

**Research Assessment Exercise 2020**  
**Impact Overview Statement**

**University: Lingnan University**

**Unit of Assessment (UoA): 30 - Chinese Language & Literature**

**Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 12**

**(1) Context**

The Department of Chinese has a pivotal role to maintain and develop Chinese culture. As such, it has always strived to extend the reach of its research beyond academia to local, national, regional and international audiences. For example, our research has enhanced the literacy of the general public, as well as building its appreciation of literature and culture. Xu Zidong's research on modern Chinese literature and Mary Wong and Grace Lau's research on Hong Kong culture, for example, have changed the views of millions of people's on literature.

Our research streams focus on classical poetics, modern Chinese literature and culture in Hong Kong. Non-academic beneficiaries include teachers, secondary school students, and general readers of Chinese literature in China, the USA and other English-speaking countries.

Specific impacts include an influence on the way English speakers are taught Chinese and Chinese literature. This flowed from Cai Zong-qi's research on classical Chinese literature and his pedagogical innovations that have made Chinese literature accessible to general readers in the West. Research has also transformed reading habits. For instance, Xu's research on modern literature has encouraged millions of people to read and cherish humanistic values. Overall, research staff in the unit have worked effectively to help raise the quality of people's lives and to promote important cultural values crucial for the building and maintenance of a civil society.

**(2) Approach to impact**

The unit's approach to interacting with the public, beneficiaries and general audiences is to reach local communities and the wider world through (1) collaborations with cultural institutions (2) working with prestigious publishers that bridge academic fields and popular culture, (3) taking advantage of traditional and social media and (4) engaging with local communities.

For example, Prof Cai Zong-qi has collaborated with the Tin Ka Ping Foundation, which provided a grant of one million HK\$ to establish the Lingnan Chinese Culture Program. This community outreach program attracted a large and demographically diverse audience including children, college students and senior citizens. This brings research on classical Chinese literature and poetics to the general public and has reached more than 400 people so far, changing their views of classical literature by making it more accessible. This positive result has been confirmed by questionnaires completed at the end of each lecture.

Prof Cai Zong-qi publishes a trailblazing book series *How to Read Chinese Literature* with Columbia University Press. Its three published volumes had an impact on more than 7,000 people because of its innovative approach to Chinese literature, according to letters from readers, teachers, and the publisher. The launch of this book series was widely reported by the mainstream media, including *People's Daily* and Xinhua News Agency.

Prof Xu Zidong's lectures on modern Chinese literature were broadcast live on Tencent, one of the largest online live broadcast platforms in mainland China, and has attracted several million views as of September 2018. His lectures built on research on modern literature and changed general viewers' outlooks. Netizens' posts and statistics gathered online demonstrate the impact.

Based on research in classical poetry and literature, Prof Charles Kwong has designed a community education program in classical & modern Chinese writing. Over the course of two years, from September 2017 through September 2019, nine courses were offered 15 times to the

public in a teahouse venue, with a total enrolment of 300. There were also two poetry/prose recitation occasions, with an attendance of 70. The courses' impact is seen, *inter alia*, in the first annual anthology (100 pp) of student writings published in 2018, edited by Prof Kwong and two co-editors; titled *Exploring Beauty and Search for Truth* 探美求真, it has reached over 200 people, with exciting feedback that has sustained enrolments. These activities were supported by the University's KT fund (2017/18) and by an outside institution, the HK Tea Academy (17-19).

Prof Hsu Tze Pin's research prepares secondary school teachers to teach *Xunzi*, one of twelve classical Chinese texts included in a new curriculum. Prof. Hsu has delivered five lectures to teachers — including how to teach the text clearly and effectively — under a training program partly organized by the Curriculum Development Institutes of the Education Bureau. Since 2016 more than 300 teachers have been trained in how to present the material.

Researchers are prolific contributors via print and online media, with over 300 appearances on topics ranging from cultural criticism to in-depth discussions of Chinese customs. The unit achieves further impact with its body of research by embedding researchers in the cultural and educational environment in Hong Kong and abroad. Key examples include:

Prof Xu Zidong served on the Judging Committee of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Chinese Writing Biennial Awards. He also served as a consultant for the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, and was the Vice-President and Executive Member of the Standing Committee, Chinese Association of Theoretical Studies in Literature and Arts (2014-19).

Prof Kwong Yim Tze was appointed as a Specialist by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (2014-19).

Prof Grace Lau was a reviewer with an advisory role for Universal Journal of Educational Research issued by Horizon Research Publishing Corporation US.

Prof Hsu Tsu Pin is a Member of the Textbook Committee for Chinese Language and Chinese Literature Review Panel (Secondary) for the Textbook Committee Secretariat of Education Bureau (Nov 2015-present).

### (3) Strategy and plans

The unit has two main goals: to make Chinese poetics more accessible and appreciated internationally, and to make traditional Chinese culture more accessible and appreciated within Hong Kong. The strategy to achieve these goals is to focus on the development of the Lingnan Chinese Culture Program to increase the high quality and accessibility of the program to attract a wider audience.

The unit will also encourage staff to publish their research internationally. To do this, the unit will provide guidance and editorial support with the aim of significantly raising international publication over the coming years.

We will set up committees to explore ways of achieving greater impact. These committees will be comprised of senior members who will provide professional consultations.

Lastly, we will extend and strengthen our close connections with cultural institutions and local and international partners.

### (4) Relationship to case studies

The case study demonstrates how the unit supports its researchers to achieve impact. In the case of Prof Cai's projects (including the Lingnan journal conferences) it demonstrates the value of stable funding. Prof Xu's modern literature broadcast shows the unit's technical capabilities, and the assistance it offers in enabling his work to reach the wider community. The department also supported the project of Prof Lau and Prof Mary Wong in its applications for the GRF and KT Fund which outcomes were disseminated in public events held in HK and beyond.