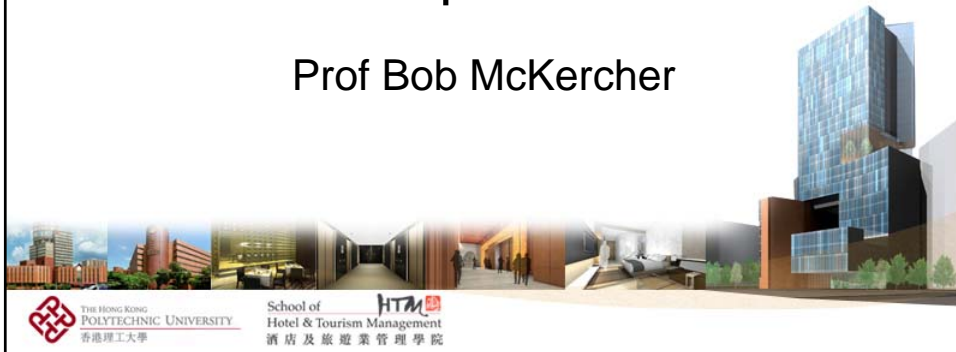


# OBA and Staff Development in SHTM

Prof Bob McKercher



## The Challenge

How to embed OBA into SHTM's teaching  
and learning culture?



# A 3 year process

## Stage 1 – Where are we (2007/08)

- Audit of SHTM's programmes to determine evidence of OBA and alignment
- Staff interviews to develop understanding of and concerns about OBA
- Establish professional development activities

## Stage 2 – Professional Development (2008/09)

- Run a series of professional development workshops for all staff

## Stage 3 – Evaluation (2009/10)



# Stage 1 – Where are we

Evaluation of Schemes of Work

Staff understanding of OBA

Student views on OBA



# Subject Alignment

- Overall inconsistency in content, style and quality of material presented
  - Many incomplete
- Macro level content strong
  - Most had outcomes stated
- Micro level content poor
  - Issues with assessment in 52 of 56 subjects
    - Insufficient assessment detail in almost 60% of the Schemes of Work
    - no details in more than one quarter of the SoW
  - Issues with rubrics:
    - Rubrics in ½ of SoW problematic
      - too complex and operationally too time consuming to be workable
      - individual assessment in group projects



# Subject Alignment

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| <b>Subjects that are not aligned in whole or in part</b>              | 47 of 56 subjects |
| Unsatisfactory, poor or no alignment demonstrated                     |                   |
| Teaching and Learning Methods not specified or unclear                | 34                |
| Subject outcomes in Scheme of Work (SoW) differ from approved syllabi | 22                |
| Inconsistencies in Content  |                   |
| Lecture topics identified in SoW do not match approved syllabus       | 11                |
| Teaching learning methods do not align with outcomes                  | 23                |
| Assessment methods do not align with learning outcomes                |                   |
| Insufficient detail of individual assessment items provided           | 13                |
| Assessment methods / rubrics do not align with level of subject       |                   |
| Lack of clarity on individual assessment in group work                | 7                 |
| Assessment methods and rubrics are incomplete or missing              | 32                |
| Assessment rubrics not aligned with learning outcomes                 |                   |



# Staff concerns

- In depth interviews with all full-time teaching staff, visiting lecturers and sessional lecturers.
  - 51 interviews conducted

## Topics

- approach to teaching and teaching philosophy,
- expectations of students
- teaching and learning techniques used.
- OBA issues



# OBA Issues

1. Poor understanding (still)
  - “How can you implement this thing without a clear definition?”
2. Question its usefulness / need
  - Paper exercise / “a waste if time”
3. Suitability
  - “may work in any other subjects but mine”
4. Can outcomes be measured?
  - “tourism subjects are part of social sciences and they cannot be measured and quantified easily.”
5. Many questions about assessment and rubrics
  - “I disagree with no numbers: as long as you are measuring their (students) abilities, their application of this subject... there is no problem for using numbers”
  - “PolyU should provide the cut off point and clear guideline of grading because: -Difficult to distinguish between A and A+, B and B+ or C and C+”



## 6. Concerns about subjectivity and lax standards

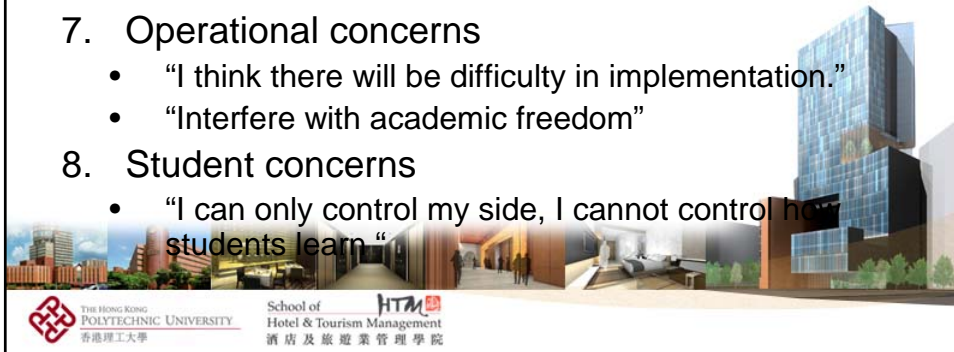
- “Actual implementation varies from person to person”
- “my level of excellence is different from other teachers”

## 7. Operational concerns

- “I think there will be difficulty in implementation.”
- “Interfere with academic freedom”

## 8. Student concerns

- “I can only control my side, I cannot control how students learn”



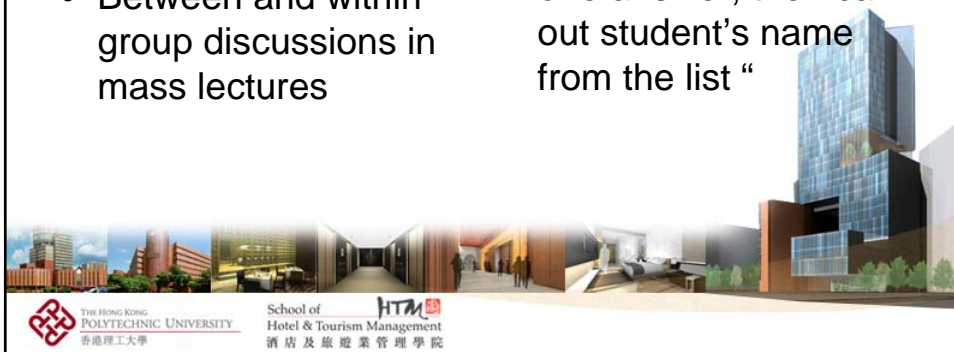
# Interactive Lectures

## Type A

- True interactivity
- Class exercises
- Between and within group discussions in mass lectures

## Type B

- Q&A
- “Ask questions, If no one answer, then call out student’s name from the list “



# Professional Development Issues Stage 1

- Ideology / Teaching Philosophy
  - Teaching and Learning Techniques
  - The Interactive Classroom
  - General OBA Issues -Understanding OBA
  - Syllabus and Scheme of Work Development
  - Alignment
  - Assessment and Rubrics
  - Student Issues
  - Professional Development
- Plus redesign Scheme of Work



# Stage 2 – Professional Development

- OBA funding sought to develop and operate a series of professional development workshops
- Hire an educational consultant and embed her in SHTM to work with staff individually and collectively



## Autumn 2008

- Individual consultations with staff
- 'Personality Dimensions' test to determine teaching styles
- Introductory sessions about OBA and adapting it to staff teaching styles
- Establish staff wiki to post OBA materials



## Spring 2009

- 12 workshops planned (each to be offered twice):
- Outcomes-Based Teaching and Learning Approaches (School winter retreat)
  - Achieving Learning Outcomes Through Assessment
  - Avoiding Assessment Pitfalls – Grading Issues in OBA
  - Avoiding Assessment Pitfalls – Setting Assessment Tasks for OBA
  - Avoiding Assessment Pitfalls – Group Projects
  - Engaging Students in Outcomes-Based Learning Activities
  - Using Feedback to Improve Student Performance
  - Dealing with Large Classes
  - Enhancing Student Learning in Small Groups
  - Mapping Generic Skills in Your Curricula
  - Helping Students to Achieve Desired Learning Outcomes in W/E
  - Experience Sharing Workshops



## 2009/10 planned activities

Second OBA audit and further professional development

- to verify alignment
- To embed OBA as staff teaching philosophy
- To address further staff concerns



## Conclusions

- A School wide initiative
- Supported strongly by Director

