

GZ faculty forum – questions

Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 16, 2020 at 9:06 AM

To: ni@cse.ust.hk [Provost Lionel Ni, cc'ed to HKUST President SHYY Wei and colleagues in the School of Humanities and Social Science (HSS)]

Dear Professor Ni,

I found the presentation of the GZ [Guangzhou] plans fascinating and promising.

For me, some very basic questions arise and I wonder how these have been resolved.

(1) What do you do when individual professors are banned from entering the mainland (are denied visas, or arrested on the mainland)? What happens to their courses and research projects?

(2) What do you think are the effects of HKUST's new GZ campus on the willingness of universities in the West to cooperate with HKUST? Aren't you afraid that HKUST will become isolated internationally as an agent of the mainland regime?

(3) How are you going to protect research (and each individual professor's career) given what we know about academic freedom / freedom of speech on the mainland? How do you ensure that professors do not have to self-censor in order to survive in HKUST academia (or not be disappeared on the mainland)?

(4) In the presentation it was said (or written) "hubs specifically designed for cross-disciplinary collaboration." Can you please provide concrete specifics of that design? (And why it can't be done on the CWB [Clear Water Bay = HKUST Hong Kong] campus?)

I noticed in the presentation that the hub 'Society' (one of the 4 hubs), headed by XIE Danyang of the business school, covers four 'thrusters: financial technology, 'innovation, policy & entrepreneurship,' MBA+, and 'urban governance and design.' -- I wouldn't call that "society." In my view, humanities and social sciences cannot operate under a totalitarian regime and therefore I don't mind that 95% of HSS [School of Humanities and Social Science, HKUST] is excluded from GZ. But from what I can tell, with the most basic questions so far not addressed(?), you are selling out academia, and by doing that you are also selling out HSS on the CWB campus.

It's already interesting that none of the questions raised by colleagues at the forum addressed such basic issues, and that my questions, submitted in writing during the forum, were not answered.

Sincerely,
Carsten Holz