



# NEWSLETTER

Center for Enhanced Learning and Teaching

Fall 2008

## Looking Forward to the 08-09 Academic



This CELT newsletter contains updates on current developments and new initiatives for supporting your teaching and your students' learning at HKUST.

There is a new call for proposals for teaching development projects focusing on assessment for outcome-based education in your courses and programs. If you have a project idea that falls outside this, then please contact either Christine Chow (ctchris, ext 8907) or myself (ctnick, ext 6809).

This semester we will be starting a new Student Learning Center (see below), so if you have students in your programs that might benefit from help related to study and learning skills, please talk with or have them contact Dr Lucia Yeung (ctlucia, ext.8940).

Finally, we would like to increase our services in terms of teaching development, so if you have ideas for things you would like to see CELT offering to teaching staff (e.g. seminar or workshop topics, funded teaching and learning communities around cross-disciplinary areas like critical thinking, a workshop series or a course on teaching and learning in higher education), do please drop me a line.

### Student Learning Resources Center (SLRC)

SLRC is a new student learning support center jointly established by CELT and Publishing Technology Center (PTC). The Center provides CELT and PTC an outlet to reach out and deliver a range of supporting services to our students, including free resources and professional advisement on how to be an effective learner, courses and workshops about learning skills, research about student learning, and printing services for students. In addition, the Center will also work in partnership with instructors to help students cope with their learning tasks.

### Table of contents

Looking Forward to the 08-09 Academic .....	1
Course Evaluation at HKUST-ASSET .....	2
Student Engagement and Satisfaction Questionnaire .....	3
Latest Development of LMES .....	4-5
CELT Tech Camp Series .....	6
Calling for Proposal - IALO .....	7
TA Corner and Upcoming Events .....	8

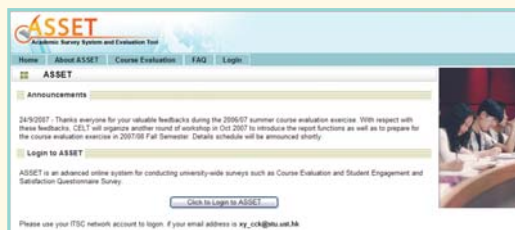
### SLRC is

- A place to find **resources** to improve learning
- A place for students to do **assessment** to understand their study habits
- A place to get professional **learning advice**

*All the services provided are FREE.*

# A New Beginning for Course Evaluation at HKUST

HKUST recognizes excellence in teaching as a crucial part of its mission. Collecting students' feedback about their learning activities has always played a key role in assessing and assuring the teaching quality of the education programs offered by the university.



with schools, departments and the Language Center, was put to trial use involving 189 sections. Results of the trial showed that the new and old questionnaires are comparable. With the endorsement of the CTLQ,

the SFQ will be adopted to collect feedback from students about their learning experience from Fall 2008.

With the support of the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ), a revision was made on the Course Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ), which has been used to evaluate teaching at HKUST since 1996. In spring 2007, a new set of questionnaires, **Student Feedback Questionnaires (SFQ)**, drafted in consultation

Instead of having just one standard questionnaire for all kinds of sections, different questionnaires are made available for the following six types of sections. Compared with the old course evaluation questionnaire, these new questionnaires are much shorter.

	Student Feedback Questionnaires	Number of Questions
SFQ1	Lecture-based sections	14
SFQ2	Team teaching lecture-based sections	16*
SFQ3	Seminar/discussion-oriented sections	11
SFQ4	Project-based sections	14
SFQ5	Language learning sections	12
SFQ6	Laboratory sections	11

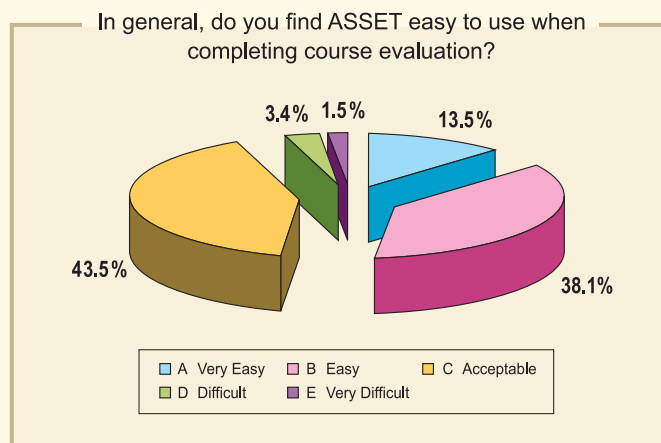
\*Varies with the number of instructors team teaching in the section

At about the same time when CEQ was revised, a decision was made to develop a new online system to replace COSSET, the old online system which supported course evaluation. COSSET became obsolete because of significant changes in online technologies and users' requirements in recent years and thus the new system, called **Academic Survey System and Evaluation Tool (ASSET)**, has been put into production to replace COSSET. Some core features of ASSET are as follow:

- All-in-one user-interface for departmental surveys.

A survey was conducted in May to collect students' feedback about ASSET, and most students found the new system user-friendly and easy to use.

- ASSET is an all-purpose survey tool with a highly configurable and flexible structure to cope with the complex and changing evaluation needs of the university.
- Support for advanced question formats including matrix type and multiple interaction questions.



# Student Engagement and Satisfaction Questionnaire Survey

As part of the University's quality assurance measure, CELT was commissioned to conduct a series of stakeholder feedback surveys. The **Student Engagement and Satisfaction Questionnaire (SESQ)** Survey was the first one to be launched in May 2007 to collect feedback from undergraduates who were in their final year of study. The purposes of the survey are three-folded:

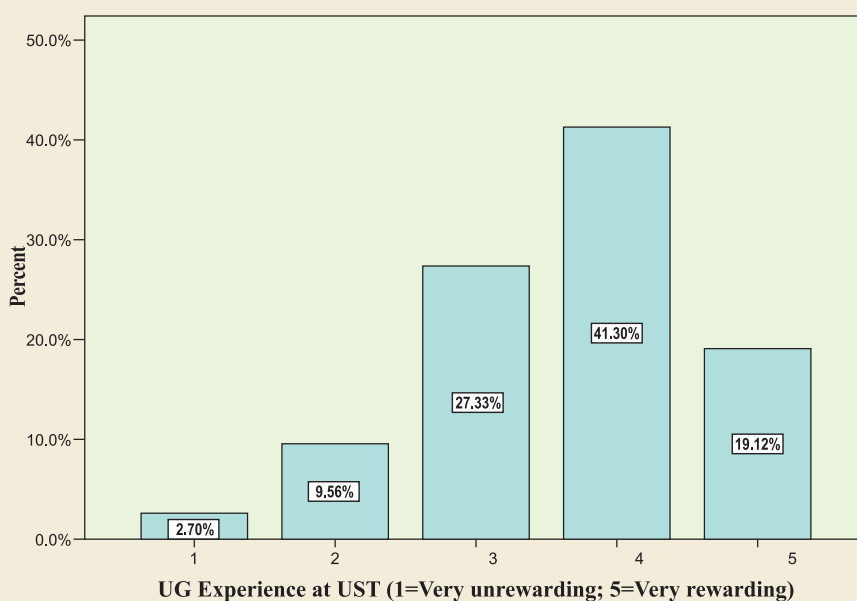
- (i) To determine the level of students' engagement in learning during the three years of their UG study;
- (ii) To collect students' views about the effectiveness of the UG programs in helping them to develop their general competencies; and

- (iii) To solicit students' views regarding the overall evaluation of the UG programs.

SESQ, was developed by CELT with input from school representatives, faculty and Student Affairs Office (SAO), based on findings about students' college experience from extensive research work carried out in North America, and in particular the work on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (<http://nsse.iub.edu/>), which is an instrument widely adopted by more than 1200 different colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada.

Here are the highlights of the 2007 survey results:

- 60% of the students regarded their UG experience at HKUST as either rewarding or very rewarding.
- About 85% of the students indicated that they may or would definitely recommend the program to other students.
- About 85% of the students replied that they may or would definitely make the same decision to enroll in this program if they were given the chance to start over again.
- In their comments, some students indicated that they would like to see a reduction in workload and assessment, improvement in the teaching and learning quality (such as the pedagogy and class size), allowing more flexibility in the course selection, improvement in the campus facilities (including the student canteen, library and residential halls), more support for student activities, and improvement in the student services (especially the career service) etc.



Based on the findings and feedback from the university community, SESQ was subject to revision and the new version is shorter and more focused. Data collection from 2007-08 final year undergraduates is now underway. Preliminary results should be available in fall.



# Latest Development of LMES

THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

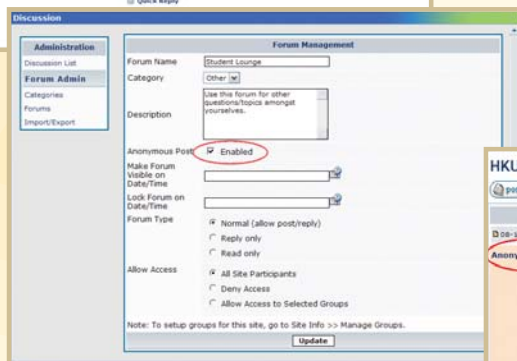
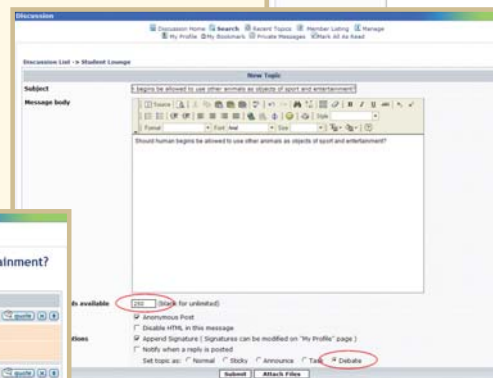
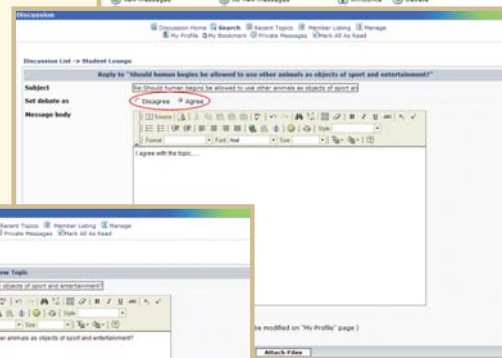
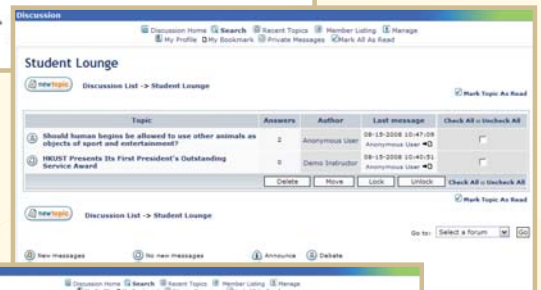
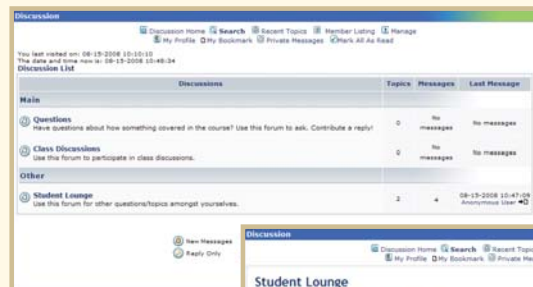
**LMES** Learning Management and Evaluation System

## Enhanced Discussion

Responding to the users' feedback, we have enhanced the Discussion with two new features, debate and anonymous post.

**Debate:** The new function greatly enhances the interaction among students. To set up a debate, you simply check the Debate checkbox while posting a topic in the discussion board. After getting into the debate topic, students have to choose between the Disagree and Agree sides. Then they can express their views in the message body. Length of the message can be pre-set as well.

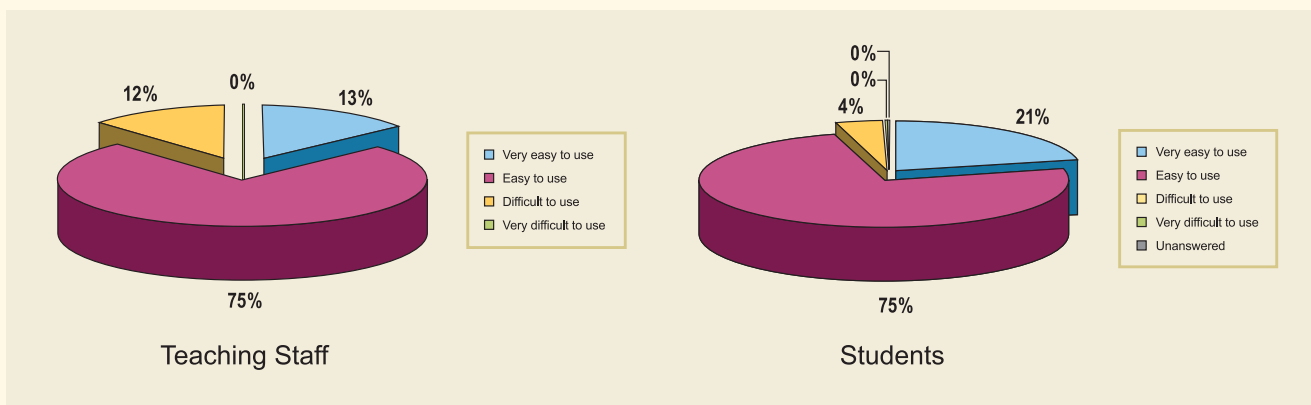
**Anonymous Post:** To protect the privacy of the students who post messages in Discussion, you can enable the newly-developed feature, Anonymous Post. After the function has been enabled, students can choose to post their messages anonymously.



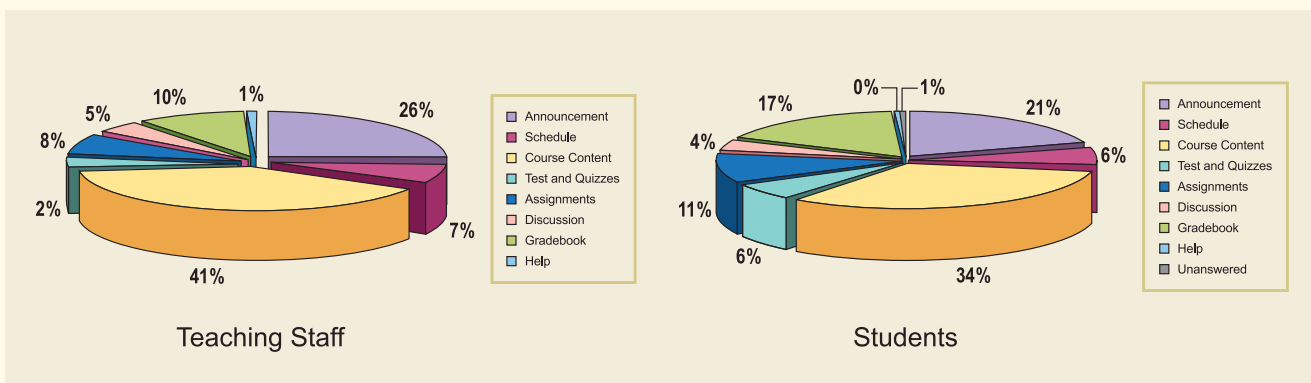
## Encouraging feedback from teaching staff and students

In Spring 2008, we conducted surveys to teaching staff and students to solicit their comments about LMES. We successfully received feedback from 787 students and 52 teaching staff. Comments are summarized below:

- More than 88% of the teaching staff and 96% of the students find the system easy to use.



- Course Content is the most useful tool for both teaching staff and students.



- The surveys show that Gradebook chosen by teaching staff and Schedule chosen by students are the two tools that may need further modifications.

We will continue improving the system to fit your teaching and learning needs. If you have any questions and feedback, please kindly contact us at [lmcs@ust.hk](mailto:lmcs@ust.hk).

### WebCT will be decommissioned after Spring Semester 2007/08!

As all of the major functionalities in WebCT are available in LMES, the WebCT platform has already been decommissioned. CELT is helping migrate courses from WebCT to LMES. Please contact us if you have any queries about the migration.

Information about LMES: <http://celt.ust.hk/lmes>

LMES sign-up form: <http://celt.ust.hk/lmes/lmesform.html>

Enquiry email: [lmcs@ust.hk](mailto:lmcs@ust.hk) or hotline 2358-8458.

# CELT Tech Camp Workshop Series

Tech Camp came again! A series of three lunchtime workshops were held during the study break of Spring semester from 19 - 21 May 2008. With the theme, Engaging Students with Web-based Tools, the workshops introduced online tools for participants to engage students in a motivating learning environment and allow students to express and present in a creative

and interesting way. The web-based tools included multimedia presentation and editing tools, blogs and social networking tools.

Encouraging feedback was received from the 20 teaching staff who participated in the workshops. Participants found the tools applicable to their teaching and a few of them even asked for advanced sessions. They also enjoyed the relaxing learning atmosphere.



## Comments from the participants:

*I can apply this for class projects in teaching or with my colleagues in the same teaching team.*

*(The tools introduced help) enrich teaching.*

*The facilitator is patient and helpful.*



*(The workshop is) useful.*

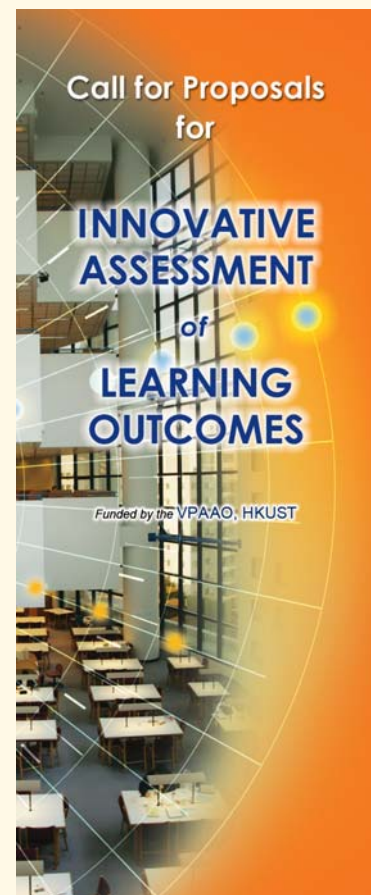
*It's good to have some hands-on (practice) in a non-threatening environment, (and) to keep us updated with the new e-tools.*

# Calling for Proposals for Innovative Assessment of Learning Outcomes

CELT is now accepting proposals for **Innovative Assessment of Learning Outcomes**. Teaching team or individual teaching staff is invited to submit their teaching and learning proposals with a focus on *innovative assessment that facilitates outcome-based teaching and learning*. No funding limit will be set for each project.

Proposal will be evaluated by the project committee made up of one Associate Dean from each School, an Associate Director from the Language Center, and chaired by Dr David Mole of AVPAA and CELT as the secretariat. Criteria which will be used to select the proposals include:

- **Outcome-based education:** Facilitate outcome-based teaching and learning
- **Student learning:** Promote improvement in student learning
- **Evaluation:** Clear and systematic evaluation to provide solid evidence to show effectiveness of projects including a generic and subject specific baseline measurement
- **Wide applicability:** Number of students being impacted immediately and potential for continuation in other courses and programs
- **Feasibility:** Scope is realistic given the funding, resources and time frame
- **Collaboration:** Inter-departmental collaboration and involvement of peers



Application deadline is **12 September 2008** and results will be announced in November in the same year. Proposal template, information about assessing learning outcomes and application procedures can be obtained from [http://celt.ust.hk/obe/call\\_for\\_proposal.html](http://celt.ust.hk/obe/call_for_proposal.html).

## Resources for various assessment projects and tools:

**Assessment Resource Centre of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

<http://www.polyu.edu.hk/assessment/arc/about/arc.htm>

**Higher Education Academy from the UK**

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/assessment>

**Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment hosted by North Carolina State University**

<http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm>



# 2007-2008 Teaching Assistant (TA) Training Program

More than 300 Year-1 Teaching Assistants (TAs) from different departments participated in the TA Orientation and Induction Training Program for 2007-2008 academic year. Most of them received the certificates of completion from Dr David Mole of AVPAA in the TAs' Certificate of Achievement Presentation Ceremony held on 23 April 2008.

According to the TA Program Opinion Survey which was conducted during the departmental feedback session, the

induction program was well received by TAs. A majority of TAs (81%) expressed that the TA training program appropriate and useful and 73% rated the overall TA program effective. Most of the TAs (80%) were satisfied with the performance of their Teaching Assistant Coordinators (TACs) and 70% rated the work of TACs beneficial to them. Among the mandatory training workshops, 'Departmental Briefing Sessions', 'Marking & Grading' and 'Orientation' were found to be the most applicable to TAs.

## Sharing of Best TAC Winners

"...I would like to express my sincere gratefulness and thanks to all the people who supported my nomination during the best TAC election campaign. It is a great honour for me to serve as ECE TA Coordinator and to know that so many people listen and agree with my opinion, read my emails and finally have voted for me. I can share my feeling on the keys of a remarkable creative personality noticed by others:

- Believe in yourself, as it is the Will to success
- Seek for your own way and be active
- Look around and Reflect your point of view..."

~ Alex-ECE (Best TAC 2007-08)



## Best TAC Award

In March 2008, all TAs were invited to vote for their departmental TA Coordinator (TAC). Two outstanding TACs, **Mr Wong Yan Fung** from **BIOL** department and **Mr Alexander Muravsky** from **ECE** department who were voted by TAs and Committee respectively, received the Best TAC Award.



".....When I was an undergraduate student at HKUST, I learned from TAs. When I became a graduate student at the university, I have been a TA and assisted students. Now, I am so delighted to be a TA coordinator between you all and thanks for your kind support and appreciation throughout this year..."

~ Fung-BIOL (Best TAC 2007-08)

## Upcoming Events

- **Fall 08 TA Induction Program** is held from 26 Aug to 2 Sept 2008. For details, please go to <http://celt.ust.hk/ta/index.html>
- **Faculty Orientation** is held from 27 to 29 Aug 2008. For details, please go to <http://publish.ust.hk/faco/schedule.pdf> or contact Tammy Sha (cttammy, ext 6803).
- Proposal submission deadline for **Innovative Assessments of Learning Outcomes** is 12 Sept 2008. For enquiries, please contact [ctcli@ust.hk](mailto:ctcli@ust.hk).