

# 香港理工大學教職員協會

## Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association

### Annual Report 2008

The year under review has truly been the best of times, and the worst of times. We began the year with high hopes that the new appraisal exercise would represent a significant improvement over the controversial ADPR, that the new Grievance and Appeals Procedures would allow staff to resolve disputes in a fair, efficient and effective manner. So far, we have not had many complaints. We also had a high hope that the differential in conditions of service between staff on old terms and staff on the 2004 HRM model would finally be reduced. It turned out that this particular hope would not be realized, at least not in the near future, partly because of the financial tsunami which adversely affects the world economy.

Here is a summary of events of the year.

1. **Council representation:** Having representation in Council is imperative for PUSA as it is an important forum for getting staff voices heard where it counts. With support from Exco, PUSA Chairman Gillian Humphreys sought re-election to Council in mid-November. On 24 November, it was formally announced that she had been re-elected to Council unopposed.
2. **Research at PolyU — the way forward** One of PUSA's tasks this year has been to continue to raise questions concerning the Position Paper: *Research at PolyU\_the way forward*. We have met with Profs Ko and Teng, and voiced our concerns. Our objections do not appear to have made much impact, however.
3. **Strategic Planning** The PUSA Chair was invited to take part in the most recent Strategic Planning exercise and found the process generally useful. In the end, however, she did not feel she could support the plan as drafted because it placed too much emphasis on the Position Paper.
4. **2008 HRM Model** In order to give PolyU a competitive edge over other local tertiary institutions in the recruitment of high calibre staff in the next few years, a proposal was put forward in the beginning of the summer to improve conditions of service for staff under the 2004 HRM model. An extensive consultation subsequently took place, during which PUSA actively solicited staff opinions and relayed them to Management. Unfortunately, the whole proposal is now on hold indefinitely because of the recent financial crisis. PUSA found this highly undesirable because development of higher education is a long term project which should not be deterred by the ups and downs of the economy.
5. **Salary Adjustments** In September 2008, Council approved an upward adjustment of salaries for eligible staff in a rate in line with Civil Servants' salary revision. However, staff were annoyed by the controversial idea of giving no salary adjustment for any staff under 2004 HRM model whose performance was considered less than satisfactory by their HoDs. Staff elected members on Council also expressed their strong reservations over the planned rewards for 'excellent' staff in the September Council meeting, especially without strict mechanisms for ensuring fairness, but were outnumbered in the voting.

PUSA is of the opinion that money required to adjust staff salaries was given to PolyU by the Government through a supplementary grant. COLA, which is linked to inflation rates, should never be withheld from staff even if their performances are considered less than satisfactory.

6. **The appointment of the new President** Professor Tim Tong was appointed President of PolyU in April. Before his appointment was announced, he made a presentation to a group of invited staff members, and PUSA Chairman Gillian Humphreys and PUSA Vice-chairman Joseph Lee, partly in their

capacity as elected staff members on Council, were invited to take comments from this audience to pass on to Council. Those present (mainly senior staff) requested them to convey their views both to Council and to the new President as a matter of urgency. They were given that chance last week, when PUSA officers were invited for a one hour informal talk with the President designate.

7. **Management/PUSA Consultative meetings** PUSA officers have also conducted regular consultative meetings with Senior Management throughout the year, both with the aim of resolving specific problems faced by staff, and with a view to simply keeping channels of communication open. They have also had the opportunity to meet informally with the Council Chairman, Mr. Victor Lo, to raise issues of importance to the University.
8. **Other events** PUSA has continued to be involved in the Walk for Millions held in January this year. Some \$150,000 was raised in the event for the Community. In May, PUSA supported the President's pledge to raise fund for the Sichuan earthquake victims by donating \$10,000 to the fund-raising campaign. PUSA Chairman has been involved in the Organization of the farewell dinner for the retirement of President Professor C.K. Poon.

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