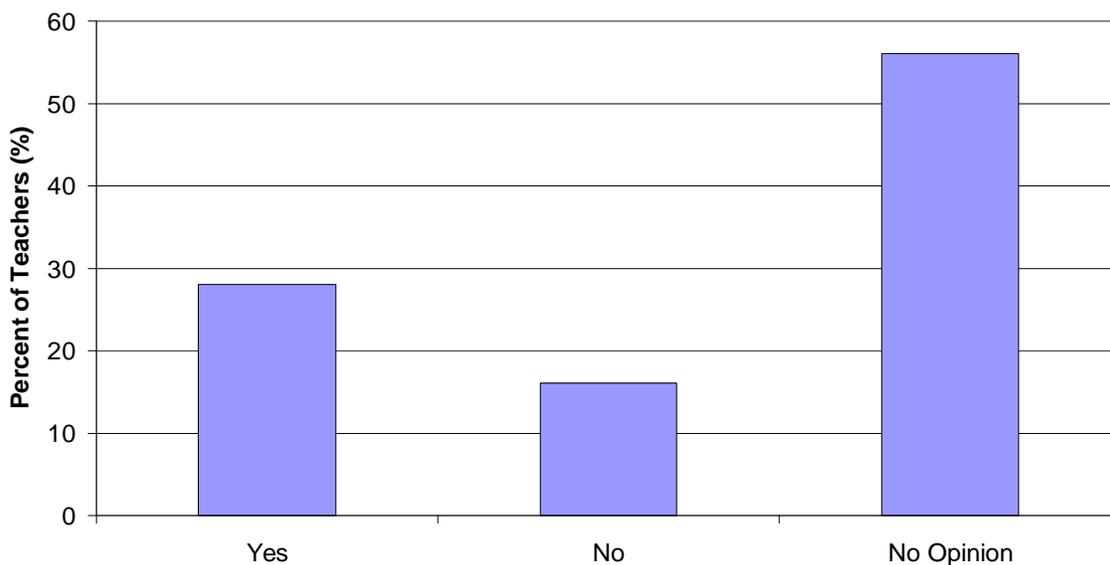


Figure 6: Is the Government Keeping You (CFHC Teachers) as Informed about the Reform as You Would Like?

However, the majority of teachers still feel they are at least partially informed about future educational changes. Teachers were asked in the questionnaire how well they felt that they understood the reform on a scale of one to five. The average answer was 3.4, well above the neutral value. Below is a graph indicating the distribution of answers.

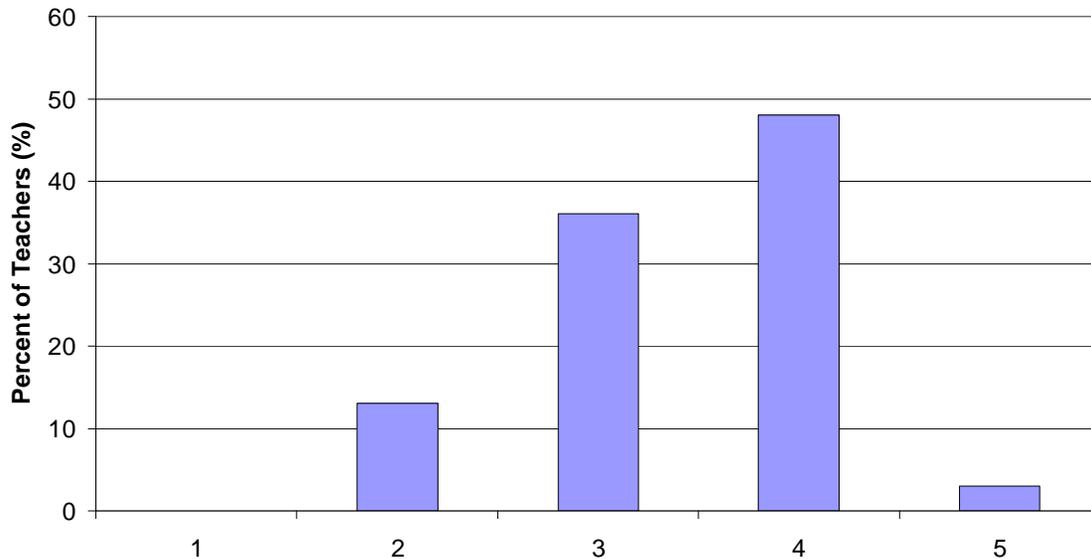


Figure 7: Teachers’ Perceived Knowledge of the Reform

There are also many concerns about the topic of liberal studies. Each teacher will be expected to teach four or five liberal studies subjects. Currently, a teacher teaches two of these subjects and must complete training for two or three more in order to continue teaching liberal studies.

“Before [this current reform involving the] 3+3+4, we had economics, history, geography, and public affairs as separate courses, which are now merged into one umbrella called Humanities or Liberal Arts. Now a teacher must be competent in all of these subjects to teach any of them.”
Teacher B, Teacher Interview 4

“There is an argument over liberal subjects and whether or not these should be introduced in high school and there is no training for teachers.”
Teacher A, Teacher Interview 1

The second most prevalent thing that came up in our interviews with tertiary school teachers was a general feeling of disinterest towards the reform.

“...it does not really affect us.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 4*

“This reform concerns the secondary school teachers.” *Teacher B, Teacher Interview 4*

Unless asked by a direct question, teachers would refer to secondary schools and what concerns they will have instead of their own. They do not believe they will be affected or they think the changes they must go through are very minor. For full transcriptions of teacher interviews, see Appendix B.

4.2 Determine the opinions of CFHC students towards the upcoming education reform as well as their level of awareness.

Through our three student focus groups we gathered information from various students on their feelings towards the reform. Many students did not know anything or very little on this subject.

“[We] have no information about it since, [it is not] until 2009.” *Student D, Focus Group 4*

“It's our last year, so we don't really have any idea about the changes”
Student A, Focus Group 3

This information was reinforced by the data obtained from the student survey. Those students who had knowledge of the reform were still somewhat unsure of its specifics, as evidenced by the graph below. The students were asked to determine their knowledge of the upcoming changes on a one to five scale, one being the least informed and five being very informed. Most students answered either neutrally or they did not know about the reform.

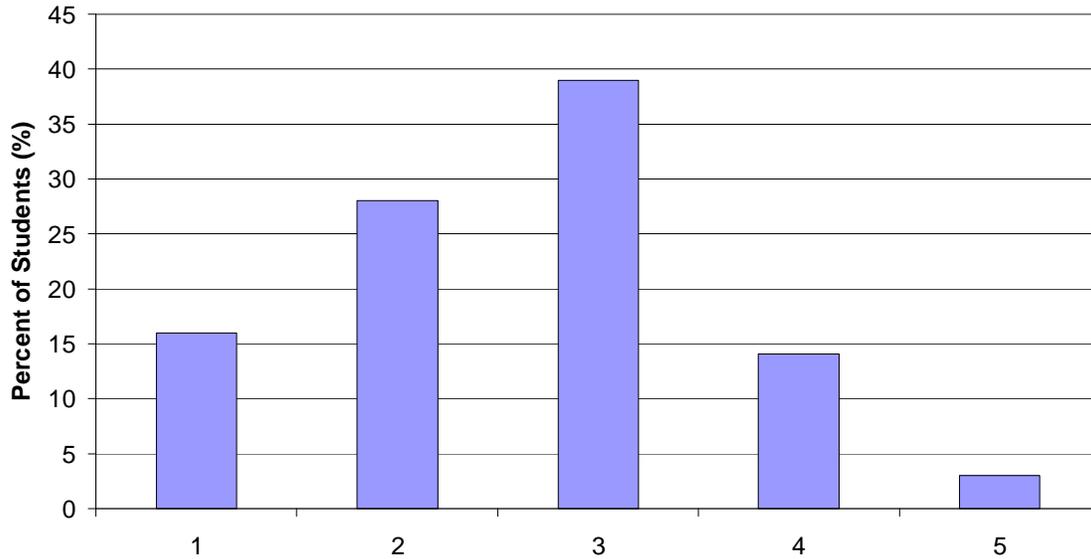


Figure 8: Students’ Perceived Knowledge of the Reform

The comment that it would not affect them came up many times and was agreed upon by other students. We discovered the main source of information for the students on the reform was news media.

B: We received information from [the] Internet...

D: ...From newspaper[s]...

B: ...[And] teachers in form seven discussed it a bit.”

Students B and D, Focus Group 4

“We’ve heard a lot of discussion between parents and students in secondary school but it doesn’t really effect us...” *Student A, Focus Group 1*

When the reform was explained, most students liked the idea. Though students felt uninformed, they welcomed information about the reform. The graph below indicates the percent of tertiary and secondary students who answered that they were in favor of the reform. Tertiary students showed more support for the system than secondary students, likely because they will never encounter the educational changes.

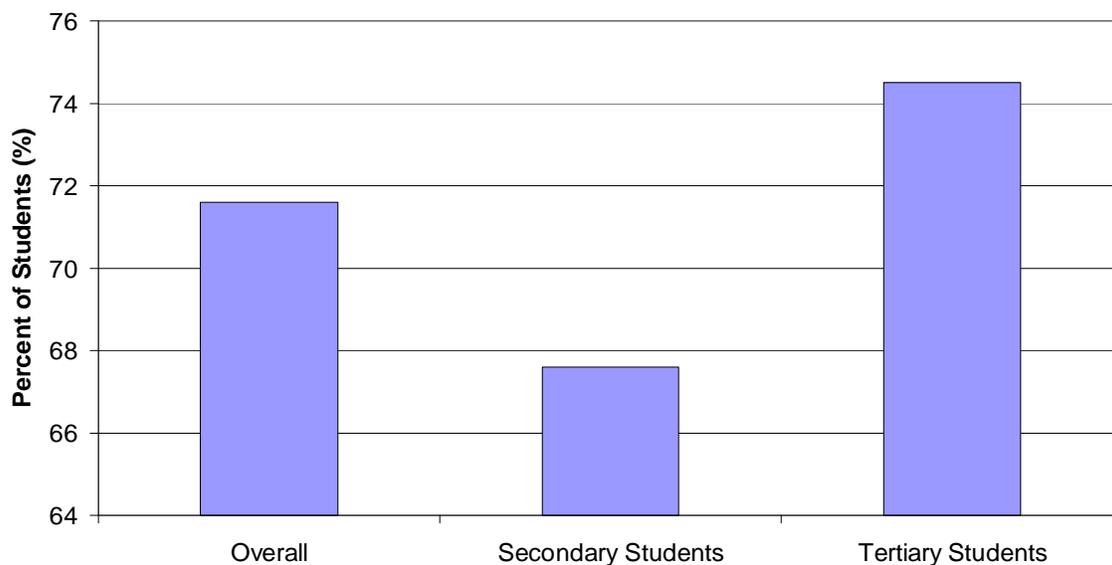


Figure 9: Percentage of Students Who Are in Favor of the Reform

Some doubts were raised in student focus groups that were not immediately clear from survey data.

“In primary school, what [is taught] is [to] listen and memorize, so [it] is hard to have critical thinking in secondary school.” *Student A, Focus Group 4*

“The existing university system in terms of time is three years. This is not enough time to enjoy university life.” *Student B, Focus Group 3*

“...no pressure means no improvement.” *Student B, Focus Group 2*

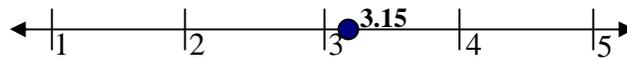
One point that raised questions was on the subject of memorization. Though most students liked the idea of moving away from memorization, not all did.

“Chinese people like to memorize more. [It] is [our] character. [We] respect teachers and like to listen to them, and pick up more knowledge from them rather than go to library. [This method is] suitable to Western [culture], but not Chinese.” *Student A, Focus Group 4*

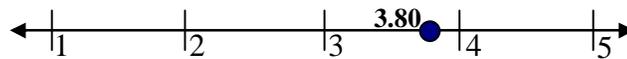
“[We] only know how to memorize, but this reform could bring about changes for the [typical] Hong Kong student.” *Student D, Focus Group 4*

Though the questionnaire responses indicated some apprehension at switching to a basic skills method of learning and moving away from memorization, students showed more concern towards the restructuring of the number of years spent at each level of education. Students were asked which aspects of the reform they agreed with. Each aspect was listed next to a scale from one through five; one represented strong disagreement with that feature and five represented strong agreement. There was strong support shown for some of these features, while students tended to stay neutral towards other features, as evidenced in the following chart.

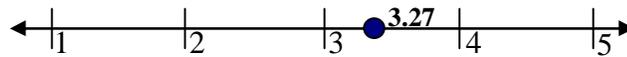
One more year to university and one less to secondary school



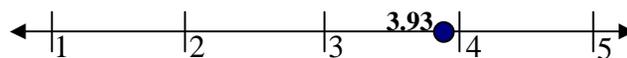
Increase in teacher training and education requirements



Replacement of the HKCEE and HKALE with one public exam



Increased choices of which classes to take



Education less based on memorizing facts

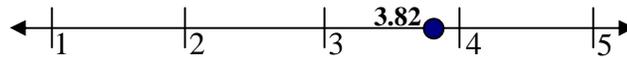


Figure 10: Student Agreement with Aspects of the Reform

In the previous system, two tests were used to gauge a student's knowledge, the HKCEE and HKALE. Students had the option to leave secondary schooling to pursue post-secondary education or start a career after each test. These opportunities, commonly called “exit points”, provided a student with multiple choices to evaluate their future plans. A survey question directly asked whether students felt that an additional year of

university and one less of senior secondary would improve education in Hong Kong. This question was used to determine if students would be comfortable with only one exit point. A majority of students (56%) answered “No”. This information indicates that although students agree with changes to curriculum and teaching methods they are unsure whether they would prefer one or two government exams. Students seem apprehensive about only one test determining their entrance into university.

Further issues regarding university entrance were brought up quite strongly in one focus group. This was a topic we had initially overlooked.

“We're [a] little nervous about the new system. If it is easier than before to pursue a tertiary degree everyone will be a university graduate and it won't be as valuable. We have worries about our job security because of the new students that will graduate.” *Student A, Focus Group 3*

Universities will have to change their current admissions requirements, which are focused on the HKCEE and HKALE, to fit with the reform. If it is easier for the new students to attend universities, the students who missed the reform may be at a disadvantage.

This concern proved not to be shared by most students at both CFHC and surrounding secondary schools. 67% of students thought there would be little to no changes in university admissions.

Some students who exited secondary school at form 5 after the HKCEE's had some concerns when they heard this exit point would no longer be present.

“I like the current system. Secondary school is too boring, some students think.” *Student C, Focus Group 2*

This student felt very bored with the curriculum offered at the secondary school level. The exit point at form five was welcomed so that he/she could go to a tertiary school and focus on his/her interests. This point was mirrored by a CCVC administrator whom we interviewed.

“The one good thing about the old system is that there were two exit points for students to move onto higher education or find a job, where now there is one.” *CVCC Administrator*

Currently, most employers require a minimum education of form five level learning. The CCVC administrator was concerned that with this exit point gone, students who have difficulty in school may not find the motivation to continue through the sixth year and finish secondary schooling.

The students were encouraged by the variety that the reform will bring in curriculum.

“In [the] new system [we] can choose [a] subject we like, and it can widen our knowledge.” *Student D, Focus Group 4*

“I want to study about different things like the planets or humanities and arts not just science.” *Student B, Focus Group 3*

“The past system is not good for [personal] development or critical thinking, and curriculum with more electives is good because students will have [more] choice based on interest and ability.” *Student D, Focus Group 4*

The interest to study more topics was reflected in the questionnaire responses. When students were asked whether the current curriculum should carry more course options, 85% of students responded positively. Strangely, the response was stronger at tertiary schools than secondary institutions, which will be implementing these curriculum changes shortly. The graph below indicates the questionnaire responses from different levels of education.

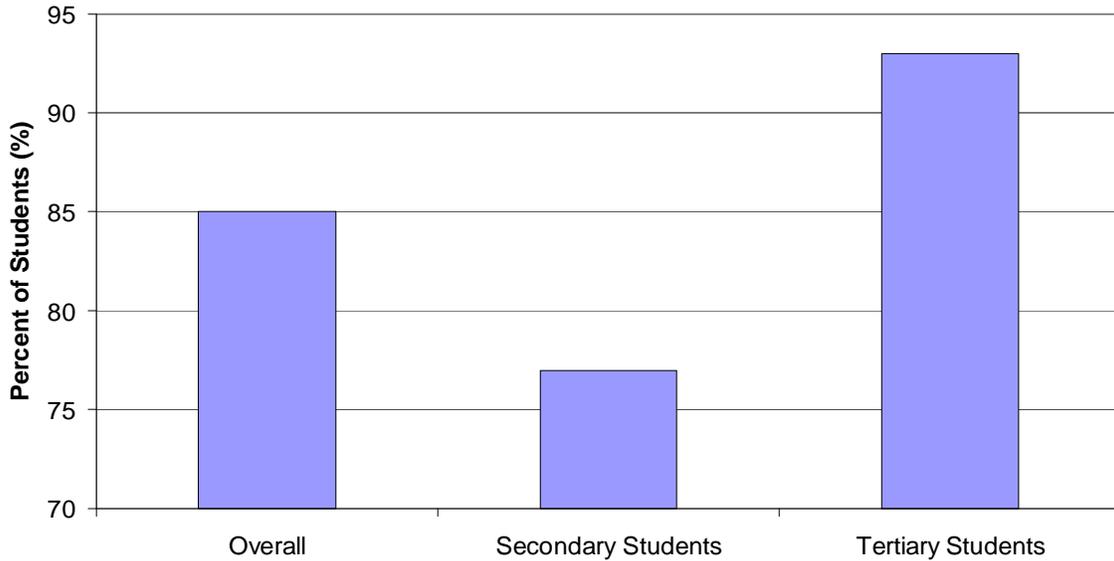


Figure 11: Percent of Students Who Believe There Should Be More Course Options

4.3 Determine the opinions of the parents of CFHC students towards the upcoming educational reform.

Through the teacher interviews and student focus groups, we gathered information about the parents' opinions. Though they both interacted differently with parents, the students and teachers expressed similar observations.

“...parents only care about grades.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 3*

“They don’t talk about it.” *Student B, Focus Group 3*

“I think the parents care [more] if students graduate on time or not.”
Teacher B, Teacher Interview 1

The consensus was that parents are not very involved in their student's education after secondary school. The parent's minds are very grade-based. This means that as long as students are getting good marks, they choose to not interfere with their educations. This

was not true for all of the students. One student mentioned that his/her parents have talked about the reform.

“They feel that Hong Kong should have [had] this system [in place] earlier.” *Student C, Focus Group 4*

The student goes on to say that his/her parents feel that two exams are too stressful for everyone involved. This particular student has younger siblings, which may be why the parents are more opinionated.

The teacher questionnaire asked about parents’ opinions on the new system and whether or not they have expressed any concerns to the teachers about the reform. The bars represent the answer “Yes” to the question “Have parents expressed any concerns to you?” on the teacher questionnaires. The graph below shows the compiled results.

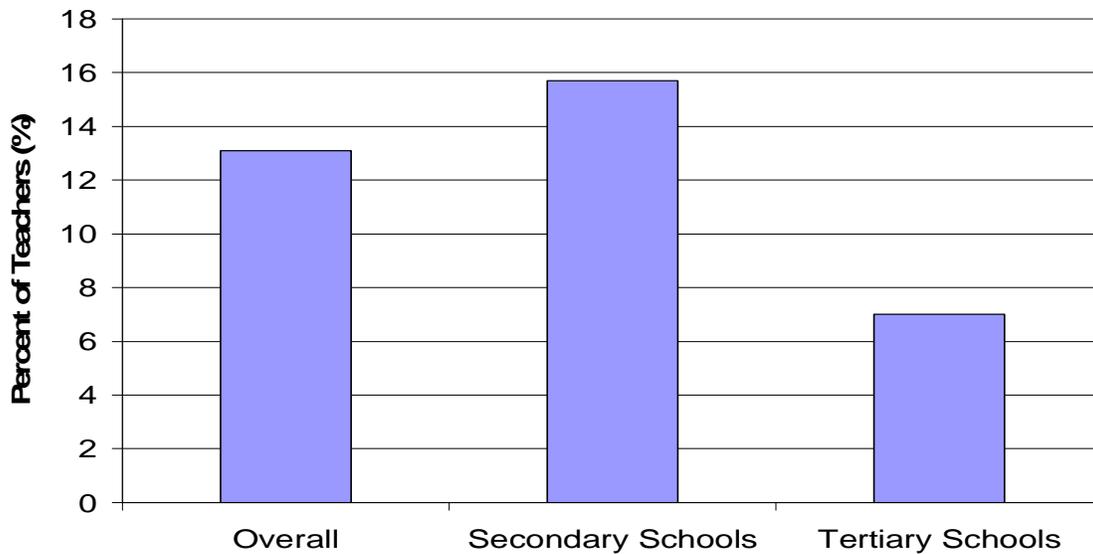


Figure 12: Percentage of Teachers who Reported that Parents Expressed Concerns to them

This graph clearly shows that parents have remained rather passive about voicing any concerns to the teachers. We can see that parents whose children are in secondary school are more actively voicing any concerns they may have, whereas a very small percentage of the parents whose children go to tertiary school do this.

Students were asked to gauge their parents' opinions towards the upcoming 3+3+4 reform, as well as whether they have younger siblings. The graph below indicates the results of a portion of the student questionnaire which addressed students' opinions of their parents concerns.

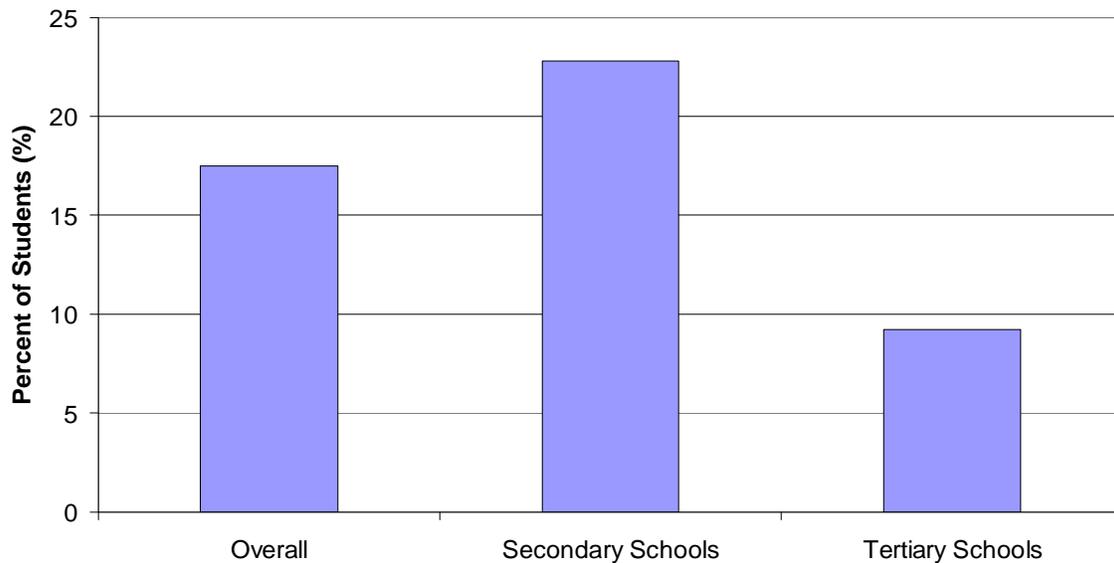


Figure 13: Have Parents Expressed Concerns about the New System to Students?

Similar to what we have seen on the results from the teacher surveys, parents do not seem to be expressing any concerns to their children about the new system. The parents of secondary school students have been voicing opinions about the reform more than the parents of those students who are enrolled in tertiary schools.

4.4 Determine teachers' and students' opinions of the current assessment methods.

Assessments are very important and are one of the major aspects that will be changing under the new system. During the teacher interviews and student focus groups, questions were asked on this topic.

“We use a 50/50 split assessment, so 50% is course assessment like oral presentations, field trips, labs, written assignments and projects. The other 50% is for the final examination.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 1*

This teacher explains the current assessment method at CFHC. The first 50% is called continuous assessment. Each class has a different percentage of continuous assessment as compared to exams.

“...we can dictate or choose the kinds of assessments that fit the needs of the class.” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 3*

When asked how they would change their assessment style after the reform, many tertiary school teachers felt that they did not need to change much or they weren't concerned at this point.

“We're not making the decision this moment” *Teacher A, Teacher Interview 2*

“Here there are practically no exams in general education courses; with respect to the education courses at the college, we are far ahead.” *Teacher B, Teacher Interview 4*

Questions on the teacher survey determined how teachers assess their students, along with if they plan on changing those methods when the reform occurs. The graph below indicates a general trend as to how secondary and tertiary school teachers perceive their assessment methods may change with the reform.

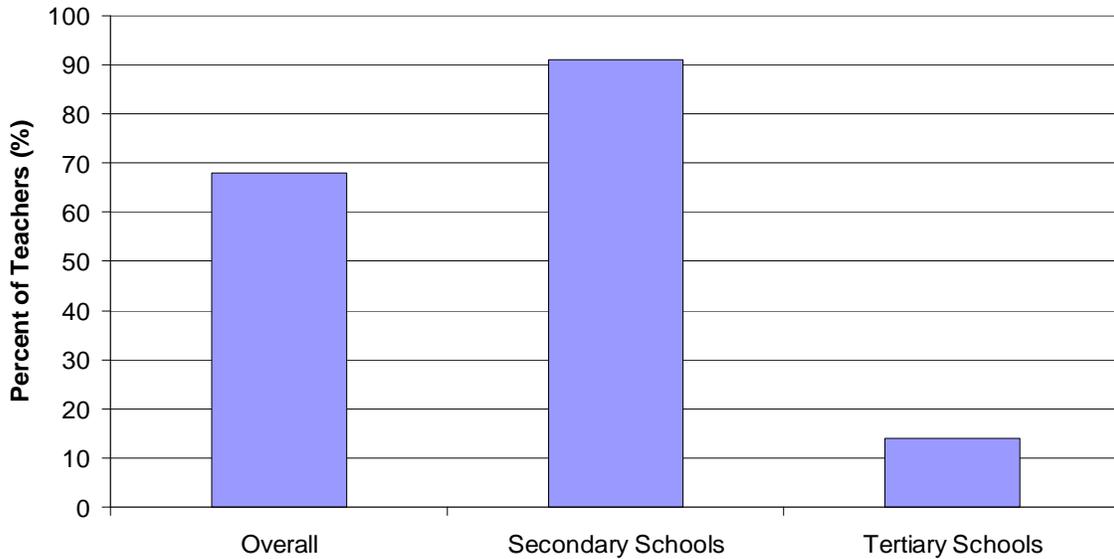


Figure 14: The Likelihood of Teachers Changing Their Assessment Methods Due to the Upcoming Educational Reform

When asked whether they think they will have to adjust their assessment methods to conform to the changes brought by the reform, the majority of the secondary school teachers agreed that this would be necessary. On the other hand, a minority of the tertiary school teachers thought that they would have to change their assessment methods in any way with the arrival of the reform.

During focus groups, students were asked about the assessment methods of their teachers and how they would like them to change. The students did not voice any opinions. They never raised any complaints about their teachers' assessments or suggestions on ways to change these methods.

On the questionnaire, students were asked whether or not they agreed with their institutions method of assessing their abilities. The graph below is the representation of the compiled results for this specific question.

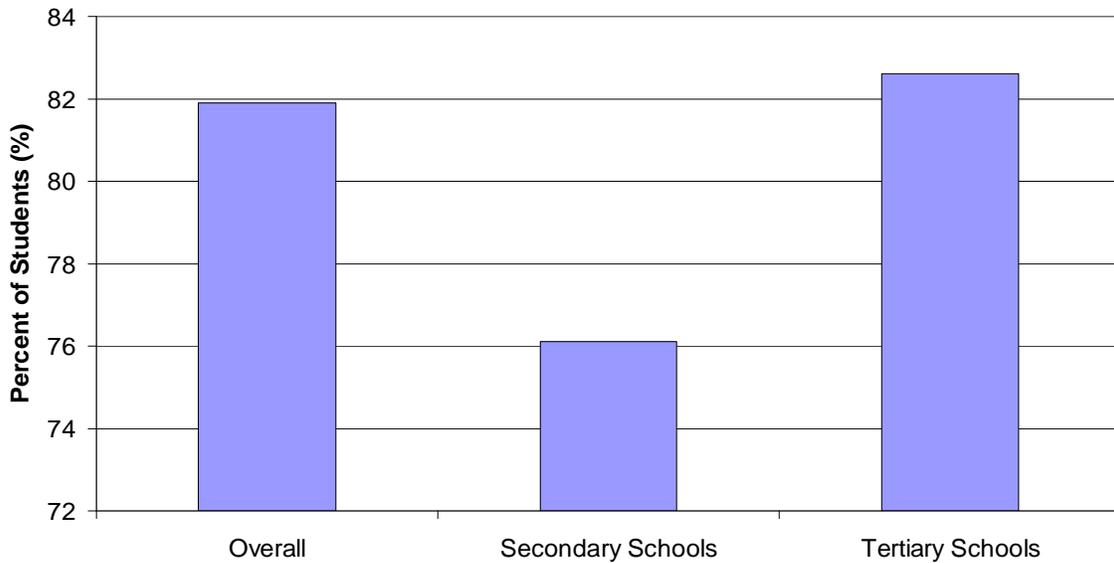


Figure 15: Students' Agreement with Assessment Methods

The outcomes of the focus groups are once again confirmed here, as both secondary and tertiary school students agree with the current assessment methods. There is an overall trend that students do not believe that changing assessment methods would be necessary.

Through the analysis of our results we addressed our four objectives. We determined the opinions of students, teachers, and parents on the subject of the reform, as well as analyzed the necessity for changing teacher assessment methods. With this new insight into the minds of the parties involved, we created our suggestions to CFHC to address any problems. With the combination of the opinions presented here and the suggestions presented in Chapter 5, CFHC will be well prepared for many upcoming challenges.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

Through the analysis of our results, the team has compiled a list of suggestions for CFHC. These suggestions may be used to enable a smoother transition at CFHC when the reform begins. Each objective was addressed thoroughly in the results and analysis section. All opinions of teachers, students, and parents were stated in the previous section and therefore, will only be summarized here. The team considered all opinions when creating their suggestions.

5.1 Teacher Concerns and Suggestions on How to Address Them

CFHC teachers feel they will not be affected. They are very confident in their assessments and teaching styles and believe they are in line with the reforms. We agree with the teachers on this point. They are very much in favor of the reform and plan to embrace it when it comes. Most appear to be very open to interactive teaching styles and many already engage students in role-playing and group work. Except for a select few, teachers are not confident in their knowledge of the reform details. Unfortunately, it seems as though this may be due to the lack of information from the government and may not be able to be addressed fully at this point.

Lack of information to the teachers creates questions in their minds. The two main questions they have are on the subjects of the foundation year and job security for contract teachers. Currently, the foundation year is in place to get form five students on the same level as form seven. After the reform, all students will be from the sixth year. Teachers want to know whether or not the foundation year will still be needed for students. This also relates to job security issues. Without the foundation year, some classes will no longer be needed and this may result in teacher cutbacks. Contract teachers are worried about their job security because of this and the number of future students. During the first year of the change, there will be no new students coming into CFHC. The school mainly draws students from form five. Without this exit, CFHC may have fewer students. These uncertainties trouble the contract teachers.

Suggestions:

CFHC must address all uncertainties of teachers to transition smoothly. In general, we feel as though the teachers are well on track for the incoming students. CFHC should feel confident in the teaching skills of their faculty.

- Teachers need to be better informed about the reform. Pamphlets and workshops created and conducted by the administration would be very helpful.
- When new information or new decisions are made by the government, a memo or e-mail can be sent to the faculty. This way, teachers can stay informed and will feel that the administration gives importance to their knowledge of the reform.
- To ensure effective communication between administrators and staff, there could be a teacher council with representatives from each department. The representatives would not necessarily be department heads, who are still a part of the administrative function. This council could be summoned when important school wide changes are about to occur. Teachers and administrators could then discuss the necessary solutions to present issues. These councils may provide a more personal and comfortable atmosphere for discussion when compared to open forums, where all staff and administrators are present to discuss issues.

5.2 Students' Opinions on the Reform and How to Raise Their Level of Awareness of the Upcoming Changes

Students are not concerned with the reform. Particularly tertiary school students think that it will not affect them. Both secondary and tertiary school students know very little on the subject.

Suggestions:

Most tertiary school students may not be interested in the information on this subject. We still suggest that it be made available to the students who wish to gain the knowledge.

- Posters with facts and information can be posted in the school to increase interest throughout the student body. More detailed information should be

made available to interested students in a social area such as the library. Pamphlets can be created and passed out to any students with younger siblings who may need to understand the reforms better. These pamphlets can be brought home to encourage conversation on the reform with their families.

- The Student Union at CFHC could discuss whether or not the prospective changes at CFHC will be of interest to students. If they believe that this topic would be of interest to their fellow students, an open panel with a guest speaker could be organized. The guest speaker could be someone who can effectively inform the students on the current happenings regarding the reform and how this may affect their futures, perhaps a government official from the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB). The school administration could help set up a date for the panel or discussion.

5.3 Parents' Opinions on the Reform and How to Get Them Interested in the Reform

Parents are much less involved in their children's tertiary education and care much more that their children obtain their degrees. Parents rarely know what classes their child is taking and generally do not show interest unless the child is doing poorly. Through student and teacher feedback on parents' views of their children's education, it became clear that parents are indifferent about changes that may occur in tertiary level educational institutions like CFHC after the 3+3+4 reform.

Suggestions:

To get parents more involved in educational matters, CFHC could take some steps to raise parents' awareness of the reform and integrate the parents in school concerns, in this case changes regarding the reform. To make parents more involved in their children's schooling and more aware of the changes in the educational system with the 3+3+4 reform;

- CFHC could organize "Parents' Day", "Parents Weekend" or even a "Parents Appreciation Day". A couple of days would then be geared towards getting parents to come to the school to get more information, and meet other CFHC parents. To ensure that parents attend these events, there could be various

student performances (theatrical and musical performances or display of student artwork) as well as information sessions to address the interests of the parents. Information sessions regarding the educational reform will attract parents who have younger children who are already in or about to go into secondary educational institutions. The opening ceremony of the new building would also be an option to attract parents.

- The school website can also be extended to include a section for parents with information on school events and current happenings. This way, parents will stay informed on the progress of the reform and how it will affect CFHC. Possible elimination of the foundation year or changing admission criteria through the 3+3+4 reform could be discussed in forums. Students could also use this port to retrieve information for their parents who may or may not be computer literate.

5.4 Teachers' and Students' Opinions of the Current Assessment Methods

The assessment methods currently practiced at CFHC are at a level that surpasses the memorization-based evaluation methods currently present in most secondary schools. Teachers at CFHC use projects, team work and student presentations as part of the evaluation of their students' knowledge and abilities. Depending on the nature of the subject, teachers decide on the weight of the written exams and finals for their students' grade. Subjects that are based more on practicality and communication skills are evaluated through continuous assessment as well as the final exam which makes up 50% of a student's grade. Other more technical knowledge based subjects, such as Computer Science, are evaluated 30% through continuous assessment and 70% through the final.

Suggestions:

- Increase continuous assessment in all subjects, especially in subjects that require practical knowledge such as translation and interpretation as well as areas in hospitality management. For more technical subjects, continuous assessment could be further administered through online activities and tests. This could be done by full implementation of WebTL by using this system for class assignments.

- An online assessment and feedback system would also help students to get immediate feedback on their work. Particularly with multiple choice tests, an online assessment system that gives immediate feedback with the right answers and explanations to the student would save the teachers' a lot of time.

We hope that the information and suggestions included in this report will help CFHC make a smooth transition into the new system and will help them deal with the impacts of the reform on their school.

References

- Barnes, M. D., Dich, E., Li, J. H., & Trinh, P. T. (2002). *Suitability of a community college system for Hong Kong* Unpublished Interactive Qualifying Project No. YHM-HK05-51. Worcester, MA: Worcester Polytechnic Institute.
- Caritas Adult & Higher Education Services (2003). About us. Retrieved November 13, 2006, from Web site: www.caritas.edu.hk
- Caritas Francis Hsu College (2004) Past, Present, and Future. Retrieved November 13, 2006, from Web site: www.cfhc.edu.hk
- Caritas – Hong Kong (2005). What we are. Retrieved November 13, 2006, from Web site: www.caritas.org.hk
- Caritas Internationalis (2003). Who we are. Retrieved November 13, 2006, from Web site: www.caritas.org
- Carless, D. (2005). Prospects of the implementation of assessment for learning. *Assessment in Education Principles Policy and Practice*, 12, 39-16.
- Case studies in secondary education reform*. (2002). Improving Educational Quality (IEQ). Project American Institutes for Research.
- Cheng, Y. C. (1996). Total teacher effectiveness: new conception and improvement . *International Journal of Educational Management* . 10, 7-17.
- Cheung, C. K., & Wong, Anne K. C. (2006). Implementation of the career-oriented curriculum (COC) in the business curriculum for senior secondary schools in Hong Kong: A pilot study. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 68, 99-16.
- Croteau, E., Ho, O., & Swatson, D. (2002). *Survey and evaluation of project springboard* Unpublished Interactive Qualifying Project No. CXP-HK01-51. Worcester, MA: Worcester Polytechnic Institute.
- Dimmock, C., & Walker, A. (1998). Transforming hong kong's schools: Trends and emerging issues. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 36(5), 476-16.

- Dowson, C., Bodycott, P., Walker, A., & Coniam, D. (February 6, 2003). Continuing education reform in Hong Kong: Issues of contextualization [Electronic Version]. *Education Policy Analysis, 11*, 1068-2341.
- Fok, S. C. (2001). Education reform in Hong Kong and the paradigm shift. *Institute of Asia Pacific Education Development Conference*, Seoul, Korea.
- La Bruna, I., Marcks, E., McGuinness, R., & Starowicz, S. (2006). *Evaluating sub-degree programs at Caritas Francis Hsu College* Unpublished Interactive Qualifying Project No. E-project-022306-024757. Worcester, MA: Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Retrieved 11/03/2006, from Gordon Library Catalog database. from <http://www.wpi.edu/Pubs/E-project/Available/E-project-022306-024757/>
- Law, F. (2005, November, 15). The New Senior Secondary Academic Structure: Interface with Basic and Higher Education, Articulation with Local and Overseas Education Systems. *Realising The Vision of 3+3+4*, Retrieved January 24, 2007, from <http://www.emb.gov.hk/index.aspx?langno=1&nodeID=4964>
- Morris, P. (2004). Teaching in Hong Kong: Professionalization, accountability and the state. *Research Papers in Education, 19*(1), 105-17.
- Morris, P. (1996). *The Hong Kong school curriculum: Development, issues and policies*. (2nd ed.). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Peterson, A. D. C. (1971). The International Baccalaureate. *BACIE Journal, 25*(1), 4-5.
- Tam, F. W., & Szeto, J. N. (2000). Muddling through school reforms: A case study of how curriculum innovation became a driving force behind quality schooling. *Annual Meeting of the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement*. Hong Kong, China.
- Tan, J., & Gopinathan, S. Education Reform in Singapore: Towards Greater Creativity and Innovation? *NIRA Review*, Retrieved November 13, 2007, from <http://www.apecknowledgebank.org/resources/downloads/SingaporeCurriculumReformCreativity.pdf>

Werquin, P. (2006). Qualifications systems: Bridges to lifelong learning. Retrieved February 11, 2007, from OECD Web site:
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/12/26/36746882.pdf>

Appendix A: Background Overview of Caritas Francis Hsu College

Caritas International is a confederation of 162 Catholic organizations, which all serve to help the poor and oppressed (Caritas Internationalis, 2003). It is one of the world's largest humanitarian networks in over 200 countries and territories. It was started in 1897 in Freiburg, Germany under the name Caritas. They spread to the US in 1910 and by 1928 there were 22 countries represented the first of a soon to be bi-annual conference. These conferences were called Caritas Catholica and continued until the Second World War All activities began once again in 1947 and in 1950 a union of Caritas organizations began. In 1957 this confederation became known as Caritas International with 198 countries and territories on every continent.

Hong Kong joined the Caritas organizations in 1953 with the help of the Hong Kong diocese (Caritas Hong Kong, 2004). Its main purpose is to "offer relief and rehabilitation services to the poor and the distressed, with the aim of addressing some of the social hardships and inequalities in Hong Kong resulting from the Second World War and subsequent social and political changes at the time." They now have 200 services in 140 locations. They focus on the needy people at the base of society. They believe that people in need should not just be given handouts, they should be shown and helped to learn to help and support themselves. They hope that through their services they can renew hope in people. They hold no prejudices no matter what and strongly believe that everyone should be equal. They receive some government funding for specific services but earn the majority of their funding from fees, fund raisers and donations.

As stated on their website, their mission is that "We are committed to serving the society at large, in particular, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable. We strive to foster social cohesion and the spirit of positive contribution to society by means of a holistic system of human services grounded in the principle of integral human development." One way that they hope to accomplish this is through education (CAHES, 2003). They have 39 schools and units in Hong Kong in their Caritas Adult Education and Services department alone. They are the largest adult education supplier in Hong Kong and have been working on integrating a community college system.

Caritas Francis Hsu College is one of the schools run by the Caritas group (CFHC, 2006). They were founded in 1985 and offered multiple two-year degrees. Five years

later they received approval from the Hong Kong government to teach post-secondary schooling. They also started a three-year diploma program including accounting studies, company secretaryship and administration, translation and interpretation, and computing studies. 1998 brought along another change in which they began to supply four-year higher education programs in order to comply with the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance, which was required to have official registration as post-secondary college. On August 8, 2001 the four-year higher education programs were validated and accredited. In 2003 they launched two associate degree programs including business information systems and marketing and tourism management. Along with these degrees, three daytime bachelor degrees were established in accounting, computing and business administration, and management.

Caritas Francis Hsu College use lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops, projects, fieldwork, and labs to teach their students. The students begin to learn English in their junior year and are taught completely in English by their senior year in order to facilitate their students' possible continued education. They give one exam at the end of each semester and one assessment in September. The school's motto clearly shows their purpose, "I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil 3:13-14). They are a religion based school who hopes to help student who have difficulty in the mainstream schools. Only 18% of the population between the ages of 18 and 20 go on to a University (Fok, 2001). Caritas Francis Hsu College gives the other 82% of students a second option, and hopefully, some hope for the future.

Appendix B: Teacher Interview Transcriptions

Teacher Group Interview No. 1

Conducted 18-01-07 at 10:00

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Hilal Tetik (Lead)

Erin McLean (Second Lead)

Todd Bitner (Scribe)

Teacher A ["A"]:

Department: Language and Translation

Experience: 5+ years

Teacher B ["B"]:

Department: Language and Translation

Experience: 5+ years

Teacher C ["C"]:

Department: Language and Translation

Experience: <5 years

What types of media do you use in your classroom?

Teacher A: Apart from textbooks we use a lot of multimedia. That is why 80% of classrooms are multimedia rooms. In my classes I use tapes and practical lessons with worksheets. We have all the resources and we use them and sometimes we have lectures in hotels and sometimes after lessons we have the students role play and play customers and concierge and then they have to do interpreting, they pretend that they are interpreting for dignitaries and heads of state. Nowadays our programs are skill training programs and you must put students in real life situations.

Teacher C: Our language program has people listening and training, so multimedia is very important for teaching. I play tapes that are very important for listening and for language skills. I think we use a lot of multimedia

Teacher B: We do use a lot [of media], they also must do presentations. I get [my students] to do oral reports and make them stand in front of people to train their skills and abilities not to be shy in front of people.

A: These are very authentic situations. Teachers ask the students to dress for the parts as social workers and we give them scenario questions. For example I would just tell them that they are the manager of the ABC hotel and they have customers coming and then they have to decide how they look and groom and how they want to act.

How do you assess your students for their grade?

A: We use a 50/50 split assessment; so 50% is course assessment like oral presentations, field trips, labs, written assignments and projects. The other 50% is for the final examination. If it is a full year course then [the breakdown] would be 20% for the first exam and 30% for the second exam. [This method] is the growing trend in all of Hong Kong and they are slowly [converting to an] assessment style that is based less on tests.

Is this assessment style typical of most tertiary educational institutions?

A: Well, this is becoming more common for tertiary [schools] but I know some places with courses that have 30-70 assessment. They use a lot of continuous assessment components, and it can be 70% continuous assessment and 30% tests.

C: It depends on the nature of the course.

A: I think for a lot of junior forms like secondary school a lot of the courses are knowledge based so the percentages change a lot but for a lot of tertiary institutions people are talking about interior assessment and students freak out during tests and think that this is not fair to them.

C: To replace public examination you need a lot of planning and design [because] a new public exam will cost 3 million dollars or more. Nowadays, teachers like to emphasize more things in their courses [for internal assessment] and students need to know how to carry themselves in a room and [use their] social skills.

B: My younger brother has just finished form 5 last year and even before the 3+3+4 educational reform, the English subject has been changed in this years HKCEE so that there will be some School Based Assessment (SBA). Only Chinese and English subjects will have SBA, so they will be internally assessed. They still need to sit for the Chinese and English [HKCEE] exams but they will have 20 to 30 percent school based assessments

A: If you talk about SBA there is a transition period but it was used all the time for primary school in my time, until 15 years ago when they introduced 9 year compulsory education so they had to introduce [...]. SBA is not a new idea, they [just] started to use it again. They wanted a school based assessment in form six to avoid too many exams, HKALE and HKCEE will be replaced. This idea will have to go towards adjustments in high school but not for primary school. There is internal assessment in primary [already]. You would be surprised how in kindergarten 4 and 5 year olds are tested, they have to go to English interviews and it scares the daylight out of them.

Are you skeptical about the transition? What are your thoughts on the reform?

A: I am all for the 3+3+4 system. [However], I think it is not a good idea with the compulsory education. Over the last years, there is a dropping of students' quality since they do not learn much in 6 and 7 as they are preparing for another exam. [We would like to] get students fresh without bad habits. The language students have to start from scratch. Form 6 should not be examination based so that the students can enjoy it and when they come to college, [they can be given] a foundation course so that they can handle [the tertiary school] courses better.

B: Programs should be customized. Nowadays, students are taught general level things that do not add much to a student's intelligence.

How do you find your connection to the administration? Do they voice any concerns about the 3+3+4 system?

A: I think that with this particular college there are no arguments [about the reform] but there are other concerns for the combination of 3 different colleges. [And that can be a major offending problem.] Oh yes, I think the communication is good with management and staff [here]. There is major adjustment [right now], today we have a

new policy and a few days later it differs and sometimes teachers [will] have problems with that. Our department likes change.

Are you planning on changing the assessment methods?

B: As a matter of fact, we have a lot of flexibility in this college so we can change to 60-40 or turn into 50-50 for skills courses. If you [want to] bring changes into the system, [the proposal] goes through QA and several meetings and academic board, so there is a lot of bureaucracy and [you] need to start early.

C: It is not very hard to get through it, it is complicated but they will not say no if you make a good argument, you just have to say why you want the change. For our program, there are advisors from several universities. So, before changing [anything], [you] must submit a proposal to these advisors [and they could say] "well I think the change is good but you might want to customize this a little bit".

Do parents voice any concerns regarding their children's educations?

A: Well, not a lot. I think that a lot of people in Hong Kong and this part of the world [in general] spend a lot of time on their own careers. Parents don't know what courses their students are taking.

B: I think the parents care [more] if students graduate on time or not. [They are a bit] money-minded.

Does the government send out information to the teachers? Leaflets for instance?

C: They have TV broadcasts and there is information in newspapers.

A: I know that there is a consultation period for Hong Kong people to voice their opinion. The people are saying that the government has not made up their mind and has been sending mixed signals. There is an argument over liberal subjects and whether or not these should be introduced in high school and there is no training for teachers. The government hasn't settled on funding and many teachers are worried about their jobs, they think "what happens if form 7 no longer exists, do I go back and teach form 1 or do I get kicked out". There should be more dialogue about curriculum and training. Mr. Lee doesn't have very good communication skills and has been criticized as the director of EMB. He used to be a doctor so he has actually never worked in a high school. High school teachers are unhappy about the uncertainty.

--End of Interview--

Teacher Interview No. 2

Conducted 18-01-07 at 11:00

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Hilal Tetik (Lead)

Erin McLean (Second Lead)

Todd Bitner (Scribe)

Teacher A ["A"]:

Department: Computer Science

Experience: 5+ years

What types of media do you use in your classroom?

Teacher A: A lot of the format for the lower form may use Chinese language teaching in the classroom and text books in English as well as homework and writing in English. Years 3 and 4, most students are required to use English and teachers use English as their teaching medium.

How do you assess your students for their grade?

A: Most of the courses in our department are 30 percent assessment and 70 percent exam. For some courses this is ok but not some of the programming courses. We should assess their ability to write programs as opposed to tests, tests are only 2 hours and you cannot write a whole program in that time.

Some students have mentioned that they feel the workload is too heavy, what is your opinion on this?

A: I don't think so. They have to do work weekly or daily in secondary school, but in our department there are only two assignments for the entire course, two tests, and one project so maybe they feel that because they do a lot of part-time work.

Do you agree or disagree with the new reforms being mandated by the government?

A: I think that Hong Kong needs to be reformed and aligned with the education system of mainland China, but we need a better time frame. A longer time would be better, we need to do it but we need a space for us to discuss it. I am supportive, but the major concern is transition. We have students from form 5 and for one year will not have form 5 students. So do we need to close for one year and open later? Our department wanted to move a step further to prepare a degree program and avoid this problem. We have to provide a higher degree in order to attract a new type of student. We will move it to a higher degree and have form 7 students come in, this is the only way is to advance.

Do you think you will change your assessment methods when the students from the new system come in?

A: We're not making the decision this moment, maybe 50/50.

Do you feel that the government is keeping you well informed about the reform?

A: We are a private school so the government does not send information. I get news from the newspaper or magazines and there is no official report or information. The college was invited to attend some associate degree programs. But because we were not a secondary not much information was covered.

Do you feel that the CFHC administration is keeping you well informed about the reform and their plans?

A: We have a lot of committees so the schools' administration provides a lot of information.

--End of Interview--

Teacher Interview No. 3

Conducted 19-01-07 at 16:00

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Todd Bitner (Lead)

Hilal Tetik (Second Lead)

Erin McLean (Scribe)

Teacher A ["A"]:

Department: Computer Science

Experience: 5+ Years

What are your assessment methods?

Teacher A: Because we're not tied to a government prescribed curriculum, we can dictate or choose the kinds of assessments that fit the needs of the class. Mainstream schools assess with many written and final exam. We do a lot of project work that is not really able to have written exams along with it so we do continuous assessments with presentations and prototyping. I try to mix different assessments for different classes. I have many labs, unlike the business department. We still do written tests, 20-30% of a student's grade is project based or continuous assessment. So, we don't do enough online or computer based assessment, its still a very traditional environment. We still do presentations but not online, it is not very computer assisted. Students use computers for assignments but exams aren't online. People don't do many online assessments where you can go online and judge. There are some but not enough.

Do you think you will change how you assess the students when they come from the new type of secondary schooling?

A: My view is more biased than other teachers' views, coming from computer science. We definitely should change towards this. We must change the physiological aspects of assessments. If everyone thinks that written assessments are important, there is no way people can say: "let me do it this way".

How would you go about changing your assessment methods in the school?

A: I think there are two levels to it. Our first priority is to comply or fulfill the HKCAA criteria. We can't self-accreditate programs. There must be bench-mark programs for colleges like CFHC. Our programs must be gauged against other universities to find what the program is worth. [The HKCAA] come in every 3-4 years to say if our programs are quality. We would like to change our assessment methods, but we must talk to the HKCAA so that they can make sure we meet the qualities laid down by them. We cannot do something like shift everything to online, because they can say no one in Hong Kong does this. The validation exercise occurs over 1-2 days. Experts look at every aspect of program; the work, assessments, everything.

Last week was not the HKCAA but another professional body. Besides having academic standards, we also have career standards. Official registration board of Social work, for example, can give approval to our Social work program. Computing

had one in March for our associate degrees. In the future, they will look at higher degrees. They see everything and judge the program.

Some students have mentioned that they feel the course load is too much, how do you feel about this?

A: From our prospective, no, and I've had over 10 years experience. The general pattern is that when courses are run, it is inevitable that some assignments will overlap. At the end of the course, you receive a project. If a student takes 4-5 courses, they have 4-5 projects at the end. Departments rarely talk informally with other departments about this. I try to give choices in when to pass in the final assignments to try to avoid this. Some teachers don't do this. They think it's important for student to pass it in on a certain day so they can give feedback on it. Sometimes the teaching pace can vary. Teaching plans can change and vary a bit and I tell students this at the beginning of the course. If an assignment is due this week, and we follow it rigidly, then there are problems. With slower learners we give students more time. Some lecturers are more relax to make up for strict ones. Sometimes I think the first week is very slow then towards the end [the students] are working 24/7.

Students have changed especially in Hong Kong. The student profile has changed. More of the students are a disadvantaged bunch; their qualifications are not as good. If we follow traditional guidelines, they feel stressed. We should find balance between tradition and the profile of the students. If we have good students then we can lay down the law but some student can be pushed too far. Here, we encourage them to learn, so we can give them more time. For some teachers, guidelines are good. I'd rather have them learn the stuff and turn around and say: "I can do this". I try to educate instead of grade.

Do you think the reform will help with this?

A: I think the student profile will change either way, reform or no. The mix of Hong Kong students will change because of all the Chinese students coming in. Reform tries to solve a certain problem, but they should try to match the problem with the reform. Because the students have changed, the reform tries to change to adjust to them. That's how I look at it, but no one can say that for sure. I think the reform serves a few purposes. The reform is based on high schools similar to the UK and US, but there are big differences in the systems and they are changing too. I think [the world] is trying to agree on what people should do in education. I think [education reform] is inevitable in HK because the population has changed. Many more students come from mainland. The curriculum will serve many purposes; maybe it will make a better student profile.

Why do you think that the student's are changing so much?

A: I think the birth rate is dropping rapidly; there are not enough babies in Hong Kong. In the UK and other countries the average family size is dropping. Being a father myself and seeing friends, the average family size was 3.5-4 kids but now it's 1.5 kids.

In America, the trend is the same.

A: It's a general trend across world and in Hong Kong its very severe and even more in china. Kids are changing because of family size, so the profile is changing. It's a very complex thing. I notice that students are less motivated to study these days. If they are studying then the family is providing for them so they don't have the urge to make a better life for themselves. Unless they want to be a doctor and then they wont be here. These students are not the brightest lot, they are the lower lot because they are not motivated to study. For parents, studying was seen as the way out but not anymore. There are too many choices. If I fail here, I can go somewhere else, unless they can lock on to a personal target.

Reform doesn't change the way students can talk or they way they are assessed, they can still be memorizing. The way you implement is important. The vision of the education in Hong Kong traditionally is elitist. If I don't study I will fall behind. The good students will fight for those places; the not so competitive students go somewhere else. They study associate degree. The current school is not everyone's cup of tea, but you must ask why did it work before and not now. The whole population has changed and the family has changed. I'm not saying the previous system was good, but it worked for them. Now it has changed and [the education system] doesn't fit anymore so now we have to change.

Is there anything else you think has changed?

A: I think in any society where wealth is being developed, the dominant force is to be better. In the older generation they tried to do their best in school and better their living and be better in general. The current students can enjoy life because the base is there. It's the same in the UK and US, in general a lot of kids are living in good families and now they don't have to be better and do not think learning makes wealth. In general Hong Kong is better off. That coupling with the school system is why the reform comes. To go with the way of the world, is high sounding. It makes sense to change to get in line with the world. If you look at the real issue, they are trying to get the students in school for longer, but why? What's the point? They say they need to learn more, but why? It doesn't fit them well.

Do you think the old system fits them better?

A: I think the old system does work because of the learning method and the way they are being taught. They are taught that way to be competitive. In foreign countries it may not be absolutely true; that they are better than other schools. Harvard is good because they have better students. The philosophy of Hong Kong schools is to push students to get better so brighter students come there to make the school better. To change that, we must change the system. People don't believe that any more. New systems won't change that, the schools to want to be better. Memorization probably won't change. It's all about figures.

So you don't think the reform will affect the schools as much as they hope it will?

A: The government says you should do group work etc. It's not for the school to say what way to push the students. Schools don't want to risk being a bad school and having bad students. Parents say: "why are my kids doing worse than yours". Marks, in

layman's eye is learning. The essence of learning, in a sense, is how educated is the population? In the US and the UK, they respect the learning. In Hong Kong it is different. Wealthy parents only care about grades. Even my kids, you have different roles when you are a parent and when you are a teacher. It is quite ok to look at the schools' perspective but you must look at the parents too because they are very involved. At the end of the day everyone talks about grades. What they do isn't changing. Everything that was proposed is additional stuff. That's why teachers are stressed. They are trying to do the traditional things and the government things. If you leave the schools alone they will go back to the old system. If you live here you don't get a public school you have to try very hard to get into schools. Just look at how the schools are assigned. Schools respond quite differently to parents than to the government.

How are the schools assigned?

A: Look at Hong Kong University, locally its one of the top. This is because it does good research and has good professors but they are rubbish at teaching. Bright students get in so they can keep up with the gap in teaching. In secondary school, you can't get away with that. If you get bright students, you don't have to teach them much and they will get good grades. Employers only care about grades, not what you know. The system here is to compliment the learning. We all like talking about ideals but they only care about grades. It's like in 1997, when we have a lot of schools switching to the Mandarin and schools rejected it because top-notch students are good with English. So, if you speak Chinese you are second-class. After 4-5 years they switched back. Some schools stayed but at University there is no Chinese. Smart Chinese speaking students can't go to university because they don't know English. Schools can't change because they want their students to go to universities even though students learn better in Chinese. It's not what they wanted; the government always lets go of rigid guidelines and lets the schools choose. The path to receiving grades is very different. Some school say we are project based and this student gets a B and others are exam based and also get a B. How do you compare? The government has to make equivalents. Sometimes it's hard to get past that. Parents in Hong Kong are very different and schools become competitive and because of that it's difficult to have different styles of learning in secondary schools. The tertiary level is different. In general we can introduce different teaching methods but at the end of the day we have to look at them and see if they can be compared. You probably find that students have a different view than teachers. I haven't been a secondary school teacher, so I can't say. Since our students are from the lower end, we see a lot of this.

Do you think the merging of CFHC and Caritas Bianchi College of Careers will be beneficial?

A: Our market share will be infiltrated by universities and we are far from getting good students. I think there are many reasons for joining Bianchi; I think to make use of our resources and we want to combine to put our strengths together. The student profile comes directly from the population. The old system may work but it's only as good as the population and school. If the government doesn't change certain things, they must change what people believe. The government had tried to stress that marks

aren't everything but no one listens because marks are everything and drive people and teaching style and universities and where they start in society. When that is changed then you have reform.

We have various extracurricular activities such as swimming; we would get a grade for that. Do you think that classes such as these would work in the new system?

A: We are still using the same scale but some are objective, say "I'm not going to judge you out of 100 [points] but out of 60 [seconds]."

In USA, universities look at extracurricular activities for admissions and how much you have done out side of school-work, do you think that this would happen in Hong Kong?

A: I think that's the difference between western and Hong Kong and China, we look at things very officially, marks and things, but that is drive and that's what makes you a good worker. If you put that into studying you will get good grades. Would you send a student to a school based on drive? Probably not. It's easier to judge by numbers. When more and more parents are educated they will see that education is not about marks. A lot of students are from China and it is very different. The system must respond to the change in profile.

How can you educate parents? I'm not seeing that big of a shift in popular believe. The government pushes things into schools but [the schools] translate it into marks. Schools see the students will learn English better with the new system, so they can get better marks. The government keeps trying, but it doesn't change anything. For the past 15 years in Hong Kong, it's very dynamic but everyone suffers. Soon enough a reform must work. I think 4 years in university is good, not because they will better grades but it gives them more time to develop. In a way, the 3+3+4 system will work when the people change their views. A reform purely imposed by the government will not work.

--End of Interview--

Teacher Group Interview No. 4

Conducted 22-01-07 at 14:00

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Hilal Tetik (Lead)

Erin McLean (Second Lead)

Todd Bitner (Scribe)

Teacher A ["A"]:

Department: Social Sciences

Experience: 5+ years

Teacher B ["B"]:

Department: Social Sciences

Experience: <5 years

What is the extent of your knowledge regarding the upcoming HKSAR educational reform? How do you feel it will affect your teaching methods?

Teacher A: We know of what you are talking, however it does not really affect us. It affects secondary school teachers, not us at the university level. So, it doesn't really affect us.

Teacher B: This reform concerns the secondary school teachers. It will affect them because they are [so] used to a memorization procedure; therefore when they were informed that they were to move to an assessment where there are liberal studies and fewer exams, they [began] having trouble adjusting and will [soon] have problems. Here there are practically no exams in general education courses; with respect to the education courses at the college, we are far ahead. So no, it does not affect us.

What are your current assessment methods?

A: We do require the assessment methods of each course to be passed through a quality assurance board. It is required that there is one formal assessment method, normally performed through a test. The minimum percentage of the final grade this assessment must count for is 20 up to about 50 depending on how the course is designed. He [points to B] can give you information about the general education courses.

B: Yes, it is almost exactly the same, however sometimes there is no exam at all, as quality assurance is very lenient with these courses.

How do you feel the educational reform will affect CFHC?

A: Normally we have two kinds of students. One type comes out of form five, who are sixteen or seventeen years old, and the other type comes from form seven, who are nineteen years old. We expect the students from form seven to have a higher academic background [than form five students]. Under the new system, all students will finish [their secondary schooling] at the same time, so we cannot differentiate the exemplary students as we currently do. [In the future] they will all finish form six together, and I'm not sure students are happy about that. Right now we have two types, and form five students have to take foundation courses, [while] form seven can begin college credit courses immediately.

- B:** The entrance requirements are [currently] different because form five students are missing some required admissions criteria and must take the foundation program before beginning the higher degree or associate programs.
- A:** You can imagine the different backgrounds. Form five [students] are slower and must take foundation courses, [while] form seven [students] immediately get into higher degree or associate courses. In the new system, we cannot distinguish the differences in educational backgrounds of the students, and all students will be equal. However, some students are better equipped for college courses and will want to [go] further [or faster] in secondary school, but will not get the chance. I assume that all parents will ask their children to continue through secondary school as far as they can [under the new system as opposed to the old one].
- B:** [The new system] will definitely affect our admission process in admitting new students, and it will affect the foundation courses that we offer. We will modify the admission requirements after seeing what happens [with the reform], we may end up scrapping the whole thing but we need to see as it occurs.

What type of multimedia do you use in the classroom?

- A:** We use a lot of group work and presentations. We use audio/visual of course, but that depends on A: the type of course, and B: how innovative the teachers are.

How would you describe the students' workloads? They seem to be in agreement that the current coursework is extensive.

- A:** Assignments are very important to the course progression. Students complain about the workload, but they refuse to hone up their time management skills, and therefore refuse to do finish things on time. All of the courses have assignments due at [around] the same time. The first year, they have difficulty adjusting. When they say [complaints about workload], you need to ask specific questions about how many assignments and how much time [they get for each]. Some have a part-time job. [Teachers] get feedback [at the end of each course] from the student-teacher evaluations [STE]. Sometimes students will say that there was not enough flexibility [in assignments], and sometimes teachers will change [their workload] if justified. However, often it depends on the teacher. I, for example, do not change based on their suggestions because I give plenty of time for each assignment and provide flexibility.
- B:** I give a little bit more homework to students than most teachers. I feel free that I don't need to give them much homework, but I must give them some to see if they [are] learn[ing the current course material]. As an example, I teach [omit] which covers [omit] and I must teach this concept[ually], but I have taught [this course] for three lessons and cannot understand if students understand the concepts. So I must give them assignments [to gauge their level of understanding]. In some classes I teach thirty students and in some others I have ten. [In the classes with ten], I can tell if they don't understand. This is harder with a larger class, so I [give more assignments and] can give them some leniency on when the assignments are due. All students [at CFHC] will complain about too many exams and assignments. Continuous assessment is effective, and I don't want to bug students to bring homework every day.

Do you feel that the merger of CFHC and Caritas Bianchi College of Careers will be effective? How will it affect the teachers?

A: We don't have many details.

B: I don't know much about that.

A: I know that they'll try not to duplicate programs at the two colleges to avoid competition. It is being discussed by the college administrations, but the details are not at our level.

Are the secondary school teachers going to react well to the reform?

A: If the government makes a decision, [teachers] will have to go that way. Even with the 3+3+4, the teachers are objecting because they are so used to giving exams and having info spit back at them.

B: If there are many means to test a student [as will be present in the new system], some students do not have the money to afford music and sports [which the government may choose is necessary for assessment], but they will still have to [compete in them]. In this way a student with a higher economic background will do better. If each student starts from zero it becomes fairer.

A: If you have memorization [as an assessment method], it reduces creativity and application of knowledge.

B: I still think there should be a base line for everything.

A: Several years ago, when the government [initially] proposed a 3+3+4, parents moved their students to international schools to follow American or UK curriculum. [Essentially], if I have money I will move my students to an upscale school and avoid these changes. If not, I will be forced to change.

B: [The reform works the same for the teachers as the students] – once the education department says we're going one way, the teacher's cannot argue.

What can schools do to make the shift easier for teachers?

B: [Secondary schools] should have some workshops or seminars about [the changes mandated by the reform], but not all teachers will attend that meeting. In some cases the Vice President [of a school] will give out information at that specific school. I assume the government will give all information to the [school's] Presidents or V.P.'s, but it all comes down to information dissemination.

A: [The information that is released] is current but [the release of this material] is not systematic and every time the government decides on a new reform, which is every few years, the principal will pass [leaflets] out and ask for feedback. He will receive a general response and send that back [to the government]. [Teachers] offer ideas [to the government], but [again, the current reform] doesn't really affect us [at CFHC]. If you start interviewing secondary schools there may be more arguing.

Is there any part of the upcoming reform that secondary school teachers will have the most trouble with?

B: Before [this current reform involving the] 3+3+4, we had economics, history, geography, and public affairs as separate courses, which are now merged into one umbrella called Humanities or Liberal Arts. Now a teacher must be competent in all of these subjects to teach any of them.

A: So the feeling is, I know two of these subjects but not all of them. Will I lose my job?

B: I don't like the current liberal system. [The history courses] only look into current history and don't [go into depth] about Chinese history. Our [current] focus is on Hong Kong. [Even though everyone agrees that] students should [be taught] life-long learning the areas [of study] do not really matter. So the focus [of history courses is only] on Hong Kong and some [Mainland] China. [Under the new system] we will look at world history, though it all depends on what school. This is because schools have some freedom over their syllabus. [Despite this], most schools [currently] do Hong Kong and China, but students should have a broader perspective.

--End of Interview--

Appendix C: Student Focus Group Transcriptions

Student Focus Group No. 1

Conducted 10-01-07 at 10:00

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Todd Bitner (Lead)

Erin McLean (Second Lead)

Hilal Tetik (Scribe)

Student A ["A"]:

Major: Computer Studies

Year: 3

Student B ["B"]:

Major: Computer Studies

Year: 3

Student C ["C"]:

Major: Accounting

Year: 1

Student D ["D"]:

Major: Computer Studies

Year: 3

Student E ["E"]:

Major: Computer Studies

Year: 3

Student F ["F"]:

Major: Accounting

Year: 1

How much do you know about the 3+3+4 reform?

Student A: [We know a] tiny bit.

[The parts of the reform were explained for the student who had little knowledge on the subject]

A: It can reduce the students' pressure.

Student B: No pressure means no improvement. It is no good to change how many years you go to school. The problem is not how long [students] are there. They should just change the content of the subjects.

Do you think the new liberal studies will help?

A: Teachers should teach the students, not [teach] for the exams. Besides technical subjects, liberal studies should be encouraged. The teachers' way of teaching is a wholly different subject. Liberal studies are good, we don't have enough non-technical knowledge. I would like subjects like philosophy.

B: I like the current system. Secondary school is too boring, some students think.

If they offered other classes electives, would people stay longer?

A: That type of education system would not be as boring for some people.

Where did you hear of the reform?

A: I heard about the reforms on the news. They said they were pushing the changes onto the students in a short time. The changes are too fast.

Student C: Even with the new system, [students] will fall behind.

Have your parents mentioned any concerns about the reform?

A: My parents just want [me to get] good grades. I have a sister that will face the HKCEE next year. She is not concerned. She is a little bit angry that she is missing the new system.

B: [If] after form 7, you can't join a university you [will be] upset. Maybe this new system will offer more chances to get in [to universities] somewhere.

--End of Focus Group--

Student Focus Group No. 2

Conducted 12-01-07 at 11:00

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Erin McLean (Lead)

Todd Bitner (Second Lead)

Hilal Tetik (Scribe)

Student A ["A"]:

Major: Language Studies

Year: 3

Student B ["B"]:

Major: Language Studies

Year: 3

Student C ["C"]:

Major: Language Studies

Year: 3

How much do you know about the reform?

Student A: We don't know much.

Student B: It's our last year so we don't have any idea about the changes

A: I know that there will be four years of university school and only 3 of secondary [school].

Do you think replacing the HKCEE and HKALE with one test is a good idea?

A: [The] HKCEE is a very memorization based test. We have to concentrate on the 7-8 subjects that we have to study for. It is too strict.

B: I want to study about different things like planets etc. We should have humanities and arts [subjects], not just sciences.

Student C: Will it be like the UK or US system?

It is moving towards the US system. Do you like the idea of having another year of university?

C: The existing university system in terms of time, is three years. [Three years] doesn't give us time to enjoy [university life]. There is a lot of work [and] a lot of tests. You cannot enjoy university life.

A: I am a little nervous about the new system. It [seems as though it will be] easier than before to pursue a tertiary degree. Everyone will be a university graduate and [the degree] won't be as valuable. We have worries about our [future] job security because of the new batch of students that graduate.

B: We have to keep competitive and it will be harder [to stay competitive] with the new system.

-- End of Focus Group--

Student Focus Group No. 3

Conducted 17-01-07 at 13:30

Rm. 407 at Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Erin McLean (Lead)

Hilal Tetik (Second Lead)

Todd Bitner (Scribe)

Student A ["A"]:

Major: Social Work

Year: 2 [Form 7 Student]

Student B ["B"]:

Major: Social Work

Year: 1 [Form 7 Student]

Student C ["C"]:

Major: Social Work

Year: 2 [Form 5 Student]

Student D ["D"]:

Major: Social Work

Year: 2 [Form 6 Student]

How much do you know about the upcoming education reform throughout Hong Kong?

Student B: Not much, because I think the reform is not...

Student A: It start[ed] in 2004 and then stopped. [We] have no information about it since, [not] until 2006. They said they would start the reform in 2009.

B: We received information from [the] Internet...

Student D: ...From newspaper[s]...

B: ...[And] teachers in form seven discussed it a bit.

A: We understand that the new form of study is the cause of [the] education reform.

B: [The] system is just like the American style. [It is] the same system as [the] U.S. system.

Have you heard of the IB (International Baccalaureate)? The Hong Kong system of education will be moving closer to it.

A: We have heard of it, but no one knows what it is.

[**B, Student C, and D** agree]

What aspects of the reform are you uncomfortable with? Are there specific things that you don't like about the reform?

A: [With the new system, students] can test and experience to learn, and is interesting; however, Chinese people like to memorize more. [It] is [our] character. [We] respect teachers and like to listen to them, and pick up more knowledge from them rather than go to library. [This method is] suitable to Western [culture], but not Chinese.

C: In secondary school [you] want to memorize more. [I] agree, [you] can do more exploration in [an] university than in secondary.

- D:** I think this system has great benefits. We can choose subjects; in [the current] system we have [the subjects] divided into assigned subjects and chosen subjects. [We] can not choose Chinese history in this system. In [the] new system [we] can choose [a] subject we like, and it can widen our knowledge.
- B:** In my opinion the reform is good because it holds [true with] society; however, I am afraid of the [lack of] resources of the government. They have to pay more and put more resources towards training the teachers. The workload of the teacher will increase and be harder. So, I am also concerned about them; but for students [it] is very good because they have to learn with their own opinion. In [the current] system, memoriz[ation is important] but [you] do not have to give [your] opinion.
- A:** In primary school, what [is taught] is [to] listen and memorize, so [it] is hard to have critical thinking in secondary school. In secondary, [the new system] seems to have [concentrate] too much knowledge for [one]self. [Students] will have to take over responsibility for themselves, so [they] can not catch up to [the] change[s that will be occurring].
- D:** [This educational reform] is good for [the typical] Hong Kong student. [We] only know how to memorize, but this reform could bring about changes for the [typical] Hong Kong student. The past system is not good for [personal] development or critical thinking, and curriculum with more electives is good because students will have [more] choice based on interest and ability. [There are] two exams now, and after [the] reform [this] will be reduced to one exam. [Fewer exams] will reduce pressure on Hong Kong students and parents, and also teachers because [there will be] less pressure in lessons. [The current system] is not good for Hong Kong's education[al] development. Under this [new] curriculum the secondary school student could have [a] better foundation of the language. [The new system] gives more time to study and have more foundation [behind] language aspects. [As] for a four year university, it sounds good because [there will be] more time for [the typical] university student to study practical skills.

Do you feel there is not enough emphasis on practical skills training at CFHC?

- D:** I think there is practical knowledge [taught at this] university, but three years [of it is] not enough. Four years [would be] better.

Do your parents mention any concerns about the current reform? Do you have any younger siblings?

- [**A**, **B**, and **C** comment that they do have younger siblings, either in Hong Kong or abroad]
- C:** They feel that Hong Kong should have [had] this system [in place] earlier. [The] HKCEE and [the current] exams, and [an overall education] system with two exams brings too much pressure to students, parents and [the] school. The one exam [system] is good for society [in] Hong Kong.
- B:** I agree with [the new] exam system, [and] that exam[ing] people is good for screening of people with potential [in order] to [separate who should] get upper education and who should be divided into another function of society; however two examinations is too much. Also, [since] the [current] education is...exam oriented, then it is not knowledge based.

- A:** I don't think [that the new system is effective]. I think that it is too hard to determine [one's] future with one exam. [It will cause] more pressure. If I fail or get [a] poor result on [the] HKCEE, I can choose to work or go to another college, but it seems like in [the] new [educational] reform [you] must study one more year before choosing to move another way.
- D:** I think that the elective courses under the new system, which is career oriented, can [believe] our concerns. The existing system...is academic[ly] oriented [and is] not [useful] for career development. Most young people do not have plans for [their] future, but under [the] new system, [it] is better for making career plans or learn[ing] more about real situations [in the] workplace. It is better than [the] existing system. I do have [Student A's] concerns, so I think the government should do more to listen to the major voice and have more arrangements [for students that want other options], especially for dropout students because now [we] have lots of dropout students after forms three or five. Under [the] new system [the amount of dropouts] will be smaller so [these arrangements] will be of more interest.

What are your plans once you are done with college?

- [A, B, C and D all initially indicate that they do not know what they want to do]
- D:** I think I should go to work and also study [towards a further degree at the same time].
- B:** I have [the] same thing
- C:** Me too. [The best approach to education] is life-long learning. Society requires more education [beyond college].
- A:** [I] will stay in Hong Kong, as school fees of other countries [are] expensive. I will choose [to] work and study part time [towards a] degree at same time. It will reduce my financial [pressure]. My parents want me to go to [an]other country and worry that [they] will discriminate against [me because I am] Chinese.

Are there any qualities that CFHC is lacking in? Are you on, or have you ever tried to start a student committee?

- C:** Yes, there are. Yes,...I am in a group; [it is] not [quite] like [a] club. We have our social action concern groups. I am one of the committee [chairs]. We are a group [that was] formed that will have [an influence] on society, and some news [outlets], and some policies that empower...groups in Hong Kong.
- B:** All students can join; there are not [many] people interested, mainly just social [worker] students.
- A:** There are some sports: football club, tai kwon do.
- D:** I was the external secretary of the [omit] last year. [We] focus on development - on [both] the department and the students' welfare.
- B:** It is too difficult in this school to sell the club because nobody will join. [There are] not enough students for us [to pull from]. The diversity is [too] narrow.
- C:** [In order] to start [a] club, [one must] gather at least three students. [Then] to make a committee [you must] have a financial plan, a year plan, and apply to the student union. If approved, then the club is allowed.
- A:** The most important thing is to concern your lecturers. [They] will give [you] advice and tell [you] about [the] administration procedure [necessary for] forming [a club] in this college.

[A reference to the inclusion of liberal studies in the new secondary school curriculum]

- C:** [On the topic of] liberal studies, I don't know [about] the content or structure. We don't know what liberal studies we have to study. I heard [that] my friends have to study liberal studies in form six and form seven. They find that the advantage of the subject is to train the students [in] critical thinking - wide thinking on one issue so [that they] have to always think and take more angles from both sides. The [teaching techniques] are not like that in Hong Kong. [In] liberal studies [classes] right now, [students] find that when they have a task the answers may have advantages and disadvantages, but if they have a knowledge of the issue they will use political or law terms [adequately to try to prove their own point], but the teacher will say [that they] are not correct.
- B:** It is [a tough issue, because] people will argue that it is too objective and hard to grade if [a] teacher is subjective. It is not fair for all students, so they will argue about these problems.
- A:** [These] subjects train students for critical thinking, but [they] do not teach [students] to have [their] own opinion because that is not what the subject requires. [Most students] do not have their own opinion.

[A reference to the translation troubles present among foreign students]

- D:** Only the Chinese language and English language [will be covered] in the subject [changes present in the new reform]. There are many minority groups like Nepalese, or South Asian and it is hard for them to learn Chinese. There should be alternatives, because it is difficult in Hong Kong for the [citizens of] Nepal.

-- End of Focus Group--

Appendix D: Administration Interview Transcriptions

Administration Interview No. 1

Conducted 22-02-07 at 09:45

Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Erin McLean (Lead)

Todd Bitner (Second Lead)

Hilal Tetik (Scribe)

Administration:

Prof. Reggie Kwan, President of Caritas Francis Hsu College

As a result from our surveys we found out that most teachers were indifferent towards the reform.

When you talk about teachers opinions do you mean teachers here?

There weren't any differences in trends in teachers between secondary and tertiary, they didn't have opinions. In our focus groups at CFHC, however, all teachers were for the reform.

When you say reform they have a vision of something they are familiar with because most have them have studied abroad. The more they know the more they lean to the positive side. There are still a couple of years before [the reform] happens.

I think they are still a bit wary because 3+3+4 is a good idea to them. Focus group teachers were all for it. In surveys there were more people who were indifferent.

In mainland, high school is 6 years and university 4 years. Hong Kong followed the British system. In the U.S you have so many different schools business, medicine, law etc and you call it a university, in the UK, a university could even be smaller than CFHC. That usually means in the US it is one place where you can get any [degree]. Here, a university doesn't [necessarily] have all different schools- they just have research. CFHC doesn't have a good campus. The local church wants us to be a university. The implication of 334 is that the [4th year is for] university. If you are not a university, you are not allowed [to add a year]. So my suggestion is, because the readers are American, you may want to put in the local definition of university [for Hong Kong].

Hong Kong is going to a system that is more universal. In the UK system when you graduate you can graduate with an ordinary degree or honors. If you receive business cards, you will see honors on the cards. In the US, these are based on the GPA. That's not going to help your report but for the 334 thing [include] a short paragraph to explain what 4 is. Colleges won't have the 4th year; we just give first 2 years, the other 2 depending on top up university. We have to have top up.

The teachers were also unsure of what is going to happen to CFHC with the reform- the foundation year and less students, contract teachers, etc. How do you inform your staff about the information you get from the government and about changes that happen within the school?

We are going to have an open forum and discuss how we are going to become a university and how the structuring within Caritas is going to work. We usually have it at the beginning of each semester. We have an academic board. That is also another place we can talk about the changes.

Another thing we wanted to find out was the students' views. Not many students had more than an average knowledge of the reform. What are your thoughts on this?

If you ask me, nobody understands fully what is going on. In my last 9 years in Hong Kong there have been so many reforms that people are reluctant to learn about them anymore. First reform was 500 high schools and 450 of those were English medium. Because of the handover, out of the 500 high schools, 400 became Chinese medium high schools overnight. The new generation kids you talk to have very different spoken English than someone who is a bit older. Second thing is liberal studies is a mess and no one knows what is going on. However, [I think] this [reform] will be successful because we have so many models to follow.

A second thing I should tell you is that in the Hong Kong education system, to tell students whether they know something or not, we have been very exam oriented. This continuous assessment they are thinking of will move a lot of the grading to high school. Grade 13 HKALE is the college entry exam. In the month of May there are suicides because of exam pressure.

In the student survey, we asked the students to rate the points of the reform. Students actually had significantly less support for points like one more year to university and one less to secondary school and replacement of the HKCEE and HKALE with one public exam

That's a surprise to me.

How do you communicate with your students about changes through the reform and its effects on CFHC?

We have open forums with students every semester. They had more concerns about local things like WC conditions. We should at least post links on our website.

You might have to bring the information to them as they might not seek it for themselves because they think it is a boring subject. How was the turnout of the students at open forums?

It was 5 percent for the first one; second one was all first year students and some 2nd and 3rd year students. They had a concern about moving campuses. The turnout was good, around 200 people. But we never talk about things like 334. By the time we don't have degree programs; we will be dead in the water because most universities will suck up all the students. IVE- institute of vocational education has far more students than we do. They have courses that may not lead to a degree. If you ask students if they want a job or want to finish their first degree [after school] most of them will say they want to finish their first degree. Some Chinese parents know that their kids aren't degree material but they still want them to finish. I looked at the graduate stats and last year about 40 percent of them are studying somewhere.

We found out that parents did not voice any concerns to secondary or tertiary school students. Parents with younger children who may be affected tend to care more about the reform, but still barely. Do you think that methods to inform parents like distributing pamphlets and having a Parents' Day to tell them about the reform would be effective?

The kids may not take pamphlets back. I haven't really tried to do a parents' day. We are building a new building; perhaps we could have an opening and attract a lot of parents. But before that [they might not come]. We don't have a parent teacher association so Parents' Day could be a good idea- or maybe we could have a Parents Appreciation Day.

Most students were happy with the way they are being assessed. However an idea was to have more online assessment, activities, grade checking etc. Is this feasible?

We are in the process of building a system like Web CT. It will be like Blackboard in the States.

--End of Interview--

Administration Interview No. 2

Conducted 22-02-07 at 09:00

Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Hilal Tetik (Lead)

Erin McLean (Second Lead)

Todd Bitner (Scribe)

Administration:

Dr. Thomas Chan, Associate Vice President (Academics) of Caritas Francis Hsu College

Our team's work has drawn to a close and we have compiled around 600 surveys and around 320 from CFHC. We are pleased with the turnout and have completed data entry and have determined results. In most cases we chose to separate the results between tertiary and secondary schools and compare them.

This is good. There are actually three kinds [of schools] now, [CFHC] is tertiary, CCVC is senior secondary and Wu Cheng-Chung is a typical full-fledged secondary.

Support is positive 64% from teachers, but there is a surprising trend of indifference.

When they were asked [about the reform in interviews] they seemed to think it wasn't going to affect them.

Maybe [the reform is] still a bit remote in terms of time. They [may] think it isn't imminent.

They may feel a little detached because it [concerns] secondary changes, so we compiled a list of how CFHC may be affected. We got ideas [to lengthen our list, which already included essential structural changes] from focus groups and questionnaires. This may work to make the reform more personal. Unfortunately the government is still making changes to the reform and has moved some of the time lines back. We learned this from a recent newspaper article.

You don't have to take a newspaper article too seriously. Sometimes [Hong Kong media] can focus on one point and emphasize it too much.

We found that most [students] get [their information about the reform] through media. Well, in Hong Kong one has to be careful about interpreting what the media tell us.

We found that some teachers were worried about the possible contraction of the foundation year courses and how this relates to their job security.

It is not as simple as that. Let me brief you on our [current] admissions procedure. There are four high diploma programs and another four associate degree programs. Form five school-leavers, who are students who have completed form five, [and have achieved] five passes in HKCEE will be admitted to year one of [the] higher diploma [program] or the foundation year of [the] associate degree [program]. Students or applicants that have completed form seven with one HKALE pass or two HKASLE passes plus five HKCEE passes will [be placed] at the second year of [the] higher

diploma [program] and the first year of [the] associates program. Our higher diplomas are four-year programs [because we are a registered post-secondary college] under ordinance Cap. 320, which is an ordinance for post-secondary colleges. [These programs] must be four-years long, so we are disadvantaged because other schools are offering three-year programs for the same award. When the reform is enforced, higher diploma programs will be two-year programs. This has an immediate impact and our colleagues may not realize it yet. That will be a very different state of affairs, and we must get ready for a different set of programs before then. We must be able to offer degree programs with two or three exit points [where a student will be able to graduate with a degree, a higher diploma or an associate degree. For the [secondary] schools change will occur sooner, for us a little bit later. It won't be too late though, so in three to four years time we must be ready. Our higher diploma [programs] must be integrated into degree programs [during this time]. Our associates degree programs are OK, but may be shortened. It's true that the government is not clear, but we will keep asking for information. They do not seem too sure about this topic.

One more point about your question: we are trying to be more lenient with applicants within [the entire organization of] Caritas, especially the higher education services. We intend to admit as many students as we legitimately can. Under the present scheme [we hope] to offer more educational opportunities to students, beginning next academic year. This will help prepare [CFHC] for the impact of the academic reform.

Is this movement meant to help prepare for the collapse of the two exit points of forms five and seven into one after form six?

We have to modify the admission procedures. [The exit points] may be one of the reasons [for this attempts to bring more students into the school] but there are others. Another is that we have not been admitting enough students; the student number has been on the decline. There are several reasons [for this decline]. One is that we have been too rigid [in following government regulated standards], adhering to requirements too “literally”. This year we will change this to prepare for the reform, and we will come up with new admission requirements for the same reason. As you said, there won't be any more form five leavers, so we will have to change [our admissions requirements to account for that]. We will have to upgrade our sub-degree programs into degree programs, and also modify our [procedure for admitting] applicants from sister [Caritas] campuses. Some of these applicants may have done a lot [of work towards degrees at other Caritas organizations] and when they [transfer] over to [CFHC in order to] further their studies some of their modules can be exempted. In this way, they can go to year two or even year 3 [of the higher diploma program].

It seems like it will be hard to judge new admission requirements right now since there is not much information about what the new test will look like.

We'll get new information from the government, and as soon as we get it we will modify [our plans for the admissions requirements] accordingly. That will be occurring soon. [All secondary schools] will introduce the new scheme in 2009 for form one students and soon after that, 2010 to 2012 at the latest, we will have to change. [The government has been slow], but we will try to communicate better with each other.

We found that contract teachers were worried about their job security during the upcoming years when the number of students entering CFHC is unsure.

A lot of teachers are not contract staff. [sic] Half of them are not on contract terms. However, the decision to terminate staff's contracts is mainly based on their performance, not whether we admit a certain number of students. Nowadays it is an achievement-based society, so whoever doesn't live up to the mark will [have to face the consequences]. The reform isn't going to affect people's job prospects. It is good that you came up with these findings, so that we know.

Teachers need a forum to bridge between their personal interests and a faceless government that is mandating changes that they must carry out. One suggestion that we have is that when updates of the reform are passed on to CFHC administration they should immediately be shared with the teachers.

Actually, there is a need for better communication between the government and the public. Normally, if [the government] wants to introduce new policies they publish a white paper. People who are interested [in these reforms] can go to the district office and get a copy to read. Other [reform] objectives can be announced through the media. The reform has gone through the white paper stage. It was a consultation paper several years ago, but now it is law.

It seems like the policies morphs constantly?

Generally the policy has been fixed. Students should [have learned] about the basic details of the reform [from their teachers].

So there does seem to be little information being handed down by the government?

The government wouldn't say that they are behaving in such a way. There have been so many reforms in the past, so principals and students may not know if this is the right [reform] at the [current] time, but [the EMB] are doing this for the good of the students. This [reform] is the result of the wisdom of a lot of people.

It would be helpful for teachers to have a chance to express their concerns about the reform. Any chance that the teachers are given to feel like they are an integrated part of the reform will improve their opinion of it.

The president calls an open forum [for teachers] every now and then. There was an open forum in November and the next one is on [March] fifth. I am going to propose to the president that he includes an item about the reform in this [upcoming forum]. In an open forum setting [the teachers] are quite vocal. So they [do] feel free [to talk].

If you feel that it becomes difficult to get points across with all of your teachers present at a meeting and talking at once, it would be useful to have senior members of staff from each department form a committee. This committee could talk to the president, and serve as a voice for their peers. In this way the majority of teachers would be hearing views of the reform from their colleagues. This committee should not include department heads though, as they are often construed as administration. The main aspect of this plan is to produce a solid bridge of information from the government to the teachers.

I think you're right, so we can do several things. The open forum is a good option for teachers to speak up. I think most importantly between the college and EMB there needs to be more communication. We get most of our information from web sites and media which can be distorted. We always need to cross check this [information] for accuracy. I think we need to our communication with the government for accurate information and in time.

Is it easy to get information from the EMB once you ask?

Sometimes it is easy and sometimes [the EMB] is impenetrable. Last summer the government approached [CFHC administration] because I think they wanted to sell the idea that there were a lot of jobs for associate degree graduates. They provided us with a lot of job offers from different organizations and asked students to apply for these jobs. They needed applicants. [This act] was very forthcoming, but sometimes the government is impenetrable and you don't know who to approach. For example: trying to get an interview for [the WPI IQP team]. Nothing happened and emails and calls were promised and there was no imminent need to produce. It differs from department to department.

Student surveys indicated that students are very happy with the reform and more than 75% of CFHC students support it. However, they were less receptive to two aspects of the reform than all of the others. They indicated that they felt were wary of the combination of two exit points and two exams into one of both.

They feel insecure about it because it is something unknown. If teachers can be convinced, then they can convince the students. The government should warm themselves up so that the message gets through. The essential thing for students is to raise their awareness [of specifics of the reform]. The information is on the [EMB] website and we hope they will search [for it]. Unfortunately, students search [lots of] web sites, but not the EMB website.

Another conclusion that we have developed is that parents are very much detached from student life at CFHC. Students have replied that they are only concerned about grades.

Well it's not quite just grades, times are changing. Most parents believe that they will not be able to change the world. They are more or less passive. However, within their power and the scope of what they are able to do they are not detached or unconcerned. Quite a lot of parents are vocal, but they will not go to the level of policy making. They do not see it as part of their duty, because their concern is for the kids. Like most Chinese people, they will take [edicts] from the [top levels of government] quite easily. Occasionally they feel it is necessary to speak out.

If you held a "parents day", that would give parents a chance to see the school and meet teachers in order to be integrated into their child's education.

Yes, that is a good idea. Like an "open day". There are also singing contests. There was one a few months ago right before your arrival.

We also found that teachers at CFHC were happy with their assessment methods and felt that they did not need to be changed. Students agreed with that, and were happy with their teachers' methods.

I think what the teachers still need [to consider when] in evaluating assessment procedures, is to look at assessment not so much in terms of weighting, but about the rationale behind it. We are not just doing it for the sake of satisfying some accreditation agency. [The question that they must ask is] why are we doing it? They need to know why; otherwise it is meaningless.

--End of Interview--

Administration Interview No. 3

Conducted 22-02-07 at 11:00

Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) Oxford Rd. Campus

Attendance:

Todd Bitner (Lead)

Hilal Tetik (Second Lead)

Erin McLean (Scribe)

Administration:

Ms. Cecilia Yu, Registrar of Caritas Francis Hsu College

One of the points we are trying to discover is whether or not teachers are in favor of the reform, have you seen any evidence either way?

Teachers can't object to [the] reform. The EMB administers all reform[s] and they have already determined it [will occur] so there's no room for going back or returning to the past state.

Are you personally in favor of the reform?

I have accepted it is going to happen. The EMB has already conducted a consultation paper. If a new policy [is introduced] they need to prepare documents and give it to public and then to consultation. All law making is complete [after the consultation step]. The whole society is now heading towards that direction at all levels.

Have you had any contact with teachers about the reform?

Not that I know of. Everyone is very busy and my contact with teachers is mainly in areas that relate to admissions and student records and administering exams. If [you are asking] "do I have anything to do with the reform", [you will] not get much input from me. Talk to Thomas Chan, he is all about internal affairs and discussion on how to react to reform. He would chair those kinds of meetings. There is a committee in our college [called the] Academic Regulations Committee, which is under the academic board, which is our most supreme committee. This committee should look at the requirements of the new student and how to revise [CFHC's] admission [requirements]. There will be a different target of students. It was [forms] five and seven, now the majority will be from form six. We have to, as a whole, look at the existing admissions requirements and revise [them] accordingly. [Academics Regulations Committee] has a lot to discuss and has not talked about [the reform yet], but I must remind them [because] we must talk about this at some point. Many schools have already discussed this and have an admissions plan. Both Thomas and I are on this committee.

Many teachers have mentioned that they don't know what is going to change, how do you feel admissions will change?

I think it means we will have to look at [admissions] according to new requirements. As I just mentioned, we are admitting form five and seven [students], but now there will not be exams to make a reference [point]. We have been using two exams to assess applicants' eligibility but with 3+3+4 [system], the exams will disappear and they

will combine into one. We will have to make [a new] reference so that the new exam results can be used.

How much information do you have about the new public exam?

The details are not very good. Hong Kong Education and Assessment Authority administer all public exams. They are the body that is now helping the government to figure out the exam details. They still must put forward more suggestions or directive [for schools] to follow. During 3+3+4, there will be substantial changes in curriculum. There was not so much emphasis on liberal studies, but now it plays a more important part in assessing students. Now, [schools must] rely more on continuous assessment. All secondary schools and the HKCAA are working very hard to define subjects and teacher training [requirements] before they work out the syllabus for students' exam. The information [the government] gives is not complete [enough] for us to get ourselves prepared. This is a very large change. It might be a year or so before [we get] more details. At the moment, a teachers need to follow trends closely to updated themselves and get training so they know what to teach and how to deliver [the new] curriculum. For us, who are at tertiary level, we look at admissions [but] we also need to look at what kind of programs will fit the new needs of society. Our program may be more traditional. Ask Thomas to discuss with his colleagues if we need to change our curriculum and emphasis. Should we stick to theoretical or exam [based education]?

Other administrators have said they must attract more students when the reform comes, are you involved in this at all?

Admissions are part of the registry duties. During summer time our office is busy. We have to put out promotions for the college and admissions [as well as] all [other] parts of admissions. I am definitely involved in the process. The agenda is so long at committees; we must have an extra meeting to look at [admissions] requirements. We have very keen competition in sub-degree sectors during these years. This college, as a whole, needs to think of tactics on how to cope with competition. Which programs must we sell to students and what jobs [can we advertise] after can we sell. Unfortunately, in the coming year, we don't have new programs so we will consolidate our strengths to attract more students to our existing programs. Time is so rushed so it is not a very popular [subject]. Various methods must be used to promote the college to the Hong Kong community and use graduated students to attract new students. I will review our procedures to see if there is anything I can do to make the admissions program [friendlier].

Many students said they like the new reform, but they don't know much about it. How can we get out information to students?

It will affect students' younger sisters or brothers. They may be aware but [they are not] very concerned. [There is no] eminent effect on students. I think information gathering must come from the HKCAA and EMB, we can gather from the websites of those authorities. To make [students] more concerned or to enable them to be more aware, I think we can ask the student body to arrange a student union or society in their departments to get more an interesting forum and invite government officials. At

the district level [government officials] can join that kind of scheme because there have been education activities to make people more aware of 3+3+4. Student unions can help and participate in those events to help fellow students understand. Officials may be too busy to visit CHFC but [students] can organize [official] visits with other schools' organizations. [The students] can consolidate their efforts and then they will be strong enough to invite authority. They can organize question and answer and information gathering sessions to arouse student interest. There is a lot to do, but the initiative must come from students. The college can help in contacting officials or in telling students who to contact. Now a day, information is readily available but someone must put it in order so students [will be] interested. They will not be affected in the sense if they will enter community as a teacher they will follow [the reform] closely, but others do not think they will be affected and they will not be affected.

--End of Interview--

Appendix E: Sample Copy of the Teacher Questionnaire

Teacher Questionnaire

Please respond to the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. How many years have you been teaching? _____
2. What program are you teaching currently? _____
3. What sex are you? Male Female
4. How aware are you about the reform?

Just Heard of It	Completely Understand
1 2 3 4 5	

5. Listed below are some of the main aspects of the educational system that are going to change. Please indicate on a scale from 1-5 (1= Strongly Disagree and 5= Strongly Agree) if you agree with these changes?

Strongly	Neutral	Strongly
Disagree	Agree	

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. One more year to university and one less to secondary school b. Increase in teacher training and education requirements c. Replacement of the HKCEE and HKALE with one public exam d. Increased choices of which classes to take e. Addition of extracurricular activities for students (eg. chess club) f. Education less based on memorizing facts | 1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 |
|--|---|
6. Overall, are you in favor of the reform? es o pinion
 7. Please explain briefly how you assess your student's knowledge?
 8. Will you change your assessment methods when the reform is in place? es o
 9. Do you believe the government has given schools enough time to implement this reform? es o
 10. Is the government keeping you as informed as you would like to be?
Yes o pinion
 11. Do you think you will need to go through additional training? es o
 12. Do you feel that an additional year of university and one less of secondary school will improve education in Hong Kong? es o pinion
 13. Do you think it will affect your job security? es o
 14. Do you believe that the curriculum should have more course options?
Yes o pinion
 15. Have parents expressed any worries or concerns about the new system to you?
Yes o
 - If yes, which aspects are they most concerned about?

Please include any other comments that you would like us to consider:
Thank you very much for taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix F: Simplified Results of the Teacher Questionnaire

Question 4:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 13 Responses

Number of "1" Responses: 0
Percentage of "1" Responses: 0.0%
Number of "2" Responses: 2
Percentage of "2" Responses: 15.4%
Number of "3" Responses: 3
Percentage of "3" Responses: 23.1%
Number of "4" Responses: 8
Percentage of "4" Responses: 61.5%
Number of "5" Responses: 0
Percentage of "5" Responses: 0.0%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses

Number of "1" Responses: 0
Percentage of "1" Responses: 0.0%
Number of "2" Responses: 4
Percentage of "2" Responses: 20.0%
Number of "3" Responses: 11
Percentage of "3" Responses: 55.0%
Number of "4" Responses: 5
Percentage of "4" Responses: 25.0%
Number of "5" Responses: 0
Percentage of "5" Responses: 0.0%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses

Number of "1" Responses: 0
Percentage of "1" Responses: 0.0%
Number of "2" Responses: 0
Percentage of "2" Responses: 0.0%
Number of "3" Responses: 2
Percentage of "3" Responses: 16.7%
Number of "4" Responses: 9
Percentage of "4" Responses: 75.0%
Number of "5" Responses: 1
Percentage of "5" Responses: 8.3%

Question 5:

Caritas Francis Hsu College:

Question 7a: 14 Responses

Mean: 3.86

Mode: 4

Question 7b: 14 Responses

Mean: 3.46

Mode: 3

Question 7c: 14 Responses

Mean: 3.71

Mode: 4

Question 7d: 14 Responses

Mean: 3.38

Mode: 4

Question 7e: 14 Responses

Mean: 3.21

Mode: 4

Caritas Charles-Vath College:

Question 7a: 20 Responses

Mean: 3.80

Mode: 5

Question 7b: 20 Responses

Mean: 3.60

Mode: 5

Question 7c: 20 Responses

Mean: 3.40

Mode: 5

Question 7d: 20 Responses

Mean: 4.05

Mode: 4

Question 7e: 20 Responses

Mean: 3.65

Mode: 3

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College:

Question 7a: 12 Responses

Mean: 4.42

Mode: 5

Question 7b: 12 Responses

Mean: 4.33

Mode: 4

Question 7c: 12 Responses

Mean: 4.42

Mode: 5

Question 7d: 12 Responses

Mean: 4.08

Mode: 4

Question 7e: 12 Responses

Mean: 3.92

Mode: 4

Question 6:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 14 Responses

Number of "Yes" Responses: 9

Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 64.3%

Number of "No" Responses: 1

Percentage of "No" Responses: 7.1%

Number of "No Opinion" Response: 4
 Percentage of "No Opinion" Responses: 28.6%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 9
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 45.0%
 Number of "No" Responses: 4
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 20.0%
 Number of "No Opinion" Response: 7
 Percentage of "No Opinion" Responses: 35.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 11
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 91.7%
 Number of "No" Responses: 1
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 8.3%
 Number of "No Opinion" Response: 0
 Percentage of "No Opinion" Responses: 0.0%

Question 8:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 13 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 2
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 15.4%
 Number of "No" Responses: 11
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 84.6%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 17
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 85.0%
 Number of "No" Responses: 3
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 15.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 12
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 100.0%
 Number of "No" Responses: 0
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 0.0%

Question 9:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 13 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 7
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 53.9%
 Number of "No" Responses: 6
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 46.1%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
 Number of "Yes" Responses: 5
 Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 25.0%
 Number of "No" Responses: 15
 Percentage of "No" Responses: 75.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 11 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 5
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 45.5%
Number of “No” Responses: 6
Percentage of “No” Responses: 55.5%

Question 10:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 13 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 2
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 15.4%
Number of “No” Responses: 4
Percentage of “No” Responses: 30.8%
Number of “No Opinion” Response: 7
Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 53.8%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 4
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 20.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 3
Percentage of “No” Responses: 15.0%
Number of “No Opinion” Response: 13
Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 65.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 7
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 58.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 0
Percentage of “No” Responses: 0.0%
Number of “No Opinion” Response: 5
Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 41.7%

Question 11:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 13 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 3
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 23.1%
Number of “No” Responses: 10
Percentage of “No” Responses: 76.9%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 18
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 90.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 2
Percentage of “No” Responses: 10.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 12
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 100.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 0
Percentage of “No” Responses: 0.0%

Question 12:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 13 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 9

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 69.2%

Number of “No” Responses: 1

Percentage of “No” Responses: 7.7%

Number of “No Opinion” Response: 3

Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 23.1%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 11

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 55.0%

Number of “No” Responses: 4

Percentage of “No” Responses: 20.0%

Number of “No Opinion” Response: 5

Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 25.0%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 10

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 83.4%

Number of “No” Responses: 1

Percentage of “No” Responses: 8.3%

Number of “No Opinion” Response: 1

Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 8.3%

Question 13:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 12 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 3

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 25.0%

Number of “No” Responses: 9

Percentage of “No” Responses: 75.0%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 11

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 55.0%

Number of “No” Responses: 9

Percentage of “No” Responses: 45.0%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 8

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 66.7%

Number of “No” Responses: 4

Percentage of “No” Responses: 33.3%

Question 14:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 14 Responses

Number of “Yes” Responses: 11

Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 78.6%

Number of “No” Responses: 0

Percentage of “No” Responses: 0.0%

Number of “No Opinion” Response: 3
Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 21.4%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 15
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 75.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 2
Percentage of “No” Responses: 10.0%
Number of “No Opinion” Response: 3
Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 15.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 9
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 75.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 1
Percentage of “No” Responses: 8.3%
Number of “No Opinion” Response: 2
Percentage of “No Opinion” Responses: 16.7%

Question 15:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 14 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 1
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 7.1%
Number of “No” Responses: 13
Percentage of “No” Responses: 92.9%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 20 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 3
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 15.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 17
Percentage of “No” Responses: 85.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 12 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 2
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 16.7%
Number of “No” Responses: 10
Percentage of “No” Responses: 83.3%

Appendix G: Written Responses to the Teacher Questionnaire

Question 7:

Caritas Francis Hsu College:

- “Various methods, completing assignments and projects, performing tasks, doing practical sessions, etc.”
- “Assignments, presentations, projects, and exams.”
- “By providing test, assignments and projects to students in assessing their learning progress. More interactive with students during lectures to assess their learning.”
- “Give intensive practice after lectures.”
- “The assessment items include written exam, lab exam, written tests, lab tests, assignments, class participation.”
- “By assessments, examinations, projects/group work.”
- “Quiz, test, presentation”
- “Tutorial ex, Assignment, test, exam, (some parts are theoretical, some parts are application)”
- “By class performance, assessments and exam”

Caritas Charles-Vath College:

- “Using continuous assessment, such as classwork, homework, quizzes”
- “From assignments, learning performance, test and examination”
- “I assess their knowledge through tests, exams, discussion, sharing, and answering questions”
- “Based on exam/project/daily performance”
- “Portfolio assessments, based on different skills and knowledge on art”
- “Examination”
- “Test, exam, class performance, homework”
- “By their homework, projects, exams, daily conversation”
- “Homework/project”
- “On their desire/willingness to participate and respond in class”

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College:

- “Test + exam”

“Continuous assessment: homework, quiz, project, tests, exams.”

“Test/exam/general assessment”

Question 15:

Caritas Francis Hsu College:

“Many students will sit for one public exam so the screening effect to get into university will be never severe.”

Caritas Charles-Vath College:

“Only one public exam is indeed not enough for student to access university”

“Student’s allocation/school banding”

“What method of study”

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College:

No Responses

Comments:

Caritas Francis Hsu College:

No Responses

Caritas Charles-Vath College:

“Teachers need more time to focus on student learning”

“The government and board of management should provide more resources for the reform of educational system”

“Number of students in one class/resources to be put in the reforms”

“More training should be given to the teacher”

“Teacher workload in preparing for the new curriculums/class size, number of students in class/supporting materials and activities (educational)/funding”

“To exercise flexibility and understanding of: 1) The teachers’ workload/time limitations currently and with the new reform, and 2) To show flexibility school-to-school in terms of student banding and level of ability.”

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College:

No Responses

Appendix I: Simplified Results of the Student Questionnaire

Question 4:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 322 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 30
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 9.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 292
Percentage of “No” Responses: 90.7%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 209 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 63
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 30.1%
Number of “No” Responses: 146
Percentage of “No” Responses: 69.9%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 68 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 2
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 2.9%
Number of “No” Responses: 68
Percentage of “No” Responses: 97.1%

Question 5a:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 319 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 283
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 88.7%
Number of “No” Responses: 36
Percentage of “No” Responses: 11.3%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 203 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 114
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 56.2%
Number of “No” Responses: 89
Percentage of “No” Responses: 43.8%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 70 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 57
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 81.4%
Number of “No” Responses: 13
Percentage of “No” Responses: 18.6%

Question 5b:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 299 Responses
Number of “1” Responses: 35
Percentage of “1” Responses: 11.7%
Number of “2” Responses: 82
Percentage of “2” Responses: 27.4%
Number of “3” Responses: 133
Percentage of “3” Responses: 44.5%
Number of “4” Responses: 45
Percentage of “4” Responses: 15.1%
Number of “5” Responses: 4

Percentage of "5" Responses: 1.3%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 167 Responses
 Number of "1" Responses: 36
 Percentage of "1" Responses: 21.6%
 Number of "2" Responses: 45
 Percentage of "2" Responses: 26.9%
 Number of "3" Responses: 63
 Percentage of "3" Responses: 37.7%
 Number of "4" Responses: 18
 Percentage of "4" Responses: 10.8%
 Number of "5" Responses: 5
 Percentage of "5" Responses: 3.0%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 59 Responses
 Number of "1" Responses: 12
 Percentage of "1" Responses: 20.3%
 Number of "2" Responses: 20
 Percentage of "2" Responses: 33.9%
 Number of "3" Responses: 17
 Percentage of "3" Responses: 28.8%
 Number of "4" Responses: 9
 Percentage of "4" Responses: 15.3%
 Number of "5" Responses: 1
 Percentage of "5" Responses: 1.7%

Question 6:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 326 Responses [Multiple Allowed]
 Number of "Government" Responses: 133
 Percentage of "Government" Responses: 40.8%
 Number of "School" Responses: 54
 Percentage of "School" Responses: 16.6%
 Number of "Parents" Responses: 19
 Percentage of "Parents" Responses: 5.8%
 Number of "Advertisements" Responses: 133
 Percentage of "Advertisements" Responses: 40.8%
 Number of "Students or Peers" Responses: 43
 Percentage of "Students or Peers" Responses: 13.2%
 Number of "Other" Responses: 67
 Percentage of "Other" Responses: 20.6%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 198 Responses [Multiple Allowed]
 Number of "Government" Responses: 56
 Percentage of "Government" Responses: 28.3%
 Number of "School" Responses: 87
 Percentage of "School" Responses: 43.9%
 Number of "Parents" Responses: 27
 Percentage of "Parents" Responses: 13.6%
 Number of "Advertisements" Responses: 76

Percentage of "Advertisements" Responses: 38.4%
 Number of "Students or Peers" Responses: 27
 Percentage of "Students or Peers" Responses: 13.6%
 Number of "Other" Responses: 24
 Percentage of "Other" Responses: 12.1%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 70 Responses
 Number of "Government" Responses: 21
 Percentage of "Government" Responses: 30.0%
 Number of "School" Responses: 41
 Percentage of "School" Responses: 58.6%
 Number of "Parents" Responses: 7
 Percentage of "Parents" Responses: 10.0%
 Number of "Advertisements" Responses: 36
 Percentage of "Advertisements" Responses: 51.4%
 Number of "Students or Peers" Responses: 12
 Percentage of "Students or Peers" Responses: 17.1%
 Number of "Other" Responses: 13
 Percentage of "Other" Responses: 18.6%

Question 7:

Caritas Francis Hsu College:

Question 7a: 324 Responses

Mean: 3.19

Mode: 3

Question 7b: 324 Responses

Mean: 3.92

Mode: 4

Question 7c: 324 Responses

Mean: 3.20

Mode: 3

Question 7d: 325 Responses

Mean: 3.94

Mode: 4

Question 7e: 325 Responses

Mean: 3.86

Mode: 5

Caritas Charles-Vath College:

Question 7a: 204 Responses

Mean: 2.85

Mode: 3

Question 7b: 204 Responses

Mean: 3.31

Mode: 3

Question 7c: 202 Responses

Mean: 3.15

Mode: 3

Question 7d: 201 Responses

Mean: 3.43

Mode: 3

Question 7e: 203 Responses

Mean: 3.49

Mode: 3

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College:

Question 7a: 69 Responses

Mean: 3.09

Mode: 3

Question 7b: 70 Responses

Mean: 3.80

Mode: 5

Question 7c: 69 Responses

Mean: 3.12

Mode: 3

Question 7d: 70 Responses

Mean: 4.14

Mode: 5

Question 7e: 69 Responses

Mean: 3.67

Mode: 5

Question 8:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 314 Responses

Number of "Yes" Responses: 236

Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 75.2%

Number of "No" Responses: 78

Percentage of "No" Responses: 24.8%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 210 Responses

Number of "Yes" Responses: 127

Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 63.5%

Number of "No" Responses: 73

Percentage of "No" Responses: 36.5%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 70 Responses

Number of "Yes" Responses: 55

Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 78.6%

Number of "No" Responses: 15

Percentage of "No" Responses: 21.4%

Question 9:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 319 Responses

Number of "Yes" Responses: 153

Percentage of "Yes" Responses: 48.0%

Number of "No" Responses: 166

Percentage of "No" Responses: 52.0%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 199 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 79
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 39.7%
Number of “No” Responses: 120
Percentage of “No” Responses: 60.3%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 67 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 29
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 43.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 38
Percentage of “No” Responses: 56.7%

Question 10:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 320 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 110
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 34.4%
Number of “No” Responses: 210
Percentage of “No” Responses: 65.6%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 204 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 68
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 33.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 136
Percentage of “No” Responses: 66.7%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 70 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 7
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 10.0%
Number of “No” Responses: 63
Percentage of “No” Responses: 90.0%

Question 11:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 320 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 293
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 91.6%
Number of “No” Responses: 27
Percentage of “No” Responses: 8.4%
Caritas Charles-Vath College: 205 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 151
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 73.7%
Number of “No” Responses: 54
Percentage of “No” Responses: 26.3%
Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 69 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 63
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 91.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 6
Percentage of “No” Responses: 8.7%

Question 12:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 325 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 170
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 52.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 155
Percentage of “No” Responses: 47.7%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 206 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 111
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 53.9%
Number of “No” Responses: 95
Percentage of “No” Responses: 46.1%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 70 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 31
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 44.3%
Number of “No” Responses: 39
Percentage of “No” Responses: 55.7%

Question 13:

Caritas Francis Hsu College: 320 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 266
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 83.1%
Number of “No” Responses: 54
Percentage of “No” Responses: 16.9%

Caritas Charles-Vath College: 205 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 153
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 74.6%
Number of “No” Responses: 52
Percentage of “No” Responses: 25.4%

Caritas Wu Cheng-Chung College: 70 Responses
Number of “Yes” Responses: 61
Percentage of “Yes” Responses: 87.1%
Number of “No” Responses: 9
Percentage of “No” Responses: 12.9%