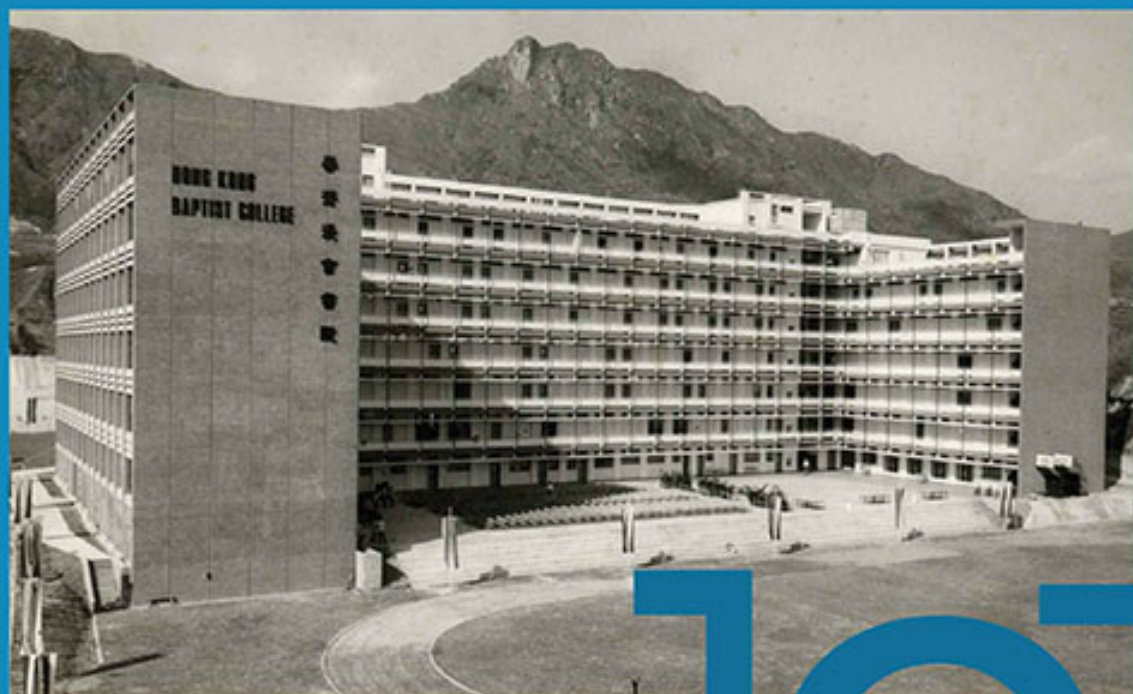


Below the Lion Rock: Hong Kong Baptist College in the 1970s

In many respects, the 1970s were watershed years for Hong Kong Baptist College. Despite periodic setbacks, important strides were made in recognising the College's academic qualifications, enhancing its stature both in the community and overseas, and towards the ultimate goal of attaining university status. The decade, while momentous, was also tinged with tragedy.





Night view of the Waterloo Road Campus in the 1970s

The first positive step occurring at the opening of the decade – the registration of Hong Kong Baptist College (HKBC) as an Approved Post Secondary College under the *Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance* (1964) – seemed to augur well for the future. It was followed by another morale-boosting development in 1971, when the Government confirmed that graduates holding the Baptist College Diploma were regarded as similar to those given the Post Secondary Colleges Joint Diploma previously awarded by the three colleges that constituted The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Under this transitional arrangement, graduates were qualified to teach in government-subsidised or public schools while graduates teaching in private schools secured the privilege of receiving government subsidies.



The Director of Education endorses the College's status as an Approved Post Secondary College in 1970

The year 1971 also saw tragedy strike. On 3 March the College's first president, Dr Lam Chi-fung, suffered a stroke and passed away on 17 April. At a memorial service held on 30 April, President Lam was deservedly hailed as a pioneer of tertiary education in Hong Kong. His life and work were an inspiration, not only for those who served under him but also for laying out a path for others to follow. The flame that he lit would continue to shine brightly on many generations to follow.

His successor as president was Dr Daniel Tse Chi-wai, aged 36. In his stirring inaugural speech, Dr Tse took the upbeat view that the difficulties encountered by the College in its early years should not be seen as

setbacks but, on the contrary, as valuable experiences that had helped to shape the unique character of the institution. For him, the obstacles that lay in the path of the College's development could become life-changing lessons to be studied and learned from. If Hong Kong itself could succeed in transforming its many disadvantages into assets, then better days should not be far off for Hong Kong Baptist College. Signalling the start of a bold new era, his speech was an inspiration to those present, instilling in the campus a fresh sense of vigour and vitality.

That same year, 1971, the College was rapidly expanding. With 56 additions to the family, the teaching population grew to 196 full-time teachers and 37 part-time instructors.

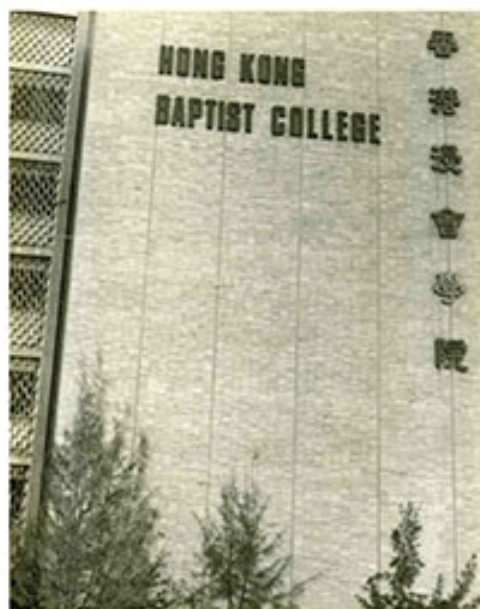


Dr Daniel Tse becomes the President in 1971

Additional positive sign came in 1972. In April, the College was granted approval by the Governor in Council to change its Chinese name from 香港浸會書院 to 香港浸會學院. According to President Tse, this change in terminology, from 書院 (*shu yuan*) to 學院 (*xue yuan*), was significant. It was necessary in order to avoid confusion that might arise over the level and nature of the College's academic programmes as distinct from those of the Anglo-Chinese secondary schools in Hong Kong, which commonly used the term *shu yuan*.

The College was also earning a rising level of recognition for the considerable contributions it was making to the local community. This commendation came in a variety of forms. Of special note, and with particular interest to the College's graduates, was the Government's readjustment of the value of entry points earned by Baptist College diploma holders as

qualifications for certain government positions. The Colonial Secretariat announced in April 1974 that graduates of the College were to be given half the number of the increments that were awarded to full degree holders. It was a further step in a positive direction. However in the mid- to late-1970s, the prospects of the College darkened as it faced severe challenges. On the financial front, President Tse was indefatigable in his lengthy and skilled lobbying of government departments and officials in the quest for support. However, the only backing received from the Government remained a loan for the College plus the provision of interest-free loans for students. It was not until 1978, after the *White Paper on Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education* was published, that the Government finally made an offer of financial assistance to the College.



The change of its Chinese name from *Shu Yuan* to *Xue Yuan* signifies the College's status as a tertiary institution



Mr Oen Yin-choy officiates at the naming ceremony of the Oen Hall in 1975. Private donations serve as an important source of financial support especially in those days.



Academic development

Following its highly promising progress at the start of the decade on the academic front, Hong Kong Baptist College was restructured to pave the way for an improved organisation and lay foundations for future expansion. The new structure was as follows:

Faculty of Arts:

Departments of Chinese Language and Literature, English Language and Literature, Music and Fine Arts, and Religion and Philosophy programme.



Faculty of Business:

Departments of Accounting, Business Administration, Economics, and Secretarial Management.

Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering:

Departments of Biology, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Mathematics and Physics.



Faculty of Social Sciences:

Departments of Communication, History and Geography, Sociology and Social Work, and Physical Education programme.



The Computer Centre is established in 1972



The Department of Communication provides students with state-of-the-art equipment



The choir performs in the 18th Commencement

In 1975, the Division of Extramural Studies was established to promote lifelong learning and provide professional and continuing education opportunities for adult learners.

Fleshing out this structure during the first half of the decade were a welcome series of advances achieved on a variety of fronts, particularly in the struggle for academic recognition. Hong Kong Baptist College, while still just a private tertiary education institution, was slowly but steadily emerging as a highly respected body, not only within Hong Kong but also well beyond the city's limits.

Moreover, solid progress was also taking place within the campus. A five-year plan was designed to improve in-house facilities and overall teaching effectiveness. The achievement of this latter goal was facilitated by the appointment of four faculty deans who helped to coordinate the further growth of the College's main faculties.

However, the College faced another steep mountain to climb in 1977 when the Government issued its *Green Paper on Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education*. This advised The Chinese University of Hong Kong to adopt a three-year instead of its four-year curriculum and at the same time dealt a blow to private tertiary institutions, describing their status as being between tertiary-preparatory and tertiary institutions. For the College, the Government's decision did not just negate HKBC's existing record of contributions to society, it simultaneously underrated the standing of the College's graduates, thereby seriously hindering their career prospects. In a robust response to this discriminatory measure, the College initiated a one-day class suspension on 19 December. In a further highly visible reaction, more than 2,000 College staff members and students led a silent march to deliver a protest petition to the Central Government Office.



Thousands of students and staff express their anger over the Green Paper in a large-scale gathering on campus



The Students' Union conducts a "one person, one letter" campaign to protest against the Green Paper



President Tse explains to student leaders details of the 2-2-1 system in his office

Faced with this strong public outcry, the Government proposed in October 1978 in its *White Paper on Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education* to subsidise those students taking vocational courses. It also gave the qualifications gained by the College's graduates equal status with those of other graduates in meeting the required criteria for careers in the civil service.

In addition, a new 2-2-1 system – comprising two years of tertiary preparatory studies, two years of post-secondary studies and a one-year honours programme – was suggested to replace the College's four-year structure, without subsidising the fifth-year students. Shortly thereafter, the 2-2-1 system was introduced by the College, and provision of government subsidies began in the 1979-80 academic year.



Confronted with this abrupt transition, the College busied itself with preparations for the 2-2-1 system in August 1978. The groundwork included the establishment of the two-year Programme of Basic Studies for Secondary Five graduates, which formed the first stage of the 2-2-1 system. Students of the Basic Studies would take the Advanced Level Examination and undergo an internal assessment by the College before entering the two-year Programme of Senior Studies. Successful candidates of the Senior Studies programme who passed the assessment would then be awarded a Senior Diploma and would be eligible to continue on to the fifth-year of study for an Honours Diploma. The College also offered a pilot International Baccalaureate Programme for Secondary Five graduates in the 1979-80 academic year in parallel with the Programme of Basic Studies.

During the decade, the College's student number gradually increased. In 1970-71, the student enrolment was 2,710, and in 1979-80 the total reached 3,152.

Internationalisation

Stepping briskly into the 1970s, the College's evolution into a widely acknowledged and respected institution had the positive effect of opening up fresh opportunities for its determined drive to internationalise its fast-developing campus. In the summer of 1972, the College's Board of Governors delegated President Daniel Tse to visit a number of overseas institutions in order to gather a series of references to be used for evaluating the College's future development needs and establishing a broader academic and professional network.

In December 1972, the College was accepted by the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning, becoming the third Hong Kong institution to become a member – the others were The University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong.



Dr Daniel Lam, Chairman of the HKBC Board of Governors (centre), receives a donation from the Board of International Ministries of American Baptist Churches



A delegation from the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention visits the College in 1973

In 1973 the College received welcome invitations from a number of overseas universities to participate in their student exchange programmes. In response, an overseas exchange programme committee was formed to formulate policies, and subsequently the College entered into academic and cultural exchanges with a number of institutions in Asia, Europe and the United States. Also in 1973, the College entered into a new and formal relationship with the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. Among the many methods whereby it supported the College, the United Board supplied faculty members with grants to enable them to participate in academic conferences.

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
795 Peachtree Street, N.E. Atlanta, Georgia 30308, U.S.A.

President Daniel C.W. Tse
Hong Kong Baptist College
224 Waterloo Road
Kowloon, Hong Kong

Dear President Tse:

Enclosed you will find the report of the committee which visited your campus in October, 1974. The organization for and purpose of the visit are explained in the introduction by Dr. Ben Fisher and I shall not repeat it.

We sincerely hope that the report of the committee will be helpful to you. If there are errors in fact or even in the suggestions based on committee opinion and judgment, I hope you will let me know. As far as I am concerned, you may use this report or parts of it in any way you wish.

It is a pleasure for me to endorse the report. Although our visit on your campus was very brief, I do believe the report reflects something of the program and quality of Hong Kong Baptist College. It is never possible to write a report which will do all that you and your associates might desire.

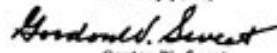
Inasmuch as you and your administrators and faculty have been very anxious for deserved recognition in the United States, it is unfortunate that there is not a device or procedure through which you might become a member of a recognized accrediting agency in the United States. It is my opinion that you would qualify, and I hope this simple expression may be of some value to you.

The students are the most important part of an institution of higher education which really exists for them. You indeed have a spirited, dedicated, and talented student body. For that, it has been necessary to build a good faculty, which you have done, and to provide necessary physical facilities. The latter you are building, although the resources needed are not easy to come by. The library is good and well administered. I believe the institution knows what its purpose and objectives are and is striving diligently to fulfill these.

It was an exciting experience to me to be with you and on your campus, personally and professionally. You are an outstanding leader and have the respect and recognition of competence by your constituents, the city, the students, and others involved in the institution.

Putting all this together you have a fine institution, and I sincerely hope that even though there is no official stamps of accreditation, your graduates, students, and faculty will receive the recognition at home and abroad which normally accompanies the official accreditation stamp. There is an expression that it is not the symbol, but that which is symbolized which is important.

Sincerely yours,



Gordon W. Sweet
Executive Secretary
Commission on Colleges

GWS:jlm

The report by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in the US affirms that HKBC's academic quality meets university standards

In August 1973, the Institute of International Education published the *IIE Report* for the College, which endorsed the academic standard of HKBC. In addition, Dr Ben C Fisher of the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States penned *A Special Report on Hong Kong Baptist College*, declaring the College's graduates as being equal in qualification and standing to all graduates from Southern Baptist universities and colleges.

In 1974, Dr Gordon Sweet, representing the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in the United States, made an inspection visit to HKBC. This resulted in a 1975 report that affirmed the College's professional qualifications as meeting the university standards set by the Commission. In late 1974, the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA), which grouped together 22 tertiary institutions from seven Asian locations, was established. President Tse had the honour of being appointed as founding president, confirming once again the growing stature of the College and its recognition in the international arena of higher education.

Between 1977 and 1979, exchange students travelled to and from Hong Kong Baptist College, Malone College, Baylor University, Whitworth University and Capital University. Restricted only by its availability of residential housing, HKBC had been well and truly transformed into a significant platform for global academic exchange.



Despite tight resources, the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering exerts every effort to develop its research facilities



Staff and students engage in a research project on water pollution in 1975



Sociology and Social Work students interview a street vendor for a social study survey

Research development

From the early 1970s, HKBC began to receive a constant flow of financial support from a variety of organisations and contributors. For example, the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia supported the College in moving ahead with its research and teaching despite the tight economic environment. The Lingnan University Foundation of New York also deserves mention for establishing the College's earliest financial basis for academic research.

The rising quality and widening scope of the College's research was reflected in the variety and depth of its results showcased in the College's publications. Further specialisation was also a priority, and to assist in reaching this goal a number of research centres were founded. The Department of Economics in 1972 established the Economics Department Research Centre (EDRC), a body which covered both research projects and the issuing of the EDRC Experimental Publication. The latter sought to stimulate students' understanding of economic issues and global affairs. Reacting in timely fashion to communal and global concerns as they arose, further research initiatives were launched: in May 1975, a centre was established to probe water pollution and its role in the context of the overall environment; the Social Research Centre was subsequently launched by the Department of Sociology and Social Work to carry out research into a variety of local issues and social developments impacting Hong Kong.

Campus growth

Consistent increases in student enrolment during this decade were matched by an expansion of the campus and its facilities. The Annex Building was completed and began operation for the Departments of Communication and Civil Engineering in August 1972. In 1975, the main campus building was officially named Oen Hall, and the new C S Tse Memorial Hall was opened for administrative and functional purposes.

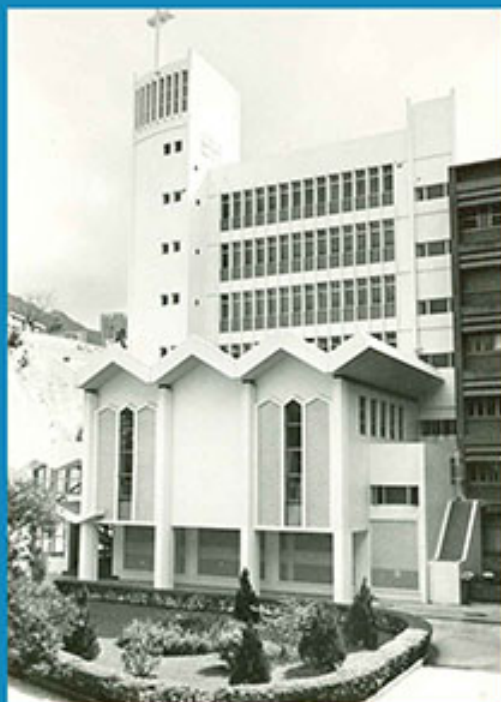
The year 1976 witnessed the opening of the Lui Ming Choi Library, situated on the lower ground level of the Dr Lam Chi-fung Memorial Building. A year later, the Christian Education Centre was established with a prayer hall accommodating 400 seats. On 19 May 1978, the 1,346-seat Academic Community Hall was completed and inaugurated by Governor Sir Murray MacLehose. The Hall has since been used not only for College events but is leased to outside communities and organisations. This gesture, like many of HKBU's community-oriented initiatives, was much appreciated: the Hall has become one of the city's popular venues for staging cultural performances.



C S Tse Memorial Hall



Lui Ming Choi Library



The Christian Education Centre



The Lam Chi Fung Memorial Building houses the Academic Community Hall



Governor Sir Murray MacLehose (right) unveils the Academic Community Hall in 1978



A general view of the campus in the late 1970s



A night view of the campus in the late 1970s