

## Open Discussion

### About the reform and project course

**1. What impacts of the program have been seen so far?**

The program is still in its initial stage. The first part of the results will be seen in two months though.

**2. Will there be more courses of this type (project-oriented)?**

Since the program is still very new. They will observe the effects before taking further actions.

**3. Should more gifted programs be offered in the university so that brighter student's knowledge gap can be filled?**

Gifted program is only a transition and not a solution for the long run. Instead we should train the secondary school teachers so that they know how to prepare their students to go to university.

**4. In what way are thinking skills dealt with in the reform?**

There is a difference of implementation between secondary schools and universities in this area. But what they share in common is that, they use projects to stimulate students to think more creatively.

### Issues related to teachers and instructors

**1. What changes are going on in secondary school teaching?**

The education reform is widely announced and is being carried out in all sectors of education.

Feedback from participants: Reform is happening in the system. Curriculum is being transformed into some other forms. e.g. more project, less course etc.

**2. What should instructors be aware of when they design problem to fit into the requirements of the education change?**

There are basically two types of problems:

- research problem
- problem related to society's interest

Teachers and instructors need to consider what they want students to learn when designing these problems. They can also refer to the projects that have already been done to stimulate ideas.

### Issues related to student learning

**1. Will the change of curriculum lead to change in student quality?**

In the long run, there will be a change in the quality of knowledge. Also, average students will get to know that they need to learn faster and be more concentrated in order to catch up. Their expectation of their own learning will be changed.

**2. In learning by doing projects, will students' background knowledge become weak? Is it a problem?**

Teachers and instructors can improve this by giving supplements to the students to provide them with necessary knowledge.

**3. How should students' all-round development be enhanced?**

One important aspect of their all-round development is raising awareness of social responsibility. This is also one of the reasons of introducing external factors in project course. It is important that students have social feeling of what's happening.

**4. What should students learn in secondary school in order to be prepared for entering university?**

It is easier and more effective for the university to "fire down" on this i.e. stating what they "would not" want instead. By doing this, the secondary schools can have guidelines to decide what their students should know.

**5. How would you deal with the dilemma between learning more superficial knowledge and going into particular topics in more depth?**

In principles, both should be done right. But in reality, teachers and instructors can do in depth in certain parts, depending on what their students have to know in order to meet the requirements. This happens in secondary school sector as most of the contents are not cut away due to the emphasis of learning through projects.

### Assessment

**1. How do you assess students in the project course?**

As the program is still new to some teachers, they are inexperienced and are still exploring more effective ways to do it. However, in the long run, database should be set up, and university can contact the secondary schools for the students' profile for evaluation.

**2. How do you assessment student in your project course?**

The projects are usually collaboration projects, so team grade is given. At the same time, students need to go to secondary schools to give presentation, feedback are obtained from secondary school teachers and is contributed to the final grade.

*Additional Comments from audience:* It's more sensible to look at students' thinking and learning process in the assessment. Some of these evaluation systems are already set to assess students so instructors only have to decide the instructional objectives of the projects and apply these systems.

Although the quality of final product is important, the process of working such as, how to do organization, how to set up things for themselves etc. should not be neglected. Reformers need to take into consideration the assessment **throughout** the project.

### The teaching and learning culture

**1. Would it be difficult for UST to change the traditional culture to be more engaged in this new learning mode?**

It will take some time to change the current pattern. Given more time, UST will be more adopted to the new learning culture.

**2. Should university approach secondary schools to strengthen the collaboration between them in preparing the students?**

Official meetings as well as other informal channels such as Science camp that was held recently should be used to strengthen the ties. However, one should be careful in cooperating harmoniously with the secondary schools such that they do not feel something is "being imposed" onto them.