Two international developments at the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT)—the establishment of UNESCO Chair in Knowledge Systems for Integrated Water Resources Management and partnership with UNESCO for the protection of cultural heritage—are being seen as catalysts for creating heightened awareness and innovative solutions in this region.

Standing with the select global community of 80 other Water Chairs, CIIT feels the sense of urgency to proactively engage with the issue of water management, considering local and regional conditions of water resources and socio-economic conditions, whereby a sustainable world for the present and future generations is ensured.

For the significant benefit of salvaging archeology, architecture and historic cities, CIIT, in partnership with UNESCO, is carrying out a 12-month study to collect and analyze data of bio-growth and its impact on archaeological sites of Sirkap and Dharmarajika in Taxila, Pakistan. These recent developments line up with the phenomenal progress of CIIT in the academic world in a short span of 14 years.

The CIIT drive to act with significant ambition and resilience accounts for the 8 fully functional campuses with a student population of more than 33,000 studying in 96 academic programs, more than 2,600 highly qualified faculty members, including 761 PhDs who have published 3,541 research papers.


Lingnan University professor receives Best University Teacher in Hong Kong Award

Prof Kwong Yim-tze of Lingnan University has attained the highest honor for university teachers in Hong Kong after receiving the Award for Teaching Excellence. He is one of the three recipients of the annual award organized by Hong Kong's University Grants Committee, which oversees the development of the eight tertiary institutions funded by the government.

"Prof Kwong's dedication and learner-centred approach have been highly regarded by students and colleagues throughout the years. As a professor of Chinese, translation and philosophy, he is at home in all of these disciplines, and could well teach other humanities subjects if called upon to do so. He epitomizes the essence and broad-based notion of Lingnan's liberal arts education,” said President Leonard K Cheng of Lingnan University.

Prof Kwong has much to say about liberal arts university teaching. Guided by the question “how best do students learn?” instead of “how best do I teach?”, he teaches with inspiring ardor and surgical objectivity, engaging students in a shared exploration of knowledge that emphasizes independent reasoning and critical inquiry. He sees himself as a senior fellow student:

“a teacher is a student with a licence. Teaching is not one-way, magisterial instruction, but fostering, interacting and co-learning.”

Beyond pedagogical excellence, Prof Kwong stands in the great tradition of life-transforming teacher-mentors. To him, a humanities teacher must help students develop critical intelligence and the moral, cultural, emotive, aesthetic senses required to act responsibly for the good of society.

He believes that teaching is not limited to the classroom; intellectual, spiritual and emotional mentoring is even more enjoyable and valuable, albeit less visible. "A university teacher is not a preacher, but there are times when a drifting spirit or ruffled mind seeks advice in deeper matters of life.

Dialogues in the office, walking with students in the January snow – these are among the dearest episodes of my teaching, from the US to Hong Kong,” he said.

As a writer, Prof Kwong is one of the best classical Chinese poets today, widely admired for blending classical beauty and modern vitality with profound wisdom. He has published 2,200 poems in 22 collections, and two collections of modern Chinese prose.