Completion Report
Project Supported by LTC/OBA Funding*

(Period covered: 1 Sep 2008 – 30 Sep 2010)

Part I: General Information

Funding Source (please tick ✓ as appropriate): LTC ✓ OBA Funding

Project Code: 2007-08/OBA/GEC

Host Department: GEC

Project Title: A Study of 'Value' Education in the GEC

Project Team:

Project Leader (Name & Dept): David Wan GEC

Team Member(s) (Name & Dept): Fong Chi Wah GEC, Cho Kut Suen Jackson, GEC

Part II: Project Details

1. Financial Information

(a) Overview

Approved Funding:	Additional Funding Received (if any):	Total Funding Received:
	+	=

Source of Additional Funding: Nil

(b) Project Expenditure

¹ Please give reasons for the revised budget and quote the relevant authority's approval reference where appropriate.

2. Project Schedule

	Start date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Completion date (dd/mm/yyyy):
Dates as Stated in Original Proposal:	01/07/ 2008	30/12/ 2009
Actual Start and Completion Dates:	01/09/2008	30/09/2010

	Total no. of extension(s) obtained :	Obtained during the project period:
Project Period Extension(s) (if any):	1 time(s)	For a total of 9 month(s)

Reason(s) for Extension(s) (if any):	Resignation of the original project leader, Death of two family members of the current project leader. GEC's structural changes and involvement in ADP

3. Project Implementation

(a) Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to design an effective model for value education through, and parallel to, the teaching of value-related subjects.

This project provides teachers with assistance in:
(i) identifying important learning outcomes in value related subjects;
(ii) designing or modifying class activities and assessment methods to ensure or improve the effectiveness of achievements and assessment of learning outcomes;
(iii) document learning and teaching activities and materials as references for teachers' self-enhancement.

It has to be emphasized that, by "design" we do not mean to create something from sheer non-existence. Education, if it is education at all, must always be outcome-based. Indeed, we have the impression that most, if not all, of the teaching practices in the General Education Centre has been outcome based in its nature. The aim of the project, instead of introducing things that are brand new, is rather to solidify and promote the existing good practices on the one hand, and explore ways of further improvements on the other.

(b) Overview of specific work undertaken for achieving the project objectives (including any changes to original proposal)

The followings has been done:
1. A series of focus groups interviews concerning students' learning on value related subject with students who are taking value related general education courses with the GEC has been conducted through a period of two semesters.
Details as follows:
Interview (6 Nov - 1 Dec 2008)
group A - 5
group B - 5
group C - 1
group D - 1
group E - 3
group F - 2
total – 17

Interview (27 Apr - 30 Apr 2009)
group A - 2
group B - 1
group C - 1
group D - 1
group E - 1
group F - 3
total – 9
(student interview takes around 30-45 mins in each group)
2. A survey on students' perception, understanding, and opinion on value education has been conducted in several GEC classes pertinent to value education through a period of two semesters.
Details as follow:

Questionnaire (27 Nov - Dec 2008)
class A - 9
class B - 74
class C - 74
class D - 84
total - 241

Questionnaire (18 Mar - 7 Apr 2009)
class A - 50
class B - 45
class C - 46
class D - 47
class E - 15
total – 203

3. A focus group interviews with teaching staffs who are involved in value education courses of GEC was conducted in the fall semester of 2008.

4. Interview transcription of all interviews has been done, and data has been analysed.

5. The compilation of a booklet on the results that serve as a teacher's guide on value education for GEC is basically completed and is under final revision.

6. A sharing session of the findings of the study will be conducted in the near future.

(c) Difficulties encountered, if any, which have affected progress. and remedial actions taken

The original project proposer and leader had to resign from the project due to personal matters at the initial stage of the project. This delayed the commencement of the project. The current project leader had to spend time and effort with the colleagues involved (including colleagues from the EDC) to understand, re-evaluated, and take ownership of the project. However, the current project leader lost two of his immediate family members in February 2009. He had to take leaves to go back to the U.S. to deal with family matters, and he took some time off for grieving. These unfortunate events contributed to the delay of the project.

(d) Deliverables/useful findings/good practices emerged

A booklet on the results that serve as a teacher's guide on value education for GEC is basically completed. There are four major findings.

I. One of the major focuses of the project is to answer the question "What kind of learning out-come should one expect from value education?" There are three possibilities: 1. students gain a set of knowledge that is necessary for value reflections; 2. the moral character of the students in general has been improved; 3. students gain the ability and incentive to engage in value reflection. Our study shows that both the teaching staffs and the students believe that 1 would render value education too academic in nature, and it would be rather meaningless to make value education a pure academic activity. As for 2, regardless of how many moral educator would like this to be the major out-come of value education, all teaching staffs and most of the students we interviewed believe that value education within the general education setting has no responsibility to improve the students' moral character and therefore such improvement should not be the major out-come of value education. This is simply because that it would be impossible to assess how one's moral character has been improved. "Ought" implies "can". Therefore, it should not. Such impossibility has several causes. First of all, it is impossible to determine the criteria being used for such assessment. Different criteria reflect different beliefs in what constitute moral characters. This is an issue open for discussion in most courses that involve in value education. Setting one criteria for assessment is in fact asking the student to commit to a particular belief (unless the criteria is concealed form those being assessed, but this would be contrary to the spirit of OBE). This would be contrary to the spirit of educating free and independent thinkers. The second problem would be the method of assessment. Even if teaching staffs could agree on the criteria being employed for assessing one's moral character, it would be very difficult to ascertain the student's true character using any commonly used methods such as examination, quiz, essay assignment, group project, or even one to one interview. Establishing a long term relationship with the students and observe their activities for a extended period of time may allow the assessor to determine the true characters of the students. However, this would be impossible to implement within the setting of general education of PolyU. The third problem is that it is human nature to change. A person could be very up-right at a particular time and environment. but the very same person could turn into a decadent at a different time and environment. It is simply a mistake to think that moral character is a relatively static condition like knowledge. Therefore, assessment done at any particular time (even over an extended period of time) would not reflect the reality of a person's moral character for there is no such reality to be reflected. Our study shows that the teaching staffs and most students we interviewed believe

that 3 should be the proper out-come of value education. On the one hand, this out-come guaranteed a certain amount of knowledge gain. On the other hand, it also raises the students' awareness to and the ability of engaging in value reflection and making moral judgements. This is consistent with the general idea of general education and it could be properly assessed through commonly used methods.

II. Discussion among students is not necessary an effective way to enhance students' ability of making sound moral judgement. While majority of the student state that discussion among themselves help in raising their ability to make sound moral judgement, some students point out the fact that since most young people in Hong Kong have very similar moral perspectives, discussions among themselves without much input from the instructor is not very helpful in this regard. This is also true from the teaching staffs' general observation. Expert input and facilitation is essential in discussion of moral education.

III. One of the challenges of value education is to raise the students' incentive of making sound moral judgements. The study shows that most students do not think making sound moral judgement is important in everyday life even though most students would concede that value education is important as a GE component. The study shows that situational reflections are very useful in helping student recognize the importance, significance, and consequence of making sound moral judgement. Movies, stories of moral dilemma, site visit (e.g. hospice care hospitals, funeral house, cemetery, cage housing, etc) are highly recommended instructional tools for value education. The key here is to emphasis the serious consequences of incorrect value reflections and unsound moral judgements.

IV. Contrary to the hypothesis of the original project leader, the instructor's personal moral character, ethical views, relationship with the students, and charisma have very little impact on students in general in terms of improving their moral characters. Students in general disregard these elements in a teaching staff. What they find important in a teaching staff is how well he delivers the course materials. They look for clear and concise explanations to concepts and theories. On this regards, value education has no difference from other discipline.

(e) Dissemination activities taken/planned to sustain impact

The booklet will be made available to staffs of the GEC. Also, a sharing session on the finding will be held in the near future.

(f) Self-evaluation or additional information/remarks

Name of Project Leader: _____Wan, David Tai Wai_____ Date: 5-9-2011 _____
(in block letters)

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Part III: Evaluation by D/SLTC (or by HoD/Director of School^)

(a) Rating and comments/recommendations on the following areas of the project
(please put a ✓ in 1 of the following 2 ratings and provide comments)

Rating

Areas	Satisfactory	Needing attention	Comments and Recommendations
Overall financial management/ use of funding	✓		
Overall project progress	✓		Despite the delays, the project was completed to meet project objectives.
Outputs /deliverables / dissemination	✓		The booklet and sharing session should be done asap while participants memory is still fresh.
Overall rating / comments on the project (Please suggest remedial actions if the rating is 'Needing attention')	✓		

(b) Issues requiring the attention of FLTC/Director of School and/or the funding authority

(c) Outputs/deliverables/good practices of the project that can be shared with other subjects, programmes or departments within the Faculty, or with the wider PolyU community

(d) Additional comments/remarks

Name of D/SLTC Chair
(or HoD/Director of School):   PROFESSOR JAMES XING   Date: 5-9-2011
                                     (in block letters)

' To be prepared by HoD/Director of School **if** the PL is also the D/SLTC Chair, **or if** the Centre/Unit/Office does not have a DLTC

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Part IV: Evaluation by FLTC/Director of School#

(a) Overall rating on the project (please put a ✓ in 1 of the following 2 ratings):

☑ Satisfactory

☐ Needing attention

(b) Overall comments and recommendations on the project:

The FLTC would like to have a copy of
the booklet to be either uploaded onto the ITH

(c) Issues requiring the attention of the funding authority: Website for wider dissemination
of the project results.

Name of FLTC Chair/
Director of School: _____WINNIE CHENG_____ Date: _____7 Sep 2011_____
(in block letters)

The Director of School or HoD of the Centre/Unit/Office needs not fill this part if he/she has already commented in Part III.

Part V: Response & Follow-up Plan by Project Leader

(Response and follow-up plan is required from the Project Leader if there is any area rated as 'needing attention' in Part III and/or IV.)

Name of Project Leader: _____ Date: _____
(in block letters)

_____ _____ _____
Signature of Project Leader   Signature of D/SLTC (or HoD)@   Signature of FLTC/
Director of School

WAN, DAVID TAI WAI   Prof James Xing   WINNIE CHENG
(Name in block letters)   (Name in block letters)   (Name in block letters)

@ *To be signed by HoD if the PL is also the DLTC Chair, or if the Centre/Unit Office does not have a DLTC; leave this blank if the PL is also the SLTC Chair.*

The Project Leader and D/SLTC Secretary should each keep a copy of this *Completion Report* for records.
A copy of this *Completion Report* will be submitted along with the *F/SLTC Annual Report (Form 20)*
to LTC/WGOBE as a supporting document.

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