



50th Golden Jubilee
Anniversary
Statistics & Actuarial Science
The University of Hong Kong 1967-2017

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50th Anniversary
1967-2017



*Department
of
Statistics & Actuarial Science
The University of Hong Kong*

Message from Department Head



In 1967, the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science (then Department of Statistics) was established in The University of Hong Kong.

Growing from originally a special teaching unit to now one of the most established statistics and actuarial science departments in the world, the Department has unquestionably come a long way through the years with only one senior lecturer and one lecturer to begin with. Now the Department has expanded to almost 90 teaching members, supporting staff and research students altogether.

On the voyage of teaching and learning, the Department's determined mission to provide state-of-the-art education has led to the respective offering of the Bachelor of Science (Majors in Decision Analytics, Risk Management, and Statistics), Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Science, Master of Statistics, MPhil and PhD programmes, which have never stopped evolving for the betterment of our students.

As ranked No.1* for the subject of Statistics and designated as one of the only two Centers of Actuarial Excellence in Hong Kong, we will continue to look beyond the challenges and competition ahead. We reaffirm our commitment to academic excellence with relentless dedication and unflagging efforts in research and scholarship.

The year 2017 is a special year, for it marks the Golden Jubilee of the Department. Over the past 5 decades, the Department has shown to the world its strengths and resolutions.

All the achievements and honours clearly should belong to all the talented and dedicated colleagues of the Department, academic and supporting. I am very grateful to have the chance of working with them in the last 34 years or so since I have joined the University. Yet the Department will not be able to achieve so much if there is no strong support from you all - our alumni and friends. Thanks also go particularly to our patrons, Professor Swee-hock Saw and Dr. Patrick Poon, more students of the Department could be awarded with scholarships which serve as great encouragement for the scholarship recipients.

More recently, the University is aspired to make overseas experience more available to students. In response, the Department signed an MOU with the National School for Statistics and Information Analysis in France for student exchange. The first exchange was successfully held last summer with 20 students. In the meantime, the University's objective is to have 50% of its student body to have such overseas experience by 2019. To realize this goal, your generous help would be much appreciated.

With your support, we believe that our international renown in the science disciplines can be heightened to a new level, bringing the Department to the next milestone. As the name of this special anniversary suggests, the Department will undoubtedly continue to shine like a golden sun and blossom with dynamic developments in the years to come.

Professor Wai-keung Li
Chair Professor and Head of Department

* HKU Statistics ranks No.1 in HK and No.20 worldwide overall in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2017.

History



History

50

years ago, the Statistics discipline existed as a special teaching taskforce before it became an independent unit, then a proper department later, with the initial aim to serve other departments with its quantitative research expertise. Since then, the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science (the Department of Statistics) continues to show its growing importance not only in the University of Hong Kong but also in the society.

In 1969, Professor Swee-hock Saw was appointed to the founding Chair of the Department. During his years as the Chair Professor, Professor Saw developed the second and third year statistics courses, up to half of a degree curriculum, to be combined with another half in other disciplines such as Economics. Emphasis was placed on applied statistics, namely economics statistics, demography, survey sampling, industrial statistics, statistical methods, and marketing research. Being not only an applied statistician but also a great philanthropist and a selfless educator, Professor Saw continued his support for the Department, even after he left the University, with his kind donation for the Saw Gold Medal and Saw Swee Hock Statistics Scholarship. He also gave his support for the establishment of the Saw Swee Hock Visiting Professorship to promote statistics education and research in Hong Kong.

Dr. S.C. Fan was the Head of the Statistics Department from 1971 to 1976. These are the years when the Department started to take shape in the Social Science Faculty starting with only five teaching staff. Dr. S.C. Fan was the Head, Dr. W.K. Chiu was a senior lecturer, Mr. C.K. Leung and Dr. K. Lam were lecturers and Mr. R.K.C. Li was an assistant lecturer. Under the leadership of Dr. S.C. Fan, a practical and challenging statistics curriculum was developed and it became quite popular with students in the Social Science Faculty. The program then was able to attract some very talented students who later became prominent figures in the academic field and in the society. Other than contributing substantially to the Department, Dr. S.C. Fan also worked as Dean of the Faculty of Social Science from year 1981-1990.

When the Department moved to Run Run Shaw Building from Knowles Building in 1985, Professor Aitchison, then Head of Department, put much effort into setting up a computer room furnished with personal computers, which not only helped solve the numerical problems in research at the Department, but also enabled demonstration of computer implementation which was previously impossible. Two years before his retirement, Professor Aitchison launched a part-time M.Soc.Sc.(Applied Statistics) programme. As the pioneer in the analysis of compositional data, Professor Aitchison's own research in this area of statistics conducted in Hong Kong has earned him a Guy Medal in Silver from the Royal Statistical Society (U.K.) in 1988 and a Krumbein Award from the International Association for Mathematical Geology in 1995. Please see page 36 for a section dedicated to Professor Aitchison.

In 1989, Professor Richard Cowan, who succeeded Professor Aitchison as Chair Professor, led the Department into making substantial changes in the course structure by introducing clearly defined streams of courses. Foreseeing

the increasing demand for skills in practical data analysis and statistical computing on our graduates, much emphasis was placed on computer-aided elements in the curriculum. In particular, a data analysis team in the Department was formed introducing new computer-aided courses in data analysis using SAS with hands-on teaching and learning. These courses were likely the prototype of problem-based learning in the University as the courses began with real problems that the students learn to resolve at the end of the courses.

In 1993, the then one-semester course in basic actuarial science was developed into a full B.Sc.(Actuarial Science) degree which was launched in 1994 with 20 student places. In the year immediately following the launch, it topped the list of programmes in JUPAS in terms of average score of the 3 best A-Level subjects. The almost four-fold increase in enrolment number in later years has not hindered the programme from maintaining its high ranking and quality ever since.

In 1995, the Department moved to Meng Wah Complex and in 1998 it changed its name to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science upon the commencement of new quota of student places for B.Sc.(Actuarial Science). Apart from the B.Sc.(Actuarial Science), the Department had about this time three study themes under B.Soc.Sc.(Statistics): Mathematical Statistics, Applied Statistics and Risk Management themes. These themes have evolved gradually into the two Science Majors: the B.Sc.(Statistics) and the B.Sc. (Risk Management) after the Department's transfer to the Faculty of Science in 2004.

The research strengths in time series analysis and financial statistics, with the joining of Professor Howell Tong as Distinguished Visiting Professor and later Chair Professor, were at an all-time high in the late 1990s, a fact well recognized by the University, which rated Financial Time Series in the Department as an area of research excellence and granted a budget of one million dollars to support the activities in this area. Specifically, the Department organized the Hong Kong International Workshop on Statistics in Finance and the Symposium on Financial Risk and Statistics, both in July 1999. One of the keynote speakers in the symposium was Professor Clive Granger, who became a Nobel Laureate in Economics in 2003.

Professor K.W. Ng served as Head from 1999 to 2006 and from 2010 to 2013 while Professor W.K. Li served as Head for the rest of the period in between and up to the present. They led the Department in becoming a top research-led department at an international level. To date, it has very strong ties with the international academic community and has organized or co-organized a total of 40 international conferences and workshops. World class academics such as Professor T.L. Lai of Stanford University, recipient of the prestigious President's Award of the



History

Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies of North America, and Professor Hans U. Gerber, who has been conferred three honorary doctoral degrees, are serving on the Department's Advisory Board. Professor Howell Tong, former Chair Professor, has also been appointed Distinguished Visiting Professor again in 2004 to formalize his continued ties with the Department, while he is also a recipient of the Guy Medal in Silver from the Royal Statistical Society.

The Department has in the website a very proud record of academic honours won by its teachers. Moreover, it was placed No. 1 in Asia and No. 10 worldwide for its Actuarial research by the NAAJ for the period from 1982 to 2011. In 2011, it was designated a Centre of Actuarial Excellence (CAE) by the US Society of Actuaries (SOA) for a period of five years with the status recently renewed for another five years. It is at this time of writing the only university in Asia receiving an CAE research grant, which amounted to over two million Hong Kong dollars.

After the recent Department's relocation from Meng Wah Complex back to Run Run Shaw Building, a new major Decision Analytics was launched in 2015 to meet the needs of the society for talents in the area of data science. In the following years, the Department was ranked first in Asia in terms of employer reputation and first in Hong Kong overall according to the QS World University Ranking by Subject 2016 and 2017. Also, it currently boasts three elected Fellows of the American Statistical Association (ASA), two Fellows of Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS) and ten International Statistical Institute (ISI) Elected Members. Being elected to these three professional bodies are the top honors for statisticians.

The relationship of town and gown has elevated to a higher altitude. The Department believes strongly that it is important to serve the society by producing high quality graduates well trained in actuarial science, decision analytics, risk management, and statistics. As a reputable academic institution of global distinction, we never cease committing ourselves to high quality academic research and teaching, and has strived its best to equip its students with the state of the art in every course it runs. Growing from strength to strength, we will continue to maintain our research and teaching vitality, and inspire our students.

The Department also believes strongly that its success is impossible without the hard work of its staff, teaching and non-teaching, the strong support of its students, its alumni, the industry and the society of Hong Kong. Generous donations from Dr. Patrick Poon and Professor Swee-hock Saw, together with a matched amount from the University, were of great assistance in not only our research but also our teaching and learning. With generous support from our business and industrial patrons as well as our alumni and friends, the Department is confident that it will be able to compete with the best internationally and achieve its mission of being one of the top departments of statistics in the world.

Milestone Timeline

- 
- 1967 — Established in Knowles Building as one of the departments under the Faculty of Social Sciences
 - 1969 — Professor S H Saw was appointed as the founding chair
 - 1969 — Developed the Statistics curriculum
 - 1985 — Moved offices from Knowles Building to Run Run Shaw Building
 - 1987 — Launched the Master of Statistics programme (then Master of Social Sciences in Applied Statistics programme)
 - 1994 — Launched the Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Science programme
 - 1995 — Moved offices from Run Run Shaw Building to Meng Wah Complex
 - 1998 — Renamed the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science
 - 1998 — HKU designated the area of financial time series as an area of distinction within the University
 - 2004 — Transferred to the Faculty of Science
 - 2004 — Launched the Major of Risk Management
 - 2004 — Established the Patrick Poon Lecture Series in Actuarial Science
 - 2009 — Established the Saw Swee Hock Public Lecture in Statistics
 - 2011 — Established the endowed Patrick S C Poon Professorship in Statistics and Actuarial Science
 - 2011 — Designated as a Center of Actuarial Excellence by the US Society of Actuaries
 - 2014 — Moved offices from Meng Wah Complex to Run Run Shaw Building
 - 2015 — Launched the Major in Decision Analytics
 - 2017 — HKU Statistics ranked No.1 in Hong Kong and No.20 worldwide according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject



Congratulatory Messages

Congratulatory Messages



On behalf of the University, may I offer my warmest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science as it celebrates its Golden Jubilee.

The Department was founded in 1967 (then known as the Department of Statistics), and over the past five decades has seen considerable growth and impressive developments. It has not only achieved a world class profile in academic research, but has also become a well-recognised and respected department locally in teaching and learning. Its graduates have gone on to make a mark of their own, in their respective professions and throughout society.

It is the years of dedication and hard work of those in the Department, past and present, that have resulted in such remarkable achievements and contributed to the University's growing international standing.

My sincere thanks to the colleagues, students and alumni of the Department for their unwavering belief in the University's endeavours. I am sure I can continue to count on their ongoing support and loyalty, so that together we can make the HKU experience a unique and cherished one for generations of students to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Mathieson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Professor Peter Mathieson
President and Vice-Chancellor

Congratulatory Messages

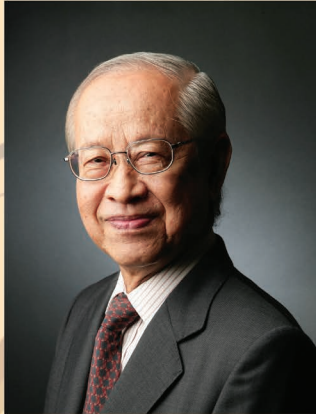


The Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science is an important part of the Faculty of Science. Since 1967 the Department has been providing well-trained and highly qualified graduates to the businesses and agencies in Hong Kong and around the world. The standards are sufficiently high to warrant being recognised by the Society of Actuaries as one of the few Centers of Actuarial Excellence in Asia. The staff of the department have won a large number of prizes and awards, all of which bring prestige to the Faculty.

It is a pleasure to see the Department flourishing fifty years after it was founded. It is great demand from students and its research continues to be buoyant. Indeed I was very pleased when the Department agreed to take the lead in the Faculty's initiative to develop a research cluster in Big Data. In this ever-changing world we cannot afford to stand still; new developments and opportunities need to be embraced when they present themselves. I wish the Department all the very best in its golden anniversary year. I am sure that many more anniversaries will be celebrated in the future in the years and decades to come.

Professor Matthew R Evans
Dean, Faculty of Science

Congratulatory Messages



In October 1969, I assumed duty in the University of Hong Kong as founding Professor of Statistics and Head of the Department of Statistics in the Faculty of Social Sciences. I am grateful to the University for giving me this huge boost to my academic career considering that I was only 37 years old, received my doctorate in Statistics from LSE not more than six years ago, and just promoted to Senior Lecturer in the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur.

The Department has developed from an extremely small one with only three staff, Mr C. S. Hui, Mr W. K. Chiu, and myself, to a mature one with 17 professoriate staff now. The last 50 years have witnessed many significant changes. Among the more important ones are the transfer of the Department to the Faculty of Science, the introduction of Actuarial Science as a degree subject, and very recently Decision Analytics was added. There is now a wide range of exciting courses offered under these three degree subjects. Equally important is the rapid expansion of well-qualified academic staff to conduct teaching and research, resulting in outstanding articles and books being published.

My heartiest congratulations to the staff and students of the Department for their excellent achievements in last 50 years. I will continue to render whatever support I possibly can to the Department to enable it to achieve greater height of excellence in the years ahead.

Professor Swee-hock Saw
President's Honorary Professor of Statistics, National University of Singapore

Congratulatory Messages



五十年前統計初
知天命者不知多
香江那怕艱辛路
播種環球奏凱歌

First, please allow me to send my warmest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of the University of Hong Kong on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

Born in 1967, originally under the name of the Department of Statistics and now the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science, the Department has reached the important age of 'understanding the decrees of Heaven' in the words of Confucius. Starting from a very humble beginning, it is now a fully-fledged department with an international reputation for teaching and research. At the age of 50, the DS&AS is undoubtedly the oldest department of its kind in Hong Kong. However, on an international scale, it is only about half the age of the oldest. It is, therefore, the more remarkable to witness how this not-so-old department has managed to win so many firsts listed by Professor W. K. Li in his Foreword to the Golden Jubilee announcement. During its journey from a humble beginning in 1967 to a top-ranking department in 2017, the DS&AS has benefited greatly from its intelligent students, dedicated teachers and industrious staff. Every enterprise owes its success to the single-mindedness of the leaders and the selfless contributions of all members of the team. Of course, DS&AS is no exception.

On paraphrasing John F. Kennedy, I am sure that as long as every member of DS&AS 'asks not what the department can do for him/her but asks what he/she can do for the department', the sky will be the limit for the department in the next 50 years.

Happy Golden Jubilee!

Professor Howell Tong
Emeritus Professor of Statistics, London School of Economics

Congratulatory Messages



I am very fortunate to have witnessed the Department's development since 1979. I came to the Department initially on unpaid leave from the University of Toronto. Under warm influence of Professor John Aitchison as Head, who unfortunately has passed away in December last year, I resigned my Associate Professorship with tenure at Toronto and stayed in the Department until my retirement in 2006. Thanks to the University authority and Department's support, my full-time appointment was extended to 2014. It is my privilege to serve as Head of such a successful university department on four occasions, one in the appointment extension period. And it is my great honour to be appointed the first Patrick C S Poon Professor in Statistics and Actuarial Science in April 2011 as one of the 54 Endowed Professors of HKU then.

I happily saw the several expansions in faculty and staff need in the Department. The first was due to the 40% increase in course enrolment after launching the hands-on computer-aided courses using SAS in early 90's, which might be the early kind of "problem-based" teaching and learning in HKU as well. The second was due to the 70% expansion of the Actuarial Science programme, leading to the change of the Department's name from "Statistics" to "Statistics and Actuarial Science". The third was due to the Department's move from the Social Sciences Faculty to the Science Faculty where students were allowed to select major and minors programmes after admitted the Science Faculty; the maximum student enrolment in courses offered by the Department was more than 45% of the Science Faculty. The fourth expansion was in the taught Master Degree Programme whose admission changed from 20 candidates every two years to about 50 each year. Readers can find in this brochure many awards, prizes and honors received by our colleagues and the history of international high rankings of the Department by subjects.

Our proud alumni and friends have helped the Department all along in these 50 years. I am confident that they will extend their staunch support to the Department for the next 50 years.

Happy 50th Anniversary!

Professor Kai-wang Ng
Honorary Professor and Patrick S C Poon Professor in Statistics and Actuarial Science

Congratulatory Messages



As one of the first HKU students taking Statistics course when the Department started in 1967, I benefitted greatly through the study. It directly helped my professional and business career throughout my life.

I cannot express enough thanks to HKU and the Statistics Department in nurturing me and many graduates who made tremendous contributions to Hong Kong and the world. The level of teaching and research in the Department has always been world class producing results that are envied by many tertiary institutions.

The Department has also given me the opportunity to support its development through the establishment of Distinguished Scholar Lectures, Scholarships to students and an Endowed Professorship. I am also tremendously grateful that HKU nominated distinguished scholar Professor Kai Ng as the first Patrick S C Poon Endowed Professor in Statistics and Actuarial Science.

At this moment of the Golden Jubilee Celebration the Department is poised to further enhance its development in teaching and research. We see the addition of new courses that meet society needs and expanded learning activities for students through international exchanges and industry internship programs.

Heartiest Congratulations to the Department for a great 50 years and beyond!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick S C Poon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Patrick S C Poon
Chairman, Harvest SCP Group Company Limited

Congratulatory Messages



It is my great pleasure to congratulate the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of the University of Hong Kong on its 50th anniversary.

Statistics is not just about numbers and formulas; it is a tool to help us understand the world. Most importantly, statistical training helps us think more systematically. Statistical methods involve validating assumptions, defining problems, verifying the hypotheses with data and making evidence-based decisions. With statistical analysis, useful information can be extracted from the sea of data and transformed into knowledge that influences our lives. I am very glad that I have studied statistics and benefited from it in my life and career.

Ever since its inception in 1967, the Department has been offering students the knowledge, skills and training that lead to professional recognition and open up careers for them in various sectors. I am confident that with its vision and dedication, the Department will continue to develop the best people in the realm of statistics and actuarial science in the future.

Mr Leslie Tang
Commissioner for Census and Statistics

Congratulatory Messages



I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science on its Golden Jubilee celebration. Ever since I started studying statistics at HKU many years ago, statistics has become my lifelong companion. I am delighted to celebrate this important milestone with my Alma Mater and wish the Department every success in the years to come!

The Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science has grown robustly in the past five decades. It has nurtured a large number of high-quality talents and professionals for serving the community on different fronts. As data of various sorts are emerging at an unprecedented pace, more and more people turn to the use of statistics for evidence-based decision making. The ability to master and analyse data has become increasingly important and provides a competitive edge to young graduates working in diverse fields. Building on its 50 years of solid foundation and capitalising on its remarkable achievements, I am confident that the Department will continue to contribute significantly to the advancement of the society through its excellence in research and teaching.

Ms Marion Chan
Deputy Commissioner, Census and Statistics Department

Congratulatory Messages



On behalf of the Hong Kong Federation of Insurers (HKFI), I would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science on the 50th anniversary of its establishment, a Golden Jubilee.

Over the past few decades, the insurance industry has faced a succession problem. There is a notable shortage of young talents providing functional support in the insurance sector. As one of the most established statistics and actuarial science departments in the world, the Department has nurtured hundreds of quality and visionary graduates in the statistics, risk-management, analytics and actuarial field in the past half-century to meet the demand for new talents. This wealth of high-caliber actuarial professionals has assiduously contributed to our market growth and helped reinforce the status of Hong Kong as an international insurance centre.

The HKFI is pleased to be able to play a small part in this successful story. Our HKFI Educational Trust has been providing scholarships for outstanding undergraduates at the Department since 1997. And we look forward to more collaboration with the Department in talent grooming and help contribute to the academia and insurance industry.

I wish the Department continued success for many more decades to come.

Mr Ronnie Ng
Chairman of The Hong Kong Federation of Insurers

Congratulatory Messages



Congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science on reaching this historic milestone and on establishing a tremendous tradition of world class research, teaching, and nurturing of the past, present and future statistical and actuarial talents.

As you mark your 50 years of success, you have every reason to be proud of your achievements. 50 years ago, there were only a handful of actuaries in Hong Kong, but today, we are over a thousand strong in numbers. While many efforts have gone into developing and sustaining a profession, we are very thankful and fortunate to have the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science provide an excellent education to nurture, guide and shape our local young actuarial students.

Thank you for playing a vital role and for being an integral part of this profession. I look forward to continuing our close collaboration in grooming and developing our future actuarial leaders for many decades to come. Happy 50th Anniversary and warmest regards to the faculty, alumni and students!

Mr Kevin Lee
President, The Actuarial Society of Hong Kong

Congratulatory Messages



It is my pleasure to congratulate the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science to its Golden Anniversary. The Department is at the very top. The research of its faculty is recognized internationally. The undergraduate and graduate programs are of excellent quality and attract the very best students. Let the success story continue!

I have the privilege of regularly visiting the Department. The mutually fruitful exchanges take place in an optimal scientific environment, combined with a warm human atmosphere. I am proud and grateful for that. The University of Hong Kong has become my favorite place to live outside my country.

Professor Hans U Gerber
Honorary Professor of The University of Hong Kong
Emeritus Professor of the University of Lausanne



Alumni Sharing

Alumni Sharing

Having passed through the era of a semi-century, we have all witnessed the achievements and changes of SAAS. In this golden commemoration, I sincerely congratulate the Department for such amazing accomplishments over the years and nurturing so many talents who are now successful leaders in different sectors of the society. As Albert Einstein said, "The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once." It's so true that it always took a long history, remarkable effort and tremendous perseverance to build up an academic faculty with strength, credibility and reputation, and it's never easy. As alumnae of HKU, I would like to extend my special tribute to all the faculty members, teaching/administrative staff and supporting officers, who devoted their life long energy and hard work in making these fifty cherished years very memorable and successful. We should celebrate this very special moment with great pride and honor!

Ms Kitty Suet-lai Chan
Statistician, Education Bureau, HKSARG



I wish to express my heartiest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science on its 50th Anniversary. For five decades, the Department has established a strong record on tertiary education and scientific research. Faculty members, students, and alumni should have every reason to be proud of such achievements. I am certain that the Department will continue to take the leading role by making significant contributions to our local society and the global academic community. Congratulations once again for this remarkable accomplishment.

Dr Wai Chan
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Alumni Sharing

Happy 50th Anniversary to my alma mater - Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science! I would like to congratulate the Department for its success in continuously providing quality undergraduate and postgraduate education to her students. In the era of multidisciplinary collaborations, statistics not only forms an important stream of science itself, but also is an indispensable component across different professions. We are glad that graduates from the Department have become the stakeholders in the public sector, the business sector, and the academia. We are confident that the Department will continue to nurture future leaders in the society and globally.

Dr Patsy Chau
Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, The University of Hong Kong



I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science on its 50th anniversary.

The Department should feel proud of its great success and enormous contributions made to society over the past half century. Since 1967, the Department has been providing profound education in the areas of statistics, risk management and actuarial science, and trained many generations of successful graduates in society. As the first batch of the actuarial graduate from the Department, I am grateful that the education at the university has built the foundation stone of my career.

May this milestone of achievement mark in the beginning of further growth and success for the Department, and bring the promise of a bright and rewarding future for all its members.

Mr Alfred C K Cheung
Deputy Chief Executive, BOC Group Life Assurance Co. Ltd.



Alumni Sharing

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my warmest congratulations on the 50th Anniversary of the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of the University of Hong Kong.

As a graduate of the Department's Actuarial Science degree program, I am extremely excited to see the growth and continued success of the Department in nurturing quality professional actuaries for the industry.

In 1994, the Department has started to provide Actuarial Science degree program, which has made it a forerunner in Hong Kong and has revealed the foresight of the Department. Over the years, the Actuarial Science graduates of the Department have been contributing in the Hong Kong's economy especially the insurance and financial markets. This makes me proud to become a part of it.

I believe the Department will continue to be the best place to educate and train more top and talented actuaries in the future.

Mr Paddy Kwok-wing Choy
Chief Actuary, Aviva Life Insurance Company Limited



It is with very great pleasure that I extend my congratulations and best wishes to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of the University of Hong Kong on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

50 years is indeed a long period and it is well observed that the Department has grown and evolved much over such years. I am sure the Department is proud of the achievements it has made over the past 50 year period and the many talents it had developed. Amongst other major achievements, being designated as one of the only two Centers of Actuarial Excellence in Hong Kong is a testimonial to the quality and standards that the Department has established.

I am sure the Department will continue its commitment to academic excellence and efforts in research and scholarship, and I wish you the very best in this milestone year and for many years to come.

Mr Dicky Lam
Chief Actuary and Appointed Actuary, Prudential Hong Kong Limited



Alumni Sharing

I am pleased to extend my warmest and heartiest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science on its 50th anniversary.

As the Chairman of the Statistics Society in 1977-1978 and a graduate with the degree of Bachelor of Social Sciences majoring in Statistics and Economics in 1979, I am proud to witness the Department's outstanding achievements over the last five decades. The Department has received prestigious awards for its academic research on statistics, actuarial science and risk management from renowned organizations. It has also nurtured many professional statistical and actuarial talents of high calibre, who play an important role in developing the insurance, banking and finance industries in Hong Kong.

I am confident the Department will continue to make significant contributions to the society. On this momentous occasion, may I wish all the students, alumni and staff of the Department every success in their future endeavours!

Mr Robert Chung-kwok Lau
Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, China Resources Cement Holdings Limited



Congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science for its 50th anniversary celebration. I would like to send my heartfelt appreciation for the excellent education offered by the Department (Department of Statistics during my study), laying down a solid foundation for my further study in economics. May the Department continue to excel in nurturing students and conducting impactful research studies.

Professor Paul Sau-him Lau
School of Economics and Finance, University of Hong Kong

Alumni Sharing

Without my training in statistics at HKU, I would probably not be able to enter my 36+ years of research and teaching career at HKU. Knowledge in statistics provides the backbone to my social policy research work.

Dr C K Law
Associate Professor, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong



Throughout the past few decades, statistics are much easier to compute because of increasing computing power. Statistical literacy in the society has improved with more applications generally. But the interpretations are much more complicated, sometimes confusing and misinterpreted, especially in the areas of social sciences. As graduates with formal training in statistics, we may need to play a role to give correct interpretations and go back to its fundamental principles whenever necessary. There is still a long way to go.

Professor Shing-on Leung
Director, Centre for Continuing Education, Macau
Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Macau

It is my great honour to send my warmest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science (SAAS) on its 50th anniversary.

SAAS is truly my “Maiden’s Home”. Ten years ago, I had participated in its 40th anniversary celebration only as a PhD candidate. Over the years, the Department had witnessed my progress in career and family. I have benefited tremendously from the wisdom, support and experience of the Department’s dedicated staff and friendly academic sisterhood. SAAS has always been the life-long support and fortune for me to face any challenge in the past, present and future. I cannot wait for joining the 50th anniversary celebration! Happy Birthday!

Dr Catherine Chun-ling Liu
Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Mathematics, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University



Alumni Sharing



I wish to convey my warmest congratulations to the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of HKU on its 50th anniversary. In the last half a century, the Department has achieved a remarkable and sustainable growth in terms of scope of specialization and variety of programs to meet the on-going changing needs of our society, and most importantly has become a cradle for local talents in statistics, analytics and actuary. I am proud of being a member of this large alumni family. Also, I am honoured to be the Chief Statistician of the Hospital Authority, leading a department with 40+ professionals, half of whom being HKU graduates. Augmented by our past university education to develop our statistical and analytic skills, and to nurture a logical mind as well as a passion in this field, we have indeed established our pivotal role to transform data into insightful information to facilitate decision making and forward planning; and formulation of strategies and measures to meet population healthcare needs. On behalf of all our alumni in the Hospital Authority, we sincerely hope the Department's renowned academic position will reach a new milestone in the "big data analytics" era.

Ms Eva Tsui
Chief Statistician, Hospital Authority

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the 50th anniversary of the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science. There is no doubt that it has produced the largest number of PhD graduates in statistics amongst all local universities. I studied as a part-time PhD student in the Department in the early nineteen nineties, under the supervision of Prof. W.K. Li. From my memory, the Department was already a Department very strong in research since the late nineteen seventies. It has a wonderful series of research reports, and I still look at the series frequently to keep me up-to-date about latest statistical researches. Congratulations for your achievements again, SAAS!

Professor Heung Wong
Professor, Department of Applied Mathematics, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University



Happy 50th anniversary! It has been a blessing and privilege that I was able to commence my undergraduate programme at the Department, followed by master and doctorate studies under Professor Kin Lam and Professor Richard Cowan, and Dr. Eddy Lam respectively. It was an eye opening and life changing experience, and has helped to build a very good foundation for my later career development. These 50 years have been remarkable and now the Department is No. 1 in Hong Kong, No. 3 in Asia and No. 23 worldwide for statistics, which we are all so proud of. I wish the Department great success and continue to flourish in the years to come.

Professor May C M Wong
Professor in Dental Public Health, The University of Hong Kong

Memorable

Moments

Memorable



1. Graduation Photo of SASS
Exco 03-04



2. See! Maybe we are the biggest Chong! 97-98, the warmest!



3. Master of Statistics Graduation
Dinner 2014



4. Statistics class "Statcity" Year 3
class photo taken in 1998

Moments

...

1. Hosts and participants of International Workshop on Econometric Time Series held in Jan 2007

2. Mr Henry Yim met Professor Wai-sum Chan at SOA Central Review in Hilton Head, South Carolina, USA. Professor Chan taught Mr Yim a course on investment when he was studying actuarial science in HKU

3. Professor Hans U Gerber visiting our Department in 2010

4. Mr Joseph Wu is standing in front of a regional Pfizer head-quarter in 2014.

5. Re-union dinner with Dr Boris Choy at Statcity (97-98)'s 10th anniversary

6. Statcity (97-98) celebrated 10th anniversary "Chong-ship" with a trip to Macau

7. Statcity (97-98) enjoyed some time together during their Chong camp

8. Statistics class "Statcity" Year 2 class photo taken in 1998

9. Dr. Philip Yu and Ms. Bonnie Tin obtained their research post-graduate degrees in Statistics from HKU. They have two sons, Ivan Yu and Thomas Yu.



 Department of
Statistics and Actuarial Science



1. Christmas Party of Exco of SASS from 03-10 taken in 2009



2. Freshmen majoring in Statistics attended O-camp in 1997



3. Students won the Statistics Shield Champion of 97-98



4. Department photo in 2006



5. ENSAI summer camp in France in 2016



6. Hosts and guests at 40th Anniversary Banquet in 2008



7. Students were happy to receive scholarship from Dr Patrick Poon at the Christmas Party in 2014



8. SASS x SIFA Actuarial Cup in 2016



1. Alumni Mentorship Scheme 2015



2. Teachers and scholarship recipients dined with Dr Patrick Poon in Feb 2004



3. Christmas Party with RPGs, teachers and staff in Dec 2003



4. Dinner with Professor Howell Tong in Mar 2007

5.



香港大學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Honorary University Fellowships 2013

INSTITUTION CEREMONY

香港大學院士頒授典禮



5. Professor Swee-hock Saw, Founding Chair of the Department, at the 2013 Honorary University Fellowship Ceremony

6.



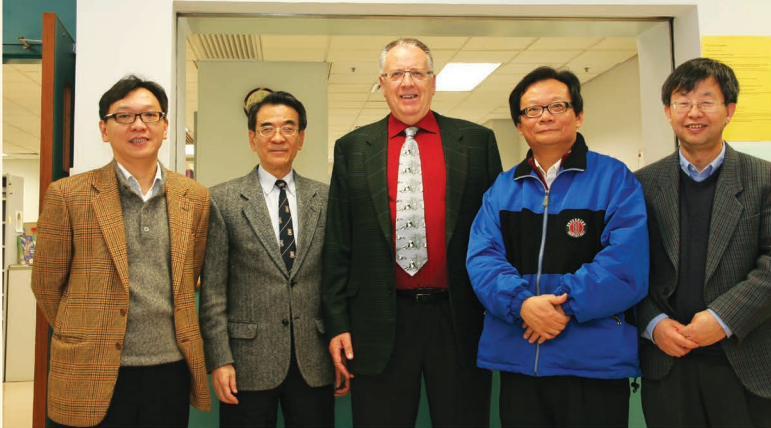
6. Teachers and guests at The Centennial Gala Dinner of HKU in Dec 2011

7.



Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science

統計及精算學系



7. Professor Hans U Gerber visited our Department in 2010

8.



8. Teachers and guests at The Centennial Gala Dinner of HKU in Dec 2011



1. Statistics class "Statcity" Year 1 class photo taken in 1998



2. Award Recipients at MStat Innovative Data Mining Application Award Presentation Ceremony 2008



3. Mr Edmond Mok and Ms Peony Fung are happy to have so many teachers and STAT classmates coming to witness their marriage!



4. Mr Edmond Mok and Ms Peony Fung have a family of 4 now



5. Mr Pak-hang Lo started his Ph.D. study in statistics in Technische Universität Kaiserslautern since Sep 2014.



6. Mr Mo-dick Wong at CCA welcome dinner in Cambridge



7. MStat Lunar Lunch in Jan 2011



8. Superpass Meal for students of 12-13

9. Student helpers at Information Day 2013





1. Speakers and guests at an Academic Seminar on World Statistics Day in 2010



2. Professor Sir Clive Granger, Nobel Laureate in Economics, at his Public Lecture in Mar 2006



3. Annual Dinner 全統宴 with Student Society "Statcity" (97-98) in 1998



4. "Statcity" (97-98)'s committee members all had wonderful u-life at HKU



5. Congratulations to Professor K W Ng who was conferred the endowed Patrick S C Poon Professorship in Statistics and Actuarial Science in Apr 2011



6. Congratulations to Professor K W Ng, Dr G Tian and Dr Man-lai Tang on receiving Research Output Prize 2011-12



7. Congratulations to Professor Hailiang Yang and Dr Eddy Lam on receiving Outstanding Research Award and Award for Teaching Excellence respectively in 2013-14



8,9. Cocktail at 40th Anniversary Banquet



In Memory of Professor John Aitchison



Professor John Aitchison, F.R.S.E., Professor Emeritus and Head of the Department of Statistics (1976-1989) was born in 1926 in East Linton, Scotland. He was a graduate of Edinburgh and Cambridge. He joined University of Glasgow's Department of Mathematics in 1956. He was Titular Professor and Mitchell Lecturer on Methods in Statistics from 1966 to 1977 in Glasgow. He was conferred Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1968.

In 1976, he came to the University of Hong Kong as Head of the then Department of Statistics, initially on secondment from the University of Glasgow. The University was on the verge of a dynamic expansion, which was to take it way beyond its then student number of 5000, and Quadrennial Planning was a high priority at the time, particularly for new degree structures.

To see through the unfolding developments, Professor Aitchison stayed on as Head until retirement in 1989. Under his insightful guidance, theoretical elements were gradually added to the courses and more courses were introduced to the new curriculum, including even a one-term course in basic actuarial science. While the main reconstructed honours degree was within Social Sciences, the Department was also heavily involved in teaching students of different study programmes offered by other faculties.

Professor Aitchison's arrival sparked off great interests in consultation, research and publications in the Department. More teaching members were recruited. The Department evolved from one of playing a supporting role to other disciplines in the University into a full-fledged and standard university department of statistics, like its overseas counterparts. Professor Aitchison's own research conducted in Hong Kong pioneered the analysis of compositional data, which are positive multivariate data that sum to unity, such as household expenditure patterns and material composition of rocks. His seminal work in this area of statistics has earned him a Guy Medal in Silver, from the Royal Statistical Society (U.K.), in 1988 and a Krumbein Award, the highest award from the International Association for Mathematical Geology, in 1995.

The founding of the Hong Kong Statistical Society in 1977 owed much to Professor Aitchison's efforts, who had poured over the government's very restrictive red-tapes then concerning the formation of a new society. The Society's address has been with the Department ever since he was elected the founding President. Two years before his retirement, Professor Aitchison launched a part-time M.Soc.Sc.(Applied Statistics) programme in 1987, which has gradually evolved into the present Master of Statistics programme.

Professor Aitchison also served as Dean of Social Sciences and Law of HKU in 1977-1978. From 1989 to 1994 he was Chairman of the Division of Statistics at the University of Virginia, USA. He was an Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Statistics of the University of Glasgow since 1995.

Professor Aitchison passed away in Glasgow, Scotland on December 23, 2016. He will be greatly missed by all of us.

Sponsors

Acknowledgement

The Department always endeavours to provide our students with the best education not only from book learning but also through experiential learning activities so as to broaden our students' horizon. We believe that overseas learning experience is very important in a student's university life. Donations from sponsors are vital to the continuation of our overseas programme.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following sponsors for supporting the Department for the above purposes and for its teaching and other related activities for students.

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