

**GLADE**

***Global Liberal Arts Design Experiments***

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to invite you to participate in the emergence of *GLADE: Global Liberal Arts Design Experiments*. What does “participation” mean? In the first instance, simply letting me know if you are interested! We can start simply by familiarizing ourselves with each other and coming to know one another a bit better.

I envision *GLADE* as an informal affiliation of very modest projects between programmes that cross disciplines, faculties, research questions and methodologies. Often, but not always, these programmes carry “General Education” as a title. I am particularly—but not exclusively—interested in how these programmes enrich the learning ecology within comprehensive research institutions and how we can be mutually supportive.

Our own initiative along these lines here at HKU is the Common Core (<https://commoncore.hku.hk/>), which consists of 6 required courses that are organized across disciplines and are taught across four Areas of Inquiry. The courses are designed and taught for the Core by professoriate staff; we have 160 courses for students to choose from; and we will soon begin offering TransDisciplinary Minors in *Sustaining Cities, Cultures, and the Earth* as well as *Cosmology, Spirituality, and Science*. This adventure began when the entire Hong Kong tertiary system, in 2012, went from 3 to 4 year degrees, so we are now celebrating our 5th birthday.

I have chosen a phrase from Bruno Latour’s *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence* as an initial conceptual gathering place: *The laboratory is now wide open for new discoveries*. I see our work in different sites and under different conditions to be forms of experiments, inventions, discoveries, inquiries and creations. Latour’s invitation to “compose a shared world” is available as a webwork (<http://modesofexistence.org/>)as well as in the form of that miraculous technology called a “book,” and, in each case, he sets out ways of beginning to stitch together collaborative work. That seems to me to fit our ethos of teaching, learning, and making creative differences in the lives of our students and beyond.

Please let me know if you’re interested in being in conversation, if there are any ideas that spring to mind about possible very modest collaborations. *Remember: it’s an experiment*. And, regardless of your interest in co-constructing *GLADE*, thank you for all the inspired work you are doing in your institution in order to inspire your students to do the unexpected.