

(1) This is how I spent 2021:

- (a) A very stressful 60% teaching (3 courses). Moved an annually changing Chinese economy course from a shelf of ring binders to powerpoint; tedious work is not the comparative advantage of age and becomes exceedingly time-consuming. Created an elaborate Canvas setup, moved to more labor-intensive evaluation and grading, and did so on my own (no TA) for two courses, including for a large first-year course. The logistics, including the technicalities of mixed mode, were overwhelming. – In August I brought this up with the Associate Provost for Teaching (no response). At a particular university in North America teaching loads were reduced due to the pandemic, and teaching was never mixed mode, in stark contrast to HKUST administrators’ “Let’s just near-double your teaching load.”
- (b) 20% dozens of standard academic duties ranging from reviewing articles for journals to writing letters of recommendation for students and chairing PhD defenses.
- (c) 20% improvising housing as I don’t have a housing allowance.

So far, that adds up to 100%. In addition:

- (d) 15% service to academia by making the superior HKUST management model accessible to a wider audience (<https://carstenholz.people.ust.hk/Initiative.html>). In earlier years, this was service solely to HKUST administrators by writing an annual, futile grant application (for a grant I didn’t really want) to avoid their penalties.
- (e) 25% dealing with the destruction of academia in Hong Kong. This topic is not my comparative advantage as a China economist and requires a disproportionate amount of my time. (<https://carstenholz.people.ust.hk/>)
- (f) 20% annual leave and short leave (6 weeks and 12 individual days).

Now we are at 160% and there is no research in my field of study yet. And there wasn’t. When I ask for a solid chunk of time to delve into research, administrators deny it: I applied for sabbatical leave in 2021/22 and it was denied (with two, offensively false explanations.) Given Hong Kong’s quarantine mode, this also meant tearing family apart for too long, and my August 2021 quarantine was harmful enough that it should never have to be repeated.

(2) I would like an explanation as to why my requests in spring 2021 (for 2021/22), 2020, 2019, 2018, 2016, and 2015 to teach a PG course on the Chinese economy were consistently ignored. (I don’t have a record for 2017, around when, thanks to a GRF, I had time off for field research.) The rule is that everyone teaches one lower-level UG course, one upper-level UG course, and a PG course. I haven’t been allowed to teach a PG course in almost ten years.

(3) I am

being paid like a HKUST Assistant Professor (if not less),  
face approximately 60% under-funded HKUST retirement savings,  
and have no housing allowance.

Yet again, I ask how HKUST administrators expect me (a full professor) to make this work.

(4) I continue to request complete transparency about faculty salaries, i.e., the adoption of professional practices of a public university.

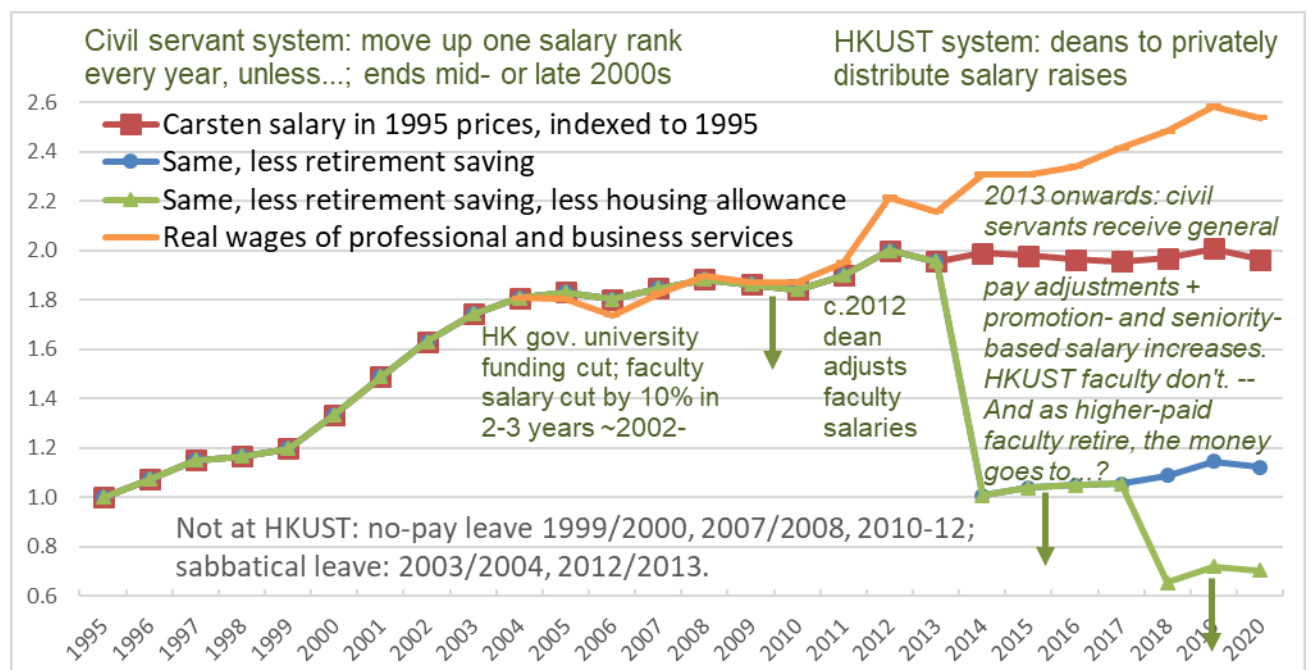
## Appendix: More on salary

(a) HKUST's "2019-2020 Financial Statements" (p. 21) in a table titled "Remuneration of Higher Paid Staff" list salary brackets with the number of employees (<https://fo.ust.hk/financial-information/financial-statements>). In 2020, the table covers 386 "staff" (who I take to be a subset of the 490 faculty), every single one of whom has a higher remuneration (as defined in a note below the table) than I do. That puts me in the bottom 21% faculty remuneration bracket, or even lower (the table does not extend further down), as full professor, with a decent publication record, and after 27 years of employment at HKUST.

(b) My salary (in real terms) has been flat since 2004, while the real wages of professional and business service employees in Hong Kong have risen significantly (chart below).

My after-tax salary cannot handle both a market rent for housing *and* the supplementary retirement saving needed to complement the severely under-funded HKUST retirement savings (see <https://carstenholz.people.ust.hk/FakeMeritReview.html>, item "Retirement Finances;" the forward projections now seem too optimistic.)

A quick and rough illustration is this: If I retired today, I would have HKD 12,000 per month to live on based on my HKUST retirement savings of HKD 5.9mio distributed over 40 years. If I never take no-pay leave this might become HKD 25,000 (HKD 9.7mio over 30 years) at the mandatory retirement age of 65. With no other source of retirement income, that has to cover *everything* from health care / insurance to food and rent.



**Real wages of professional and business services:** The closest relevant Hong Kong wage series that I could find is the Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department's Table 19 "Nominal Wage Indices for employees up to supervisory level (excluding managerial and professional employees) by selected industry section" ([https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web\\_table.html?id=19](https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web_table.html?id=19)). I linked this series at its start date of 2004 to my salary index and, going forward, adjusted it by the CPI.

**Housing:** From 2002 through June 2018, I received a "home financing" (housing) allowance. After June 2018, the line "... less housing allowance" in the chart subtracts that amount from my salary (out of which it would now have to come). The housing allowance has always been, and increasingly *by far*, insufficient to pay the rent, as indicated by the downward arrows. In 1995- 2002, HKUST provided an apartment, for the first years off campus, against 7.5% of my salary.