Aligning student learning with a sustainability mindset

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About Hong Kong
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Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Foundation of a Sustainable Campus

FOCUS ON SURROUNDINGS AND LIVABLE SPACES
Our surroundings influence our understanding of sustainability.
Designs, location, and attractiveness play a large role in determining active and healthy behaviors.
In some cases, designs may actually prevent social interaction or collaboration.
Sense of Place - Conclusions

Surroundings have strong influence on our ability to understand sustainability.

Surroundings influence behavior.

Surroundings influence our social lives.

Campuses are perfect places to create good examples for sustainable surroundings.
Gaining Alignment

SUSTAINABILITY MINDSET
STUDENT LEARNING
CAMPUS OPERATIONS
Changing landscape

69% of students*
  ◦ consider green campus attributes when deciding

82% of young Millennials**
  ◦ consider a company’s CSR commitments when deciding what job to take

74% of Millennials**
  ◦ say they would volunteer for a cause supported by a company they trust (vs. 56% U.S. average)

1 of 3 Students today
  ◦ Will be alive in the year 2100

* Source: Princeton Review
** Source: 2015 Cone Communications Millennial CSR Study
Student Influence on Process
**Current Snapshot:**

*Strength in four areas where the university is making significant contributions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research and discovery</th>
<th>Campus operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leveraging university resources and human capital to solve pressing problems for human society</td>
<td>Transitioning towards a campus that becomes an integral part of the learning experience and training of the students.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Collaborative impact</th>
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<td>Preparing students for careers and social interaction within a 21st century environment (resource-constraints, rapid and unpredictable technology changes, globalization)</td>
<td>Contributing to the advancement of the HKUST community, Hong Kong, and the world (“spilling out”)</td>
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Directional Movement

**Campus operations** –
*Continues integration in student training*

**Research and discovery** –
*Continues transition towards tech transfer*

Continual transition through:
1. Campus as learning lab
2. Demonstrating by doing (“walking the walk”)

Emphasis to get “off the lab bench”
1. Implementation in real world settings
2. Integrated / cross-disciplinary / cross-sector research
Perspective
A sustainability vision can bind existing elements together in new and interesting ways
Alignment – Some Thoughts

Universities must change rapidly to keep up with student needs.

Alignment requires flexibility and adaptability.

Alternative approaches are needed to build meaningful experiential learning.

Sustainability can play a role in generating experiences that provide learning platforms for students.
How does this look in the context of students?

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS SURVEY
Can We Confirm Any of This?

Current research project

Focus on employers in Hong Kong

1) What advice would you give to a student?
2) What is important to your business?

Sustainability Knowledge and Skills Survey

Hard skills

General knowledge

Specific knowledge

Soft skills

Doing Business in Hong Kong
Skills and Knowledge for Students in the 21st Century

- Taught hard skills and training
- Learned soft skills and experience
Important Attributes in Employees

- Commitment to volunteering and helping others (5%)
- Broad and diverse array of experiences (5%)
- Inquisitiveness and willingness to learn new things (69%)
- Strong sense of ethical and moral grounding (16%)
- Sense of humor (5%)
Important Attributes for Applicants

- Overall strong academic record
- Academic major in a field that is relevant to your business
- Industry experience (from internships or other work activities)
- Leadership in groups, student societies
- Strong letters of recommendation

45% 25% 23% 3%

Learned soft skills and experience
Brief Conclusions

Experiences matter

*How can we best utilize the campus as a learning lab?*

Interpersonal and social skills mean everything

*How do we create vibrant spaces that foster interconnections?*

Inquisitiveness opens the world

*How can we foster a life-long love of learning?*
Questions?