

A brief report on communication situation in Hong Kong

Baptist College, Dept of Communication

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**A Brief Report on Communication
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A BRIEF REPORT ON COMMUNICATION SITUATION IN HONG KONG

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The communication development of Hong Kong has reached an advanced stage. After the inauguration of the satellite communication centre in Stanley in 1969, communication moved one step further.

With a population of 4 million, Hong Kong is served by 70 newspaper with an estimated daily circulation of 1,500,000. In addition, there are 3 radio stations serving with seven channels with 1,500,000 radio sets and audio receivers, 2 television stations with four channels with 300,000 television sets, 105 cinemas with seating capacity of 130,000, and over 10 film studios.

The press enjoys almost complete freedom of expression, despite the usual legal restraints in respect of sedition and obscene publications and the legal requirements for regulation and a cash deposit. The diffusion rate is 375 copies to 1,000 persons, second highest in Asia, next only to Japan (487 per 1,000), and way above the world average of 102 per 1,000, or the Asian average of 40 per 1,000. Circulation is mostly by street sales and not by subscription. Hong Kong has the lowest - priced newspaper (10 cents) in the world.

Hong Kong has a large and active press and by the end of 1970, a total of 264 periodicals and publications are published, 66 of the daily newspapers are Chinese and 4 English. All maintain a good balance between foreign and local news, generally speaking, non-partisan in politics. Four international news agencies (Reuter, AP, UPI, AFP) maintain bureaus in Hong Kong, and it is indicative of the attention which local press pays to world news that the majority of leading newspapers subscribe to at least three of the services provided. Besides, a big source of information on local news coverage is daily bulletin issued by the Government Information Services.

On Nov. 1968 the Chinese Language Press Institute was established and Hong Kong became its headquarters. Besides, there are several other press organizations, such as the Newspaper Society of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong National Committee of the International Press Institute and the Foreign Correspondents Club of Hong Kong.

The press is supported by a well-developed printing industry, which also helps make Hong Kong one of the printing centres in the world.

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With the satellite communication centre added to the service in 1969, the electronic media in Hong Kong has entered a period of rapid growth.

Hong Kong's first television service was a two-channel closed circuit system (RTV), charging viewers a monthly subscription fee. It was run by the Rediffusion (HK) Ltd. established in Dec. 1957. The second station, a wireless one and free, is run by the Hong Kong Television Broadcast Ltd., established in Nov. 1967. In 1971 its station HKTVB started transmission in color.

Both stations provide bi-lingual transmission (Chinese-Cantonese & English). There is a keen competition between these two stations, bidding for advertising support as well as in the visual news coverage. Each has its own independent newsroom.

Viewers may now watch some 310 hours of TV a week -- 150 hrs. a week transmitted by RTV, and 160 by TVB. Both stations provide full day service on special occasions and public holidays.

Radio broadcasting appears to have suffered a setback after the rapid growth of television service.

There are three separate organizations providing public broadcasting services in Hong Kong. Radio Hong Kong (1928), Commercial Radio (1959) and Rediffusion (HK) Ltd, (1947).

Radio Hong Kong, the government station which does not carry advertisements, provides English and Chinese service, both for 19 hours a day. Commercial Radio derives its revenue from advertisements and has three channels, one in English and two in Chinese. Rediffusion operates a wired broadcasting service throughout the colony and runs three programmes, one in English and two in Chinese (including Cantonese, Mandarin and other dialects).

Hong Kong is one of the largest filmproducing countries in the world. Now the two leading studios--Shaw Brothers and Cathay Organization, have 28 shooting stages. They are making Mandarin films all in color.

A third TV station plans to enter the market when the franchise providing for only one wireless television company expires in 1972.

So far the very cost of live broadcast via satellite has rendered its regular use uneconomical and so is used for only the most important news events.

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The government is ready to introduce educational television (ETV) in the fall of 1971. The purpose of the ETV is to aid primary teachers to use new methods for teaching. Students beyond primary 3 are encouraged to watch TV in the classroom.

The task of training personnel in the demanding skills necessary for radio and television broadcast, for the printed media, for films, and for public relations and advertising, naturally falls on the institutions of higher learning.

There are six post-secondary colleges in Hong Kong which offer training courses in Journalism.

Among these institutions, the Communication Department of Hong Kong Baptist College has by far the most comprehensive syllabus for both printed and electronic journalism. The Department is equipped with a closed circuit television studio and a studio, publishes its own bi-lingual student newspaper, and has a sizeable library. It emphasises training in both the academic side and mechanic side of journalism, and has students from overseas.

The Department's communication programme covers four years and is open to all qualified students.

The Department's task is to train young people in mass media skills and responsible social fulfillment. It is the goal of the department to send into both secular and religious fields of communication, including public relations and teaching, men and women possessing in intellectual discipline as well as thorough with the instruments of mass communication. It is hoped that their work will be of substantive value in the promotion of truth and credit to the profession.

To fulfill these aims a broad background knowledge in history, psychology, sociology and political science is required. In addition, mastery of English and one's native language are considered essential to professional courses in Journalism, Radio/TV, public relations, advertising, cinematography or leadership in the field of communication.

Besides, the Department of Journalism at New Asia College of Chinese University of Hong Kong offers bi-lingual bachelor degree courses, and the Mass Communication Centre of the same University is a research body established in 1966 by a grant from The Asia Formdation.

Information about the Department of Communication

Hong Kong Baptist College

A. INTRODUCTION

As modern technology shrinks the world, our planet is becoming a "global village," The need for people to communicate understandably with each other grows more urgent and apparent each day. No longer can one nation or one segment of the globe remain immune to what is happening elsewhere; ideas and information almost instantly reach the remotest sections of our world with enormous consequences.

To process this information which affects so many lives, there is a growing need for people skilled in gathering information assessing its importance and putting it in understandable terms. To meet this challenge is the goal of the Department of communication at the Hong Kong Baptist College. The Department hopes to train dedicated Asians to serve the needs of their continent.

Figures released by the United Nations reveal that along with Asia's booming population there has been a comparable, if not greater explosion in mass communications. Figures by the UN's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), show that more people in Asia are reading books and newspapers, watching television and listening to radio than at any other time in history.

UNESCO has also estimated that within the next ten years, the expanding mass communications system in Asia will need more than 13,000 persons trained in the skills required by the mass media -- newspapers, magazines, radio, television and films. Although UNESCO figures did not show this, along with the expanding mass communications system there will be an almost simultaneous growth in the mass media's sophisticated handmaidens -- public relations and advertising.

The task of training the personnel in the demanding skills necessary for radio and television broadcasting, for the printed media, for films, and for public relations and advertising, naturally falls on the institutions of higher learning. Mindful of the special demands of our age, the Hong Kong Baptist College started a Department of Communication in September 1968. The Department's task is to train young men and women in mass media skills and responsible social fulfilment; by doing so the College and the Department hope to contribute to Asia's advancement by integration a Communication program within a framework of Christian principles.

The Department's communication program covers four years and is open to all qualified Asian students, regardless of nationality. A selected number of students will be permitted to enter the program in the third year provided they have at least two years of postsecondary training from a recognized institution and meet other departmental qualifications.

The Department seeks to attract those students who want to open more widely Asia's window to the world of tomorrow; the Department seeks to attract those young people who will strive to use the vast power of the mass media intelligently, with social responsibility, and for the betterment of all.

No others need apply.

B. Objectives

The Department which shares the general objectives of the College of providing broad cultural training to equip the student for a useful life as a leader in the modern world, has three specific objectives.

- They are:
- (1) Cultivation of successful careers in a democratic society, of professionally oriented interests, and personal qualities that contribute to social responsibility.
 - (2) Training dedicated men and women in the manifold techniques of modern mass media communication.
 - (3) Providing a background in research which will eventually bring about an increased understanding of the current problems in communication and better communication of the Christian message among the people of the world, and especially of Asia.

It is the goal of the Department to send into both religious and secular fields of communication including public relations and teaching, men and women possessing intellectual discipline as well as thorough familiarity with the instruments of mass communication, to the end that their work will be of substantive value in the promotion of truth and a credit to the profession.

To fulfil these aims a broad background in history, psychology, sociology and political science is required, in addition to mastery of English and one's native language, because these are essential prerequisites or supplementaries to the professional courses in Journalism, Radio/TV, public relations, advertising, cinematography or leadership in the field of communication.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The Department of Communication offers a four-year program and a special two-year upper-division program, both leading to a diploma.

The first two years are devoted to liberal arts courses, with the exception of one or two courses each semester. These special courses provide an intensive introduction to the major area of communication.

FIRST YEAR

1st semester

Chinese Composition
English Composition
History
General Psychology
Fundamentals of Communication

2nd semester

Chinese Composition
English Composition
History
Principles of Sociology
Fundamentals of Communication

SECOND YEAR

1st semester

Journalistic English
Journalistic Chinese
Government
General Economics
Fundamentals of Communication
Social Psychology

2nd semester

Journalistic English
Journalistic Chinese
Statistics
Semantics
Fundamentals of Communication
Elective

The second two years, a special two-year upper-division program, will be devoted to professionally-oriented courses as well as liberal arts courses with a communication orientation. The aim is to give students a degree of professional competence which will prepare them to begin careers in newspaper and magazine reporting, editing and publishing, broadcasting and public relations. Each of these areas is represented by a sequence of specialized courses which will be taken in conjunction with a basic program required of all communication majors.

The journalism sequence emphasizes preparation for careers in newspaper, wire services and magazine fields.

The Broadcasting sequence stresses preparation for careers in the field of electronic media.

The Public Relations sequence provides training in the basic skills of media research, writing and editing and preparation of programs as well as administrative sciences.

Core Courses

News Gathering & Writing
Editorial Techniques
Advertising
Communication Research Methods
Semantics and Communication
Information Retrieval and
documentation

News Translation
Legal Aspects of Communication
International Communication
Public Opinion & Communication
Professional Internship

Sequence Requirements

Journalism

Principles of Photography
Advanced Reporting
Religious Writing
Feature Writing

Magazine Editing
Magazine Article Writing
Media Management--The Printed
Media

Broadcasting

Writing for Radio/TV
Radio/TV Production
Radio/TV News
TV Camera Techniques

Programming for Radio/TV
Announcing for Radio/TV
Media Management--The Electronic
Media

Public Relations/Advertising

Principles and Practices of Public Relations
Administrative Process in Public Organizations
Organization Structure and Behavior
Writing and Editing for Public Relations

PR Workshop
Advertising Copy
Advertising Methods

For graduation, 141 semester credits are required. Of this total, 70 credits in acceptable liberal arts courses are required for junior standing. The student selects his major at the end of the second year. He may have a minor in social science, humanities, business, or natural science.

In the communication courses the emphasis is on practical work and on doing; that is the students are required to apply their classroom learning to real-life situations. Many assignments take students off campus. For example, students majoring in radio/television will frequently be given interviewing assignments and required to do documentaries that take them out into the community.

In newswriting courses, assignments will frequently take the students off campus. All advanced students are also required to work on either the Department's experimental monthly newspaper, The Young Reporter, The College PR project "College Life for A Day" or "News and Music At Noon", a on the Campus Radio program. This newspaper's "outward look" into community affairs also entails offcampus assignments.

The Communication Department constantly strives for professional realism in the training program, an ideal that is impossible to achieve completely in a classroom atmosphere. In order to give students the professional exposure needed for their development, all members of the third year (junior) class are required to "intern" for two months during the summer on newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, and public relations firms. The Department makes the arrangements with the media.

The Department also sponsors frequent colloquiums, inviting mass media experts to discuss communication problems with the students. These panel discussions are also open to the public.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

1. The applicant must present a minimum of 60 transfer credits from an acceptable school whose entrance standards are equivalent to those of the College. Among these credits must be courses acceptable to the Department in one's native language and history of another country, in lieu of the Chinese and Chinese history requirements of the College. Any student from outside Hong Kong who attended a Chinese-language Middle School and College will be expected to present Chinese language and Chinese History among the 60 acceptable credits for admission.
2. The applicant must have proof of an English standard high enough to attend lectures in English and use English references.
3. To graduate a candidate must take a minimum of 79 semester hours (including three in the summer, after the third year, in supervised Internship) at Baptist College, as prescribed by the Department.
4. The candidate must have a minimum of 130 semester house credits to be eligible to receive the College Diploma.

Preference will be given to those applicants who have included in their first two years' program a course in Psychology or Social Psychology, in addition to Chinese and English, or English and the students' own national language.

ADMISSIONS

Students who have completed their middle-school education and passed the Hong Kong School Certificate Examination plus an additional one-year course in a registered school, may apply for admissions to the first year.

The applicant for admission must pass in five subjects, including Chinese and English, and, in addition, meet Department requirement through interview and special languages and aptitude tests administered by the Department.

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Only the junior class will accept transfer students. (See Transfer Students)

CRITERIA OF SELECTION

1. Scholarship: Scholastic achievement in middle school or college is one of the most important criteria of admission. Emphasis will be laid on the candidate's mastery of both English and his native Asian language as well as a broad educational and cultural background.
2. Aptitude: Although no formal course work or experience in journalism, radio or television is necessary, demonstrated talent and strong motivation are considered important.
3. Recommendation: Admission decision will be greatly influenced by recommendations of former school head-masters and teachers, as well as pastors and church leaders, in respect to industry, character, integrity and personality.

SCHOLARSHIPS

More than 20 scholarships are available to students who have outstanding academic records and who have need for financial assistance. These scholarships range from HK\$600 to 1,500 a year.

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE OF ADVISORS

To guide the Department of Communication in its training programs, two advisory committees have been established; one committee includes noted scholars and educators, the other committee consists of journalists, editors, and executives in the printed and electronics media. Members of the committees are of various nationalities who have the common bond of seeking to advance communication standards and promoting Christian ethics.