

1990



“O Baptist U, our founders’ dream”: the 1990s

The 1990s were the years when the carefully nurtured green shoots of growth burst into glorious bloom for Hong Kong Baptist College. After almost 40 years of untiring effort, stoical resilience in the face of adversity, and above all unparalleled dedication to higher education, the College finally fulfilled its founders’ dream of gaining the status and title of University.

By the early 1990s, Hong Kong Baptist College (HKBC) had already succeeded in fulfilling three major criteria for becoming a university. First, the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) agreed on the mission and academic profile of the College as a medium-sized institution of arts and sciences in 1992. In the same year, the Legislative Council gave the go-ahead for the College to align its staff's salary levels with those of the three universities in Hong Kong. Finally in July 1993, the Executive Council granted the College the authority for self-accreditation of its academic programmes.

After achieving these three targets, the College went ahead with the submission of its proposal to the Government to rename itself as Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) and also sought to amend the *Hong Kong Baptist College Ordinance*. In May 1994, the Executive Council approved in principle the long-sought and hard-won renaming of the College, and on 16 November 1994, the Legislative Council approved the *Hong Kong Baptist University Ordinance*. Nine days later, the legislation was gazetted and Hong Kong Baptist College was formally retitled as Hong Kong Baptist University.



President Tse officiates at a flag raising ceremony on 25 November 1994 to celebrate the retitling of Hong Kong Baptist College to Hong Kong Baptist University

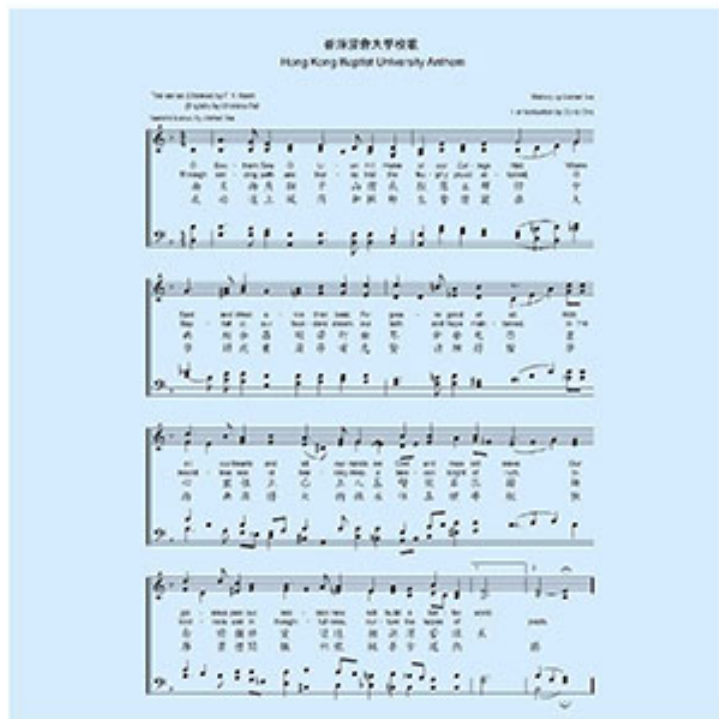


In accordance with official procedures following on from this development, the Governor of Hong Kong was appointed Chancellor and the President was renamed President and Vice-Chancellor. Under the new structure, the Board of Governors re-emerged as the highest advisory body, the Court, and the Council was established as the highest executive body while the Academic Board was renamed as the Senate.

Celebrating this huge leap in its fortunes, HKBU introduced a series of new brand identities: a fresh university emblem, a new logo and a revised anthem.



(Above and below) The College organises a "U Day" on 16 November 1994 to celebrate the passing of the new Hong Kong Baptist University Ordinance in the Legislative Council



The revised university anthem consists of additional lyrics in which the first stanza adopts lyrics previously written by Professor Zia Nai-zin, a former professor in Chinese of the College. The second stanza was written by President Daniel Tse in 1993 and the new anthem was arranged by Dr Gene Cho, former reader of the Department of Music and Fine Arts.

The new additions to the university anthem are:
Through winding path and thorny trail the trophy proud attained;
O Baptist U, our founders' dream, our faith and hope maintained;
In the boundless sea of learning deep, a beacon bright of truth;
In kindness and in thoughtfulness, nurture the hopes of youth.

Reflecting the University's struggles and vision since the 1970s, the first two lines of the second stanza properly narrate the hard work of students and teachers under the leadership of President Tse – effort that was duly rewarded when the College achieved its goal of becoming a university. The last two lines of the new stanza emphasise the far-reaching vision of the University – to persevere in educating future generations in body, mind and soul.

On staff affairs, an organisational restructuring took place from 1995 to 1996 to align the newly-minted HKBU more closely with other universities in the territory. During this transition, academic staff members were given new titles as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor and Chair Professor.

Since its earliest days, financial assistance from the private sector has been pivotal in the successful development of the institution. Despite the fact that government subsidies were progressively increased, private donations were still very much needed for projects that did not qualify for public funding. In light of this urgent requirement, the University established the University Foundation Fund in 1993. It has proved to be a crucial vehicle for generating funds to finance HKBU's ambitious plans.



A First Day Souvenir Cover of Hong Kong Baptist University and a Last Day Souvenir Cover of Hong Kong Baptist College are released to commemorate the retitling



A donors' plaque is installed on campus in 1997 to recognise the supporters of the University

Academic development

The early years of the new decade saw impressive enhancements and expansion of the soon-to-be university's academic capabilities and aspirations, developments that would have profound consequences for the future.

In 1990, the Division of Continuing Education was upgraded to the School of Continuing Education. Meanwhile, the Department of Communication evolved as the College's sixth faculty and was renamed the School of Communication in 1991. Under the School, three departments were founded, namely Cinema and Television, Journalism and Communication Studies. The departments of Physical Education and Government and International Studies were established under the Faculty of Social Sciences in 1992 and 1994 respectively.



The Department of Communication is upgraded and renamed the School of Communication



The College confers its first honorary doctoral degrees on Dr Billy Graham (front row, fourth from left) and Sir Run Run Shaw (front row, second from right) in the presence of Governor Sir David Wilson



The launch of the PhD programme signifies the realisation of a longstanding aspiration of providing a complete academic ladder



The Physical Education programme is introduced in 1992

The year 1990-91 also marked the conferment of the College's first-ever honorary doctorate degrees, which were awarded to renowned Christian evangelist Dr Billy Graham and legendary entertainment tycoon and philanthropist Sir Run Run Shaw.

In terms of courses, the College launched new degree programmes in Humanities and in Translation in 1990-91, Physical Education and Recreation Studies in 1992-93, European Studies in 1994-95 and Government and International Studies in 1995-96.

Another significant milestone for the College came in spring 1992 when it launched the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme, thereby marking the completion of the academic ladder from undergraduate to postgraduate studies. The first cohort of four PhD students was admitted to the Faculty of Science.

A number of taught master's degree programmes were offered in the 1990s, including Music, Language Studies, Chinese Literature, Language and Culture, Business Administration, Analytical Chemistry, Scientific Computing, Education, Communication and Social Work. A Postgraduate Diploma in Education programme was also launched.

Another milestone for the University came in 1995 when the School of Continuing Education (SCE) offered a 2+2 programme with the Western Michigan University – a prototype of the associate degree programmes in Hong Kong. Later in 1999, SCE

became the first institution in Hong Kong to launch its own two-year associate degree programmes. In 1999, SCE established Hong Kong's first degree programme in early childhood education.

In March 1997, the University Grants Committee, formerly called the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC), released its Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review Report. This commended the University's teaching and learning processes for delivering high-quality whole person education.





The full-time bachelor's degree in Chinese Medicine is the first of its kind in Hong Kong

In the latter part of the 1990s, the University recorded another creative breakthrough – the launch of the territory's first full-time Chinese medicine bachelor's degree programme. To prepare for this innovative move, the Institute for the Advancement of Chinese Medicine was founded in 1997 and a five-year collaboration agreement was signed with China's Tsinghua University and the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine. Before the year ended, the University worked together with Hong Kong Baptist Hospital in founding a Chinese medicine clinic at the Baptist Hospital Au Shue Hung Health Centre.

In September 1998, the new double degree programme in Chinese Medicine and Biomedical Science was rolled out, signifying both a beginning of pedagogy in this field as well as academic research into Chinese medicine at an international level. As part of the effort to achieve the latter objective,



The Chief Executive of the HKSAR Mr Tung Chee-hwa (second from left) officiates at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Jockey Club School of Chinese Medicine Building in 1998

the University participated in a variety of research projects: for instance, it embarked on focused research into arthritis and rheumatism and worked with Tsinghua University to establish a laboratory. In 1999, the School of Chinese Medicine, destined to achieve high levels of recognition locally and internationally, was founded.

By the turn of the century, the University had emerged as a leading institute in the pedagogy and research of Chinese medicine, with a new undergraduate degree programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences in Chinese Medicine launched in 2001.

In 1990-91, student enrolment at the bachelor's and master's degree level was 3,191. There were also some 1,600 diploma graduates enrolled in part-time conversion programmes. In 1999-2000, the total number of students increased to 4,789, comprising 3,998 undergraduate and 791 postgraduate students.

Research developments

Greater government funding in the 1990s coupled with efforts to attract resources from private and commercial benefactors acted as an enormous boost to the scope and variety of research throughout the city's higher education sector.



(Above and below) Research activities take off in the 1990s with both quality and quantity rising significantly



A staff member of the Faculty of Science briefs Governor Sir David Wilson on the latest research equipment

Hong Kong's very first Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was carried out in 1993 by the UPGC. The positive conclusion of the RAE was that the College had achieved a respectable level of research performance. Taking into account the inevitable differences in the role and mission of UPGC-funded institutions, Baptist College's performance clearly compared favourably. Further RAEs were conducted in 1996 and 1999, when the College had secured university status, and the percentage of the faculty rated as being active researchers had steadily risen from 40% in 1993 to 44% in 1996 and then 56% in 1999.

In 1998-99, the University founded the Institute for Natural Resources and Waste Management. The Institute, in partnership with the United Nations Environmental Programme, the Nanjing Institute of Soil Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Zhongshan University, conducted research in soil science, environmental protection and the recycling of natural resources. The collaboration with the Nanjing Institute of Soil Science was the first venture of its kind between a key research institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and a university outside Mainland China.

Internationalisation in the 1990s

As Hong Kong Baptist College evolved into Hong Kong Baptist University, the efforts to drive forward the campaign to internationalise the campus were stepped up. In order to foster additional academic links with overseas institutions, the College formed several international institutes or consortia for Asian, North American and European academics to assemble and connect.

In 1993, the Centre for East-West Studies was renamed the David C Lam Institute for East-West Studies. Founding members Baylor University, Ohio University, Simon Fraser University, Tsinghua University and



The David C Lam Institute for East-West Studies, a unique consortium of more than 25 universities worldwide, begins operations in 1993



Member universities of the David C Lam Institute for East-West Studies sign membership agreements in 1995

University of Leeds were later joined by University of Strathclyde and University of Western Sydney. Associate and corporate members from a variety of East Asian and European institutions also joined.

Serving as an additional platform for East-West interaction, the Wing Lung Bank International Institute for Business Development was formed in 1992. Aiming to advance research into global business development, the Institute provides synergy for an impressive network that brings together research efforts in Australia, Canada, Sweden, the Netherlands, Thailand, the Philippines and the UK through international conferences and exchange programmes. Its International Summer Institute has been an important highlight of East-West interaction in this field since it began in 1997. The Institute offers overseas and Mainland Chinese students, through short-term courses, a valuable opportunity to learn from the business management experiences of others and gain an enhanced understanding of cross-cultural issues within an East-West context.



The International Summer Institute is an important annual event in promoting East-West cultural exchange

Notably, through these measures HKBU has become far more than a platform for the promotion of East-West interchange. Blending both an international vision and its aspirations for academic advancement, the University devotes particular attention to financially supporting academic projects and encouraging global research collaboration between the University's talents and overseas professionals. Established in 1994, the University Fellowship, made possible by a private donation, sponsors visiting scholars undertaking research and academic endeavours in Hong Kong, and welcomes overseas scholars to conduct public seminars in Hong Kong. In 1995, the Distinguished Lecture Series was held for the first time, at which John C Polanyi, the 1986 Nobel laureate in Chemistry, gave an inspiring opening lecture.



In 1991 HKBC hosts a historic video-conference with seven other higher education institutions in Hong Kong and Australia's Western Sydney University to discuss the development of higher education

As HKBU gained stature both locally and internationally, it received the honour of being selected by the European Union Commission to set up in 1997 the European Documentation Centre for Hong Kong. At this Centre, virtually every document issued by the European Union can be readily accessed by the public.

On the student side, the University offers a growing array of internship and exchange opportunities to ensure its students are empowered locally and connected globally. Among the internship programmes, all of which give students hands-on experience in a range of fields in order to equip them more effectively for today's globalised job market, the Metropolitan Attachment Programme, introduced by the Student Affairs Office in 1998, is the most popular. Every year, more than 200 students spend eight weeks during their summer vacation in major cities across the world where they acquire invaluable professional and cultural experiences.

In a further step towards internationalisation, exchange students have been warmly welcomed at HKBU; in 1998, there were 33 foreign exchange students from 22 partner institutions. The following year HKBU welcomed the first batch of 11 undergraduate students from Mainland China.



The Metropolitan Attachment Programme gives HKBU students an opportunity to develop their global experience



Exchange students enrich the campus atmosphere with international elements

Whole person education and campus life

Skillfully balancing the ideals of professionalism and diversity, by 1991 a wide selection of complementary study courses were readily offered to students. The courses addressed language and computer skills, analytical and critical thinking, lifelong learning and self-awareness, ethical consciousness and life meaning, cultural acknowledgment and harmonious co-existence, and physical awareness and healthy lifestyle. To help students take full advantage of an all-round university life and thus make their experience at HKBU fulfilling and rewarding, a Leadership Development Programme and a Character Development Programme were introduced.



Upon transitioning to university status in 1994, HKBU understandably placed fresh emphasis on its cherished mission of delivering whole person education. In particular, the University paid attention to aligning its own educational development with those of others in the world.



In 1996, whole person education was re-emphasised as one of the University's core values, as articulated by the Court of the University: "The corporate Christian commitment of the University is expressed in numerous ways, but especially through its philosophy and practice of whole person education. This holistic approach to knowledge and learning is considered to be the most appropriate preparation for life and service in the rapidly expanding and developing society of Hong Kong as well as in a rapidly changing world at large." In striving to realise its educational goals, the University further invested efforts into creating an environment that advocates the development of moral character, mutual respect for people, the formation of caring interpersonal relationships and genuine concern for society in hopes of nurturing wholesome, responsible and well-informed young people.



In 1996-97, a new subject, University Life, was launched for freshmen to acquire the study methods necessary to thrive in a modern university and to expose them to the enlightening applications of educational and information technology. The subject also provided a mentoring system to give new students timely assistance in tackling their academic challenges, helping them keep abreast with the University's requirements and hasten their progress.

Students of HKBU are afforded many formal and informal opportunities to participate in the University's governance. Starting from the 1990s, student representative places have been provided at various levels of university committees, including the Council, the highest executive body, and the Senate, the supreme academic body. As of September 2015, there are a total of 284 student representative places.



Campus development

The Shaw Campus on Renfrew Road, named after philanthropist Sir Run Run Shaw, was completed in mid-1995. The Opening Ceremony was held on 7 October 1995 attended by Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten and Sir Run Run Shaw. The Shaw Campus, comprising the Shaw Tower, the Wing Lung Bank Building for Business Studies, and the David C Lam Building, houses the central administration offices, the School of Business, the Au Shue Hung Memorial Library, the Lam Woo International Conference Centre and the Li Promenade.

Furthermore, to express the University's appreciation of donor Dr Ho Sin Hang's long-standing support, the Waterloo Road Campus was renamed Ho Sin Hang Campus.

During the construction of the Shaw Campus, seven two-storey buildings were built south of the Shaw Campus to ease the space shortage on campus.

In June 1997, the 12-storey Dr Ng Tor Tai International House, which provides 176 rooms, opened as a guesthouse for visiting scholars.



Shaw Campus

Shaw Tower Carillon

Walking on Renfrew Road, a pleasing melody emanating from the rooftop of the Shaw Tower can be heard every hour. These tunes come from the carillon at the top of the building.

The carillon, which has 25 bells, was made by the long-established Royal Bellfoundry Petit & Fritsen with quality bronze using the ancient technique of bell casting. The bells range in size, with the largest one weighing 112 kg, with a diameter of 56 cm and a height of 48 cm. Altogether, the 25 bells weigh 920 kg. Each bell plays a different octave. A computerised control triggers different melodies at different points of the day to indicate the time.





Dr Ng Tor Tai International House

As suggested by the University, the Government named the new road between the Shaw Campus and the seven low-rise buildings as Baptist University Road – the first time in Hong Kong that a road has been named after a university. As a result, the new campus area located between Baptist University Road and Renfrew Road was named the Baptist University Road Campus, and became the third campus of the University.

In 1999 a new building at the Baptist University Road Campus, the Jockey Club Academic Community Centre and the Madam Chan Wu Wan Kwai School of Continuing Education Tower, was built.

At the start of the 1999-2000 academic year, the BU Bridge, a footbridge crossing Junction Road, opened to the public, providing improved access between the Ho Sin Hang Campus and the Shaw Campus.



Madam Chan Wu Wan Kwai School of Continuing Education Tower



The low-rise buildings on Baptist University Road Campus