

## PUSA Annual Report 2015

Starting from September 2014, PUSA kicked off the issuing of PUSA ALERT, an e-newsletter to all staff with a view to keeping all colleagues updated with what was happening on campus that, of course, from a Union perspective. Since the beginning of 2015, four issues of PUSA ALERT had been published (in April, June, September and November). PUSA is truly grateful for the numerous feedbacks it has so far received. The enthusiasm of our readers in these issues was really out of our expectation. Three of our main follow-ups in the coming year are on (1) Major Review/Contract Renewal Concerns, (2) the Career Progression and Promotion for Non-academic Staff, and (3) Evaluation of Teaching Performance. Discussions with Senior Management surrounding these issues are on-going. As a matter of fact, the main platform of communication between PUSA and Senior Management, The Staff Consultative Group Meeting chaired by VPRD, has been useful on the whole. At least there is a frank sharing on views from both sides, and some of the viewpoints of PUSA have been listened. As the above three concerns are important staffing policies that the Senior Management has stressed on their open-mindedness on improving the policies over time, PUSA will keep a close watch to the implementation of these policies. Staff members are urged to keep track with progress of all aspects from the **PUSA ALERT**.

In April, PUSA launched the second campus-wide survey on work situation on campus, following the first survey on 'work-life situation' launched after the tragedy that occurred in the University in December 2013. In this exercise, we received 486 responses from 64 departments/units. The open forum of the survey finding (one conducted in Cantonese and the other one in English) was held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015, and a final report will be uploaded to PUSA website before the end of this year.

In May 2015, PUSA wrote to Dr Wong Pik Wan, a member of the LegCo Education Panel, requesting for arranging a Public Hearing on the trends and problems of the development of Higher Education in Hong Kong resulting from the policies adopted by the UGC in recent years, in particular to the adverse effect of the top-slicing exercise and the new funding model. This request was echoed by Staff bodies of a few other institutions (HKU, CityU). The request was eventually denied by the Panel Chair, but an alliance with other staff associations in fighting for the interest of higher education has been gaining momentum.

It is difficult to deny that, since the second half of 2015, the topic of "institutional autonomy and academic freedom" becomes the talk of the town. On 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015, PUSA made a public statement on the Democracy Wall to show her grave concern on the 'silent march' organized by the staff and students of HKU within their campus. PUSA strongly believes that

to maintain the independence and sustainable development of higher education, these two core values must be kept at all cost. Recently, representatives from six out of eight UGC-funded tertiary institutions that have staff associations, together with all student unions of the eight UGC-funded tertiary institutions, have gathered together to consider ways and means to safeguard the independence of the tertiary institutions. PUSA will do whatever she may to ensure that the staff of the university may work in an environment without fear of intrusion.

As a continued effort to enhance communication with staff, PUSA has formally established an office hour for interested parties to drop in from 1300-1700 on every working Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Furthermore, PUSA had issued an open letter to all new colleagues and non-members in September, giving them a brief introduction to PUSA. As a gesture of our appreciation for their support over the years, PUSA has prepared a souvenir for all her existing members and the distribution of the souvenir has started through various events PUSA has launched. For those who have not collected it you are welcome to contact us. In addition, for the purposes of recruiting more members and for providing more membership benefits, PUSA has re-launched mega sales starting from the 2015 academic year after a successful trial run in June. PUSA will make every effort to ensure that the products/services provided will be of good value for the money.

As in previous years, PUSA has continued to work closely with PolyU Students Union for the common interests and benefits of both parties. PUSA representatives were invited to attend in the inauguration ceremony of this year's SU Office Bearers.

Dr. Justin Law, PUSA Vice-chairman and an elected member on Council, left the University for a new page of his career in the Summer of 2015. Dr. Ming-yin CHAN of BSE successfully replaced Justin in the Council Election, which took place in June, and he together with PUSA Chairman will continue to reflect staff views and sentiment to Council honestly and fearlessly. Besides Justin, PUSA has also been fortunate to have Miss Linda Liu serving its ExCo as Secretary for a couple of years. Linda retired from the University this June after 35 years of dedicated service. PUSA would like to thank Justin and Linda for their dedication, and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

As always, various PUSA officers and EXCO members have continued to serve on various committees of the University including the Grievance and Appeal Committee and the Catering Committee. The two elected members on Council continue to serve in the Finance Committee, the Campus Development Committee and the Board of Trustees of PolyU Retirement Funds. On the other hand, we co-organized with the 'Community Recycling Coop'

the “Used Item Collection Campaign” in March and November to collect second-hand usable items from PolyU staff to help low-income residents in Sham Shui Po. Also, PUSA officers have continued to involve in CFM matters, help negotiating and mediating between CFM Management and our Associate members in CFM.

Lastly, PUSA has been able to maintain a good working relationship with Council members, in particular the Council Chair, Ms. Marjorie Yang. After six years of service, Ms. Yang is going to complete her term by end of December. She has shown a lot of support and respect to the works of PUSA over the period, and PUSA would like to wish her well in all her future endeavours. We look forward to working with Council’s future leadership for the benefit of the University and its staff.

Prepared by Rodney CHU, Jimmy CHANG and CW CHAN  
For and on behalf of the Executive Council,  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association

16<sup>th</sup> December 2015