



# Sustainability - It's Everyone's Job

Sustainable Academic Libraries: Now and Beyond

Academic Librarian 4

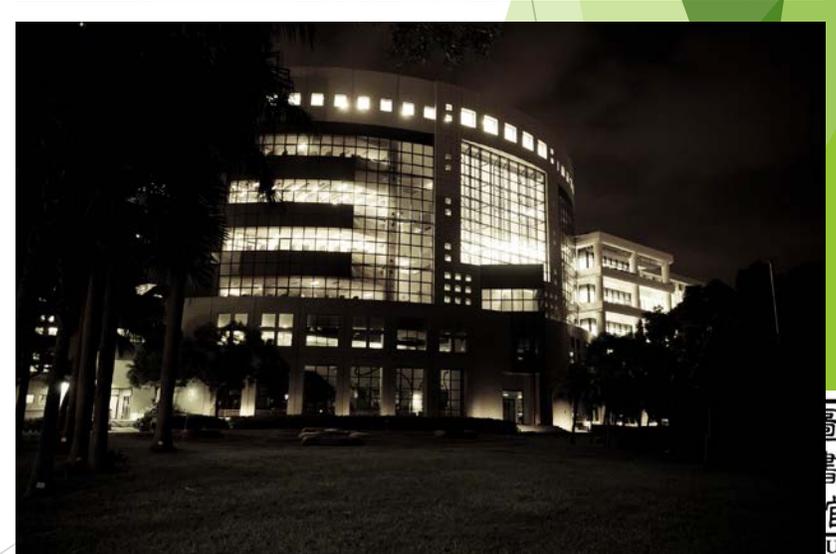
2-3 June 2016, Hong Kong

Sustainability



# HKUST Library

- ▶ The *Hong Kong University of Science and Technology* (HKUST) was founded from the earth in 1991.
- ▶ The University has had two eras of explosive growth:
  - ▶ when it first opened and grew from a few hundred to 5,000 students in just 3-4 years;
  - ▶ and recently, when Hong Kong moved from a 3-year to a 4-year undergraduate program - Student enrollment rose from 7,500 in 2011/12 to 10,000 in 2014/15 to 13,700 in 2015/16.



# Sustainability From Day One



resources



Silent Dance @ HKUST (hq).mp4



- May help with unexpected student usage

# Sustainability From Day One

1. Sourcing study furniture (tables, carrels, chairs, counters)
  - ▶ Solid wood construction, plus wood edging. Very durable, most still in use
  - ▶ May help with unexpected student usage
2. Self-service photocopying - sustainable operations
  - ▶ 'History' and Negotiations with Finance Office
  - ▶ These two efforts were "sustainable", although that term was not yet in common usage.
  - ▶ *How sustainable is a Library if its primary focus is minimalism and cost savings?*



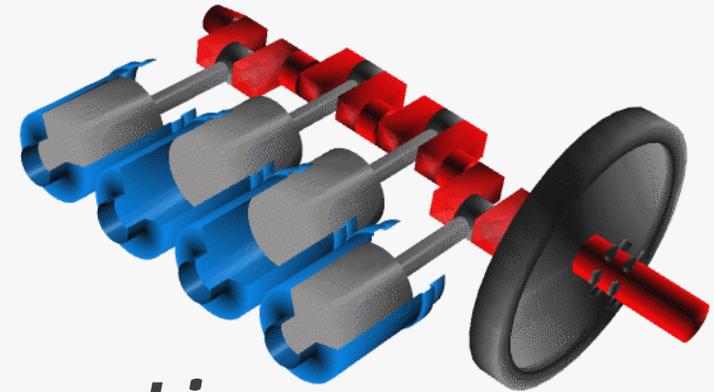
# "Sustainability"

- ▶ Sustainability is a relatively recent field

*"Sustainability is the ability to continue a defined behavior indefinitely."*

(*Finding and Resolving the Root Causes of the Sustainability Problem.*  
<http://thwink.org/sustain/glossary/Sustainability.htm>)

- ▶ Provides a graspable entry point for any discussion or action plan at any level - *micro-* or *macro-*

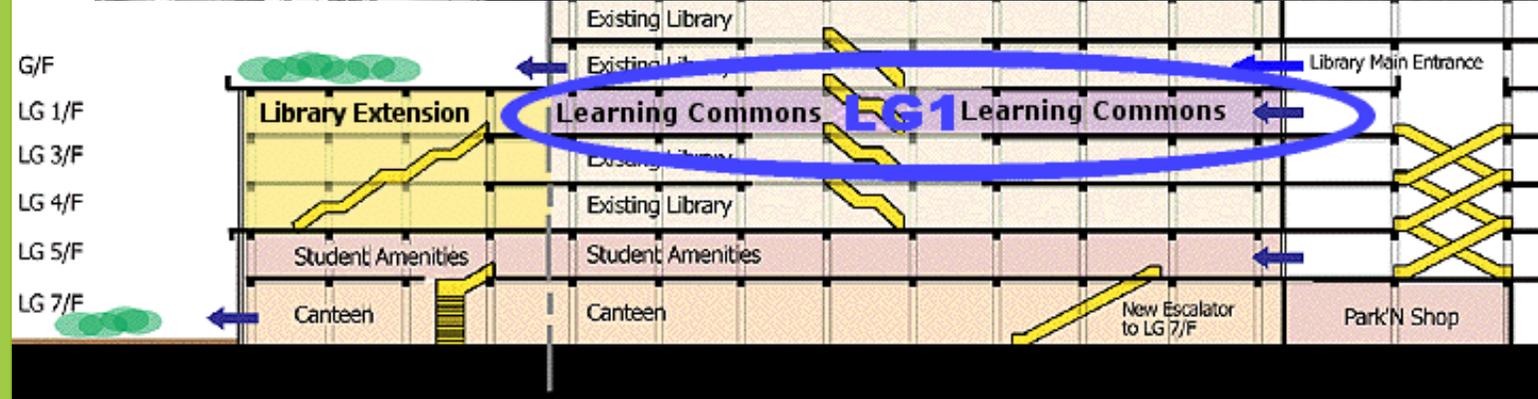


# Macro- vs Micro- Efforts

- ▶ “Macro” - often viewed as national and international politics, economics, demographics, etc.
- ▶ “Micro” - efforts at the lower end of social, political, industrial, or organizational body
- ▶ Perspective - can be either or both:
  - ▶ At a place like HKUST, the institution’s sustainability plans may fit the Micro definition above from the viewpoint of Hong Kong and Chinese governmental planning,
  - ▶ but it is very Macro from the viewpoint of clerical staff in the Acquisitions department of the Library.



# Macro- → Micro- - Implementing Institutional Projects & Goals (1)



Macro- → Micro-

## - Implementing Institutional Projects & Goals (2)

- ▶ Library staff at all levels were actively involved in the planning process
- ▶ Give staff a sense of “ownership” of the plans
  - ▶ Invested in exploring issues and solutions
  - ▶ Committed to continuing the efforts on the Micro-scale once the initial project was “completed”.
  - ▶ Avoid micromanagement -> Don't just tell staff what to do, tell them the goals and let them find their own solutions
- ▶ Bring everyone into the process with an awareness of the goals and benefits not just for the institution but for society



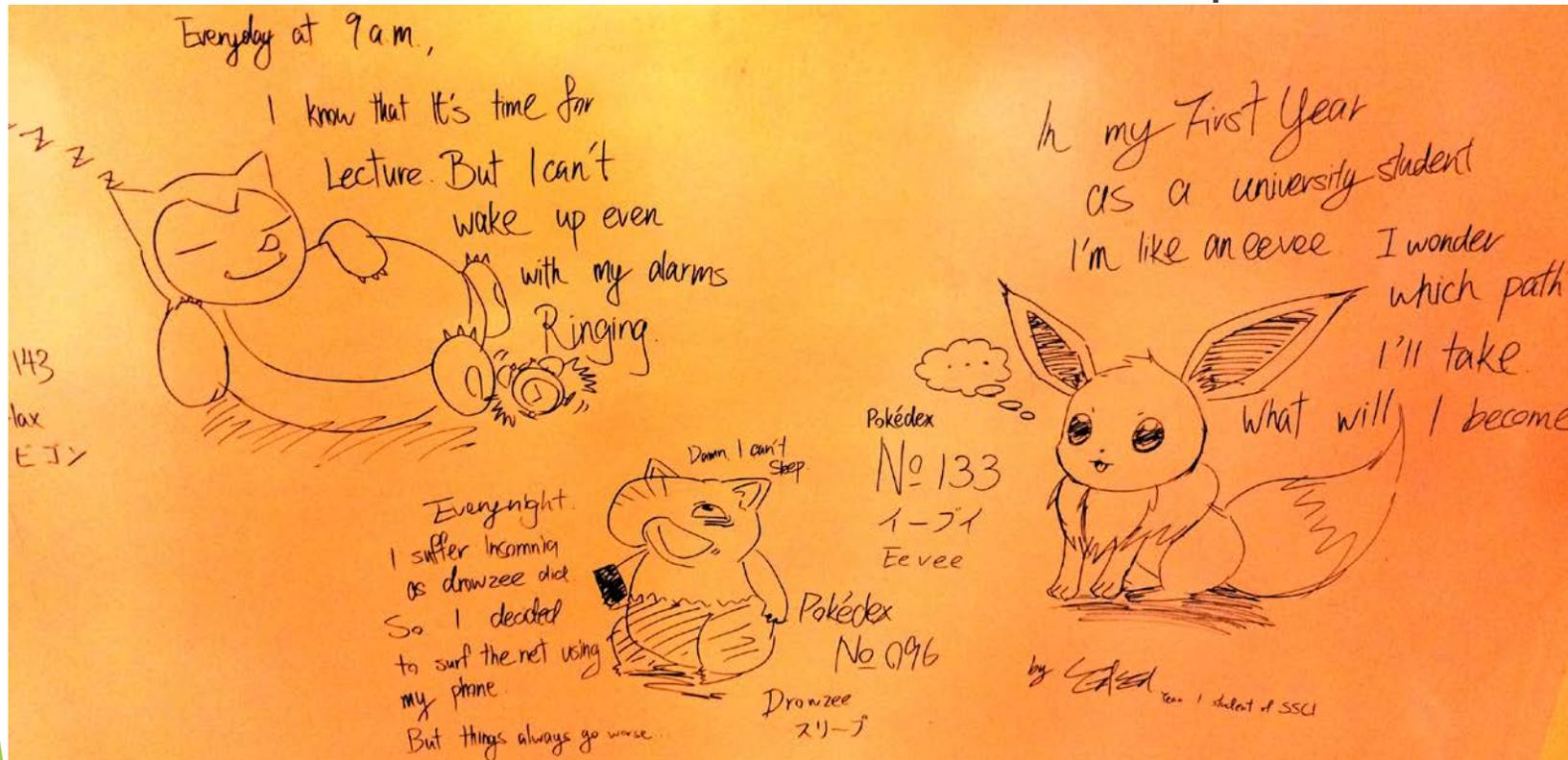
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## Reading Chair Re-upholstery Record

Date	Blue Chair		Burgundy Chair		Total Number of Chairs
	Armed	Armless	Armed	Armless	Re-upholstered
6-Jan-03			60	20	80
6-Feb-04			49	33	82
19-Jun-04	42	138			180
28-Apr-05	135	174	124	244	677
22 May 2006			30	54	84
26-May-08			22	52	74
5-Mar-10			25	202	227
22-Jul-11				16	16
19-Aug-11				16	16
20-Jan-12	22	18	30	44	114
20-Dec-13	90	50			140
1-Dec-14	7	7			14
	296	387	340	681	<b>1704</b>

# Micro- from the Bottom Up

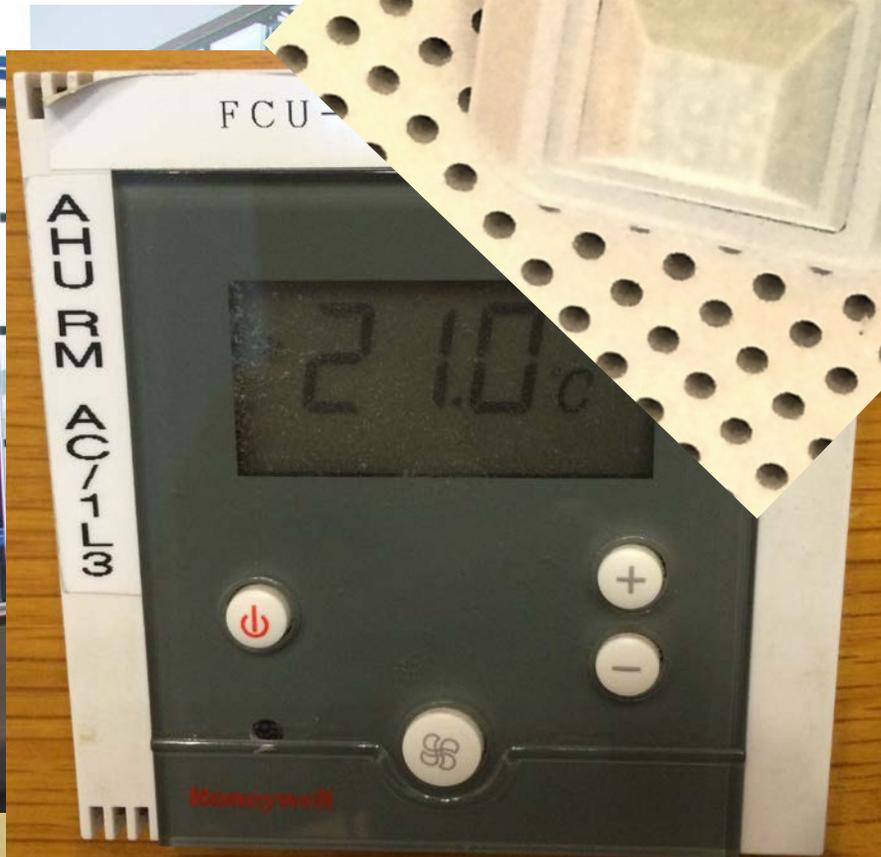
- ▶ Empowering staff to come up with new ideas and bring them up through and across the organization
  - ▶ Empowerment, Ownership, Inclusion, Solutions
- ▶ Refillable white boards markers - from operational staff



Sustainability

# UST: Heating, Ventilation, A/C, Lighting

- ▶ HVAC - Single largest environmental impact point of the Library
- ▶ Competing requirements of user comfort versus cost conservation
- ▶ Complete isolation of the Library Commons and its 24/7 operation
- ▶ Local Controls where feasible
- ▶ Circulation staff doing regular checks and expanding the provision of study rooms - not just the main study rooms
- ▶ Sensors in new areas deactivate HVAC systems as well.





## UJST: Water



- ▶ Library
- ▶ Power
- ▶ need
- ▶ Uni
- ▶ sug
- ▶ Aut
- ▶ PCs

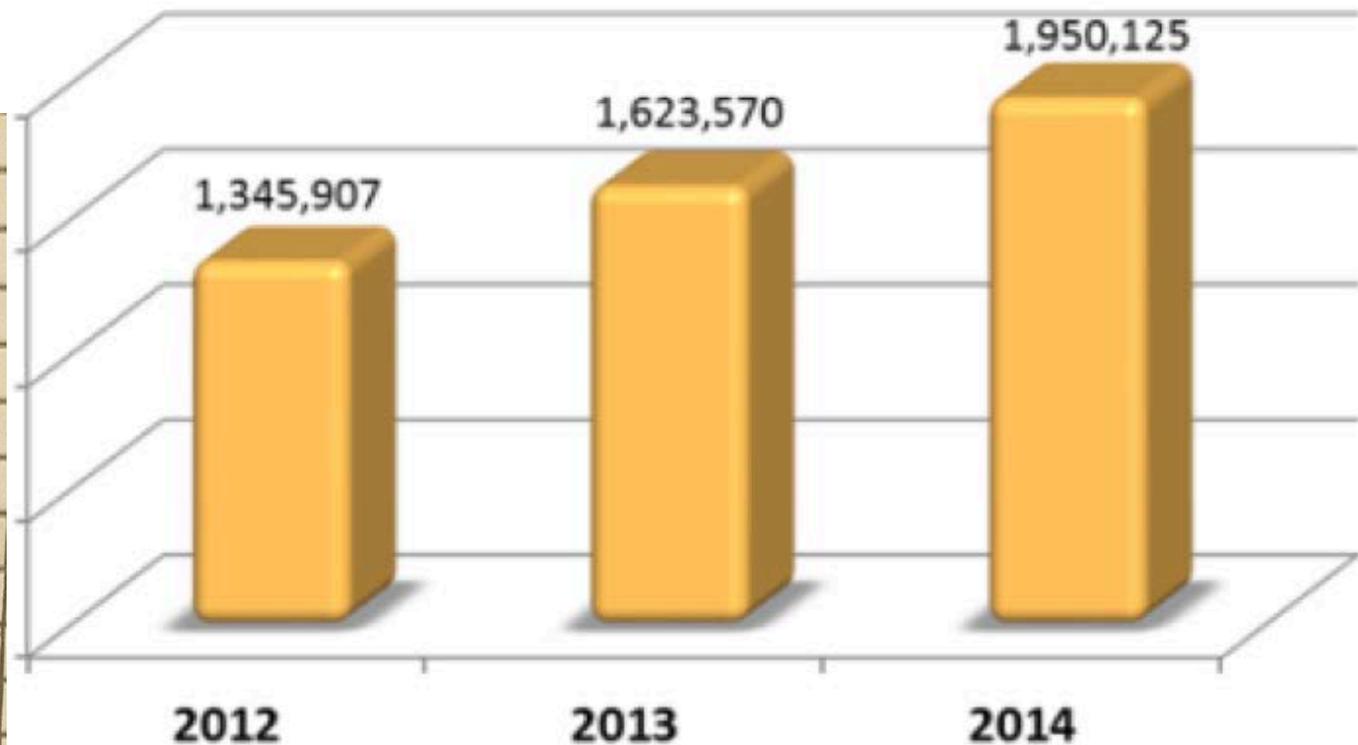
at time of  
the Library or  
anonymous

10-200 public  
t suggestion

Sustainability



## UST: Environment E-journal (No. of Article Downloads)



Library's annual retreat

- ▶ Also opportunities to raise awareness among users.



# Planning

Library is in  
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Electrical, 495  
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a learning  
ary, but for

▶ Dedicate campus facilities for vendors	Door	30
	Sanitary Fitting	12
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>991</b>

▶ developed solid relationships based on trust and reliability

Defects completion based

(991 defects/260 days\*)  
= completed 3.8 defects per day for Facilities team

- ▶ Apply to the... and other Library events?

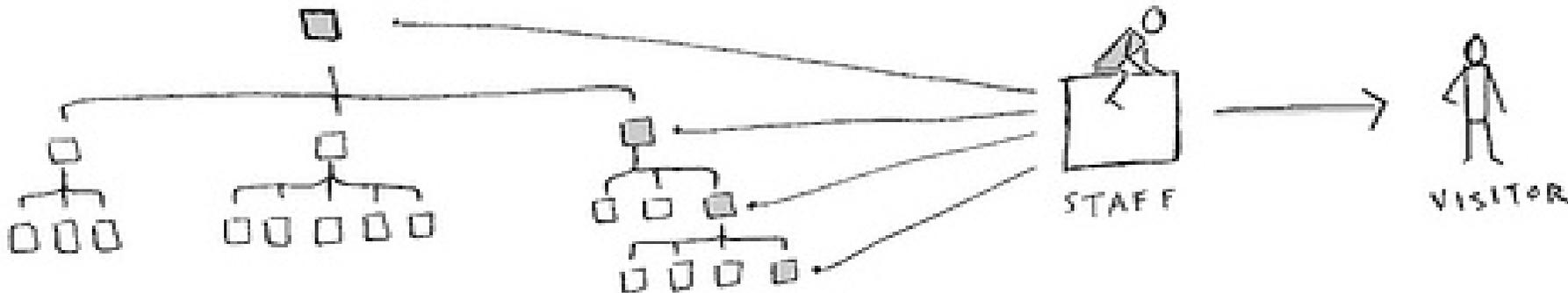


Sustainability



# UST: Organizational Structure and Culture

- ▶ When looking at these efforts, a pattern emerges of an increasingly flexible and agile management culture - much of the reason for the range and success of the Library's sustainability efforts
- ▶ Strong positive outcomes require developing a management style which encourages user input at all levels.
- ▶ Input from micro-level staff is needed into the process of sustainability
- ▶ BUT!!! To make this work, the organizational structure must support it
- ▶ Many ways to achieve this:
  - ▶ flattening the organizational chart



# Culture of Sustainability

- ▶ Issues of sustainability need to permeate the entire organization - create a “culture of sustainability”
- ▶ Existing focus is top-down micro efforts from macro directives
- ▶ Seek opportunities for bottom-up efforts - micro-level actions influence macro-level initiatives
- ▶ Over time, HKUST Library has made many changes in organization and management
  - ▶ flattening the organization chart;
  - ▶ involving a broader range of staff on committees, working groups, project teams;
  - ▶ Established annual strategic planning retreat for all staff.
- ▶ Micro-level issues are not always micro-implementations of institutional objectives. They also contribute to high-level strategic planning.
- ▶ Remember to build in an understanding of what sustainability is.



A sustainable environment is everyone's responsibility, and it can make all of our jobs easier ... or at least more satisfying.