To celebrate the launch of the Common Core Curriculum
To provide an overview of the Common Core Curriculum and
the key issues in each Area of Inquiry

COMMON CORE
Distinguished Lecture Series
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Lecture 1
17 Oct 2012
Humanities AoI
Why the Humanities Matter
Professor Sander Gilman, Emory University

Lecture 2
24 Oct 2012
Scientific & Technological Literacy AoI
Science for Future World Leaders
Professor Richard Muller, University of California, Berkeley

Lecture 3
30 Oct 2012
Common Core Curriculum
Excellence with a Soul: The Mission of Undergraduate Education
Professor Harry Lewis, Harvard University

Lecture 4
4 Mar 2013
China: Culture, State & Society AoI
China in the 21st Century: Domestic Dilemmas and International Challenges
Professor Jeffrey Wasserstrom, University of California, Irvine

Lecture 5
19 Mar 2013
Global Issues AoI
Gridlock: Why Global Cooperation is Failing when we need it most
Professor David Held, Durham University

Please visit http://commoncore.hku.hk for registration and details
The debates about the value of the Humanities taking place in North America and Europe have been answered to a degree by the new curriculum at the University of Hong Kong. These debates, however, ask not only HOW we should study the Humanities but also WHY we should do so. The answer to this is more than simply topical: What value does such knowledge have for us, for our world, and for our time?

17 Oct 2012 (Wed) 6:45 – 8:00 pm
Rayson Huang Theatre, HKU

Webcasting will be available in other venues.
Details will be announced later.
Please visit http://commoncore.hku.hk for registration.

Why the Humanities Matter

Professor Sander Gilman, Emory University

Professor Sander Gilman is a distinguished professor of the Liberal Arts and Sciences as well as Professor of Psychiatry at Emory University. A cultural and literary historian, he is the author or editor of over eighty books.

For twenty-five years, Professor Gilman was a member of the humanities and medical faculties at Cornell University where he held the Goldwin Smith Professorship of Humane Studies. For six years he held the Henry R. Luce Distinguished Service Professorship of the Liberal Arts in Human Biology at the University of Chicago and for four years was a distinguished professor of the Liberal Arts and Medicine and creator of the Humanities Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has been a visiting professor at numerous universities in North America, South Africa, The United Kingdom, Germany, Israel, China, and New Zealand. Currently, he is a Visiting Research Professor at the University of Hong Kong.
We live in a world in which many issues, possibly most, have a technological component. It is no longer sufficient for world leaders to master the traditional areas of politics, economics, business and diplomacy; they must understand science. The lecture will describe a new way to teach science to future world leaders based on emphasis of issues that are evidently important. These will include the physics of terrorism and counter-terrorism; nuclear weapons, nuclear accidents, and cancer; space and satellites, energy and alternative energy, and global warming. This is not diluted science, but tough top-level science, science that can and must be mastered by not only our leaders but by the people who elect them.

24 Oct 2012 (Wed) 6:45 – 8:00 pm
Rayson Huang Theatre, HKU

Webcasting will be available in other venues. Details will be announced later. Please visit http://commoncore.hku.hk for registration.

Science for Future World Leaders

Professor Richard Muller
University of California, Berkeley

Professor Richard Muller is professor of physics at University of California, Berkeley. His proudest achievements: discovery of the non-uniformity of the radiation from the Big Bang; invention of AMS, now adopted around the world as the most sensitive method of radioisotope dating; Nemesis theory of a companion star to the sun; creation of a supernova discovery program that led to the discovery of dark energy; lunar soil analysis; author of a technical book on glacial cycles and climate change. His course “Physics for Future Presidents” was twice voted “Best Class at Berkeley” and has been watched on YouTube in ninety countries. He is currently leading the “Berkeley Earth” study making a new evaluation of global warming.

Professor Muller has been awarded the MacArthur Prize, the NSF Waterman Award, the Texas Instruments Founders Prize, and numerous teaching awards. He is a fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His most recent book is Energy for Future Presidents.
What should students get from their undergraduate education? Not just knowledge and skills, but habits, values, and ideals. A great education leaves students empowered by their knowledge and humble about its limits, curious to learn more and skeptical about what they have been taught. Well-educated people can place the problems of their society in the course of human history, and can face their personal challenges in the context of what others before them have wondered about themselves. True educational excellence does not just transmit information; it inspires students and awakens their souls.

30 Oct 2012 (Tue) 5:30 – 6:30 pm
Rayson Huang Theatre, HKU

Webcasting will be available in other venues. Details will be announced later. Please visit http://commoncore.hku.hk for registration.
This talk will explore some of the many challenges currently facing the government of the People's Republic of China, and how an awareness of events that have taken place in earlier periods of Chinese history and events that are taking place now in other parts of the world can help us put those challenges into perspective. It will be argued that it is important to look back in time and across the globe for two different reasons. First, because we can find analogous situations in the past and in other settings for some phenomenon. China is not, for example, the first rapidly developing country whose rise excited and confused many international observers, as this was true of the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Second, China's current leaders have shown an intense interest in trying to avoid following in the footsteps of Chinese dynasties and authoritarian leaders in various parts of the world that found themselves in predicaments like those the Communist Party now faces—and fell from power.

Professor Jeffrey Wasserstrom is Chancellor's Professor of History at the University of California, Irvine, where he also holds a courtesy position in the Law School. He is the author of four books, including China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know (2010), and the editor or co-editor of several others, including Chinese Characters: Profiles of Fast-Changing Lives in a Fast-Changing Land (2012). He has contributed to a range of scholarly periodicals and written commentaries and reviews for newspapers such as the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the Wall Street Journal, as well as a wide variety of magazines, including Foreign Policy, the Atlantic, the Nation, Outlook India, and both TIME and Newsweek. Before returning to his native California, he taught at the University of Kentucky and at Indiana University, where he spent a decade-and-a-half as a member of the History Department and served for a time as the Director of the East Asian Studies Center.

Seats in the Rayson Huang Theatre will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis on the evening of the lecture. Webcasting of the lecture will be available in other venues. Details will be announced later. Please visit http://commoncore.hku.hk for registration.
Across a range of pressing global issues, countries have proven unable to cooperate effectively on issues of global concern: global financial instability and massive economic imbalances within and across countries, the lack of effective environmental governance in a world increasingly vulnerable to climate change, the proliferation of nuclear arms and the basic insecurities that persist from violent conflicts, to name just a few. International negotiations on critical issues run increasingly into cul-de-sacs. Since World War II the world community has been very successful, compared to other historical periods, in generating a wide range of international governance regimes which provide global public goods. Yet many recent efforts to address the most urgent issues of our times have stalled. Why? And can we do anything about it?

19 Mar 2013 (Tue) 6:00 – 7:15 pm
Rayson Huang Theatre, HKU

Conversation with Students
A sequel to the lecture is Professor Held’s conversation with students. 21 Mar 2013 (Thur) 5:30 – 7:00 pm, Room 112, Knowles Building, HKU

Gridlock: Why Global Cooperation is Failing when we need it most

Professor David Held, Durham University

Professor David Held is Master of University College, Durham and Professor of Politics and International Relations at Durham University. Among his most recent publications are Gridlock: Why Global Cooperation is Failing (2013), Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and Realities (2010), Globalisation/Anti-Globalisation (2007), Models of Democracy (2006), Global Covenant (2004), Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture (1999), and Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance (1995). His main research interests include the study of globalisation, changing forms of democracy and the prospects of regional and global governance. He is a Director of Polity Press, which he co-founded in 1984, and General Editor of Global Policy.