

# Engaging Undergraduates in RESEARCH and INQUIRY: A Scholarly Dialogue

## Service Learning Opportunities in a Social Science Course: Hong Kong

Course Instructor/Project leader

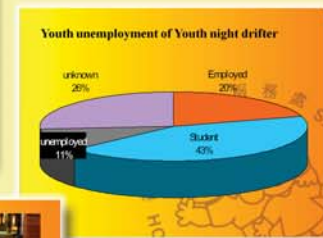
Prof Julian McAllister GROVES, *Visiting Scholar, Division of Social Science, HKUST*

### Project/Course Objectives

- To practice sociological methods and techniques by conducting sociological interviews, surveys and writing up reports.
- To develop empathy for their clients with whom they have to form friendships during the research projects.

### Inquiry Based Learning Activities

- Students offered English/computer skills classes to migrants, became "big buddies" to disabled companions and visited disadvantaged youths in public housing estates.
- Students were required to go off campus to conduct interviews with different people (e.g. new immigrants, the disabled, the elderly, and community activists).
- Students learned to take positions or responsibility for their clients and exercised their leadership skills. They were required to organize basic skills classes, provide counseling for drug abusers and be responsible for helping a disabled person for a day.



**We Believe**

- Every Youth are talented
- Everyone has a righteous power to pursue for a bright future.
- Deviant behavior is an indicator of unfulfilled needs
- Youth problem is an individual problem as well as a social problem



### How did you assess the effectiveness of students' learning?

Student groups have two deliverables for this project:

- A 10-15 page report based on a set of questions, e.g. for the Disability project

These questions were supplemented with an additional question asking student groups to reflect on and evaluate their experience of the project as a whole.

- A 10-minute oral presentation based on the report

Presentation covered key learning gains for the group and recommendations for project improvement.

### What were the major outcomes of this project/course? Do they match with your objectives?

- Understanding and integration of knowledge within the discipline have been deepened
- Empathy and understanding of clients' needs and the social problems in the community have been enhanced
- Personal responsibility for tasks and leadership skills have been improved
- Ability to apply sociological methods and techniques in conducting a community-based social research have been developed