Project Title : Developing, Assessing and Providing Direct Evidence of Student Learning in Generic Skills in the Context of Engineering Higher Education in Hong Kong

Leading University : The University of Hong Kong

Participating UGC-funded University(ies) : City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

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Layman Summary of Proposal

To ensure Hong Kong's international competitiveness as a knowledge-based economy, increasing emphasis is being placed by employers, the government, teachers and students on the generic skills of graduates. This emphasis was reflected in the encouragement and support provided by the UGC in the development of an outcomes-based approach across the UGC-funded institutions and has been further promoted by the efforts of the universities. Building on this progress, it is now timely to provide a more direct and specific direction on how generic skills are delivered, practiced and assessed in local higher education. In order to enhance the quality of student learning in generic skills, it is crucial for us to investigate teaching and learning approaches and to further develop a common understanding of assessment for learning in generic skills development. Thus, this project is timely to develop a systematic process and an effective mechanism for documenting and analysing direct evidence of students' generic skills competency within the engineering discipline in Hong Kong universities. In order for education practitioners to gain a deeper understanding on how to facilitate student learning, direct and indirect evidence of student learning will be triangulated, such that survey data on students' perception of generic skills development in their university learning experience will be collected in addition to direct evidence of their generic skills competency. A framework on how to collect and evaluate evidence to enhance the quality of student learning for generic skills competency will be investigated and developed.

This project will also build and strengthen a community of practice for fostering and advancing the development and assessment of generic skills in Hong Kong higher education.

Layman Summary of Final Report

This project aims to develop a systematic process and an effective mechanism for documenting and analysing direct evidence of student generic skills competency within a specific discipline – Engineering, in Hong Kong universities. In order for education practitioners to gain a deeper understanding on how to facilitate students' learning, we have collected and analysed survey data on students' perception of generic skills development in their university learning experience in addition to direct evidence of their generic skills competency. Our findings suggest that generic competency development is determined by students' approaches to developing generic competencies in out-of-classroom settings which is influenced by their personal characteristics and perceptions of the learning environments. To fulfil a need to nurture generic capabilities in university education, we have also developed a framework for the collection and evaluation of direct evidence to enhance the quality of student learning for generic skills competency. This project has also built and strengthened a community of practice for fostering and advancing the development and assessment of generic skills in Hong Kong higher education. This project will have a long-term impact on the teaching and learning of generic skills within the Engineering discipline in Hong Kong higher education institutions. It will not only provide a systematic process and an effective mechanism for documenting and analysing direct evidence of student generic skills competency, but will also provide rich data on students' perception of generic skills development in their university learning experience, enabling educational practitioners to gain a deeper understanding on how to facilitate students' development of generic skills.