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From : Clerk to the Legislative Council
To : All Members of the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 18 March 2009

**Proposed amendments to motion on
“Comprehensively reviewing the role and functions
of the University Grants Committee”**

Further to LC Paper No. CB(3) 418/08-09 issued on 5 March 2009, seven Members (Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po, Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong, Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, Hon Tanya CHAN, Hon WONG Yuk-man, Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee and Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou) have respectively given notice of their intention to move separate amendments to Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing’s motion on “Comprehensively reviewing the role and functions of the University Grants Committee” scheduled for the Council meeting of 18 March 2009. As directed by the President, the respective proposed amendments will be printed in the terms in which they were handed in on the Agenda of the Council.

2. To assist Members in debating the above motion and amendments, I set out below the procedure to be followed during the debate:

- (a) Prof Hon Patrick LAU moves his motion;
- (b) the President proposes the question on Prof Hon Patrick LAU’s motion, and orders a joint debate;
- (c) the President calls on the seven Members, who intend to move amendments, to speak in the following order, but no amendment is to be moved at this stage:
 - (i) Hon Paul CHAN;

- (ii) Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong;
 - (iii) Hon Starry LEE;
 - (iv) Hon Tanya CHAN;
 - (v) Hon WONG Yuk-man
 - (vi) Hon Mrs Regina IP; and
 - (vii) Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou;
- (d) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) to speak;
 - (e) joint debate on the motion and the amendments follows thereafter;
 - (f) the President gives leave to Prof Hon Patrick LAU to speak for the second time on the amendments;
 - (g) the President calls upon the designated public officer(s) again to speak;
 - (h) in accordance with Rule 34(5) of the Rules of Procedure, the President has decided that he will call upon the seven Members to move their respective amendments in the order set out in paragraph (c) above. The President invites Hon Paul CHAN to move his amendment to the motion, and forthwith proposes and puts to vote the question on Hon Paul CHAN's amendment;
 - (i) after Hon Paul CHAN's amendment has been voted upon, the President deals with the other six amendments; and
 - (j) after all amendments have been dealt with, the President calls upon Prof Hon Patrick LAU to reply. Thereafter, the President puts to vote the question on Prof Hon Patrick LAU's motion, or his motion as amended, as the case may be.

3. For Members' ease of reference, the terms of the original motion and of the motion, if amended, are set out in the **Appendix**.

(Mrs Justina LAM)
for Clerk to the Legislative Council

Encl.

(Translation)

**Motion debate on
“Comprehensively reviewing the role and functions
of the University Grants Committee”
to be held at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 18 March 2009**

1. Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing’s original motion

That, as the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role and functions of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, including:

- (a) complementing the switch to the ‘334’ academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific researches;
- (b) improving the mechanism for approving research funding, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, and promoting research studies which meet the needs of the local community;
- (c) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; and
- (d) promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia.

2. Motion as amended by Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po

That, as *following* the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role and functions of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with

a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, including:

- (a) complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific researches;
- (b) improving the mechanism for approving research funding, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, and promoting research studies which meet the needs of the local community;
- (c) *establishing a Fifth Matching Grant Scheme, continuing to encourage universities to raise funds from the community and their alumni, strengthening the link between universities and the community, and cultivating within the community a philanthropic culture in support of the development of university education;*
- (d) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; and
- ~~(d)~~(e) promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia.

Note: Hon Paul CHAN's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

3. Motion as amended by Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong

That, *as the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong has all along failed to play its role to be neutral and as a 'buffer' between the universities and the Government, and* the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role ~~and~~ functions *and abolition or otherwise* of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with a view to *effectively promoting and* optimizing the academic quality *and development* of local universities as well as the quality *and development* of their scientific researches, including:

- (a) complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and

strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific researches;

- (b) improving the mechanism for approving research funding, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, and promoting research studies which meet the needs of the local community;
- (c) ***raising the Government's target ceiling of providing 14 500 first-year undergraduate places annually, and*** allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of ~~associate-degree~~ ***sub-degree*** graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; ~~and~~
- (d) promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia;
- (e) ***there must be participation of teacher and student representatives from the institution in the decision-making process of promoting the institution's development and allocating resources; and***
- (f) ***establishing a mechanism independent of the Government to impartially handle disputes over the allocation of resources among institutions as well as complaints from teaching and non-teaching staff of the institutions, so as to ensure that the spirit of institutional autonomy and academic freedom can be realized.***

Note: Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong's amendment is marked in ***bold and italic type*** or with deletion line.

4. Motion as amended by Hon Starry LEE Wai-king

That, ***promoting outstanding development in higher education is in line with Hong Kong's need to nurture talents, and*** as the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role and functions of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, including:

- (a) complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and

strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific researches;

- (b) improving the mechanism for approving research funding, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, and promoting research studies which meet the needs of the local community;
- (c) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; ~~and~~
- (d) promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia; *and*
- (e) *supporting Hong Kong's universities to operate higher education institutions in the Pearl River Delta Region and collaborate with mainland education institutions in the area of scientific research, thereby enhancing the quality of these universities' scientific researches, so as to complement the development of Hong Kong into an education hub and nurture talents for the Pearl River Delta Region.*

Note: Hon Starry LEE's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

5. Motion as amended by Hon Tanya CHAN

That, ~~as the~~ *university education is an important human capital investment of the Hong Kong community; as the current* international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review *the need for the existence as well as* the role and functions of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, *and comprehensively review the overall policy and funding system for university education*, with a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, ~~including~~; *the specific measures include*:

- (a) *expeditiously reviewing the effectiveness of the work of the University Grants Committee and, based on the review results, examining the Committee's composition, structure, statutory status, mode of connection with the Government, powers and responsibilities, as well as its mode of regulation over various education institutions;*

- (b) complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific researches;
- ~~(b)~~(c) improving the mechanism for approving research funding, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, ~~and~~ promoting research studies which meet the needs of the local community, ***and in vetting research funding applications, the University Grants Committee or the various education institutions should arrange for the vetting work to be carried out by persons with research experience in the academic fields for which the funding is applied;***
- ~~(e)~~(d) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; ~~and~~, ***and reviewing the existing target that 18% of the relevant age cohort may enrol in publicly-funded undergraduate programmes;***
- (e) ***through various feasible ways, striving to enhance the corporate governance standard of publicly-funded education institutions and improve their administration, financial and human resources management systems, so as to strengthen the protection of academic freedom and enhance the transparency of the operation of the universities; and***
- ~~(d)~~(f) promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia.

Note: Hon Tanya CHAN's amendment is marked in ***bold and italic type*** or with deletion line.

6. Motion as amended by Hon WONG Yuk-man

That, as the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role and functions, ***as well as the abolition or otherwise,*** of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, including:

- (a) ~~complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific~~

~~researches~~ *abolishing the existing university funding mechanism and replacing it with a university funding body which is independent of the Government, transparent, open, widely represented and comprises community representatives and stakeholders, including the management of universities and representatives of university teaching and non-teaching staff as well as students, etc;*

- (b) ~~improving~~ the mechanism for approving research funding, ~~abandoning~~ *should abandon* the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ~~ensuring academic freedom, and promoting~~ *promote* research studies which meet the needs of the local community, *particularly researches in humanities education, and also ensure that there will not be uneven distribution of resources among universities, and at the same time can impartially handle complaints from teaching and non-teaching staff, so that the spirit of academic freedom can be realized;*
- (c) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places, *and increasing the number of undergraduate places in universities* and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the '334' academic structure reform; and
- (d) *emphasizing the principle of autonomy for all university teaching staff and students, promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia with the participation of representatives of the relevant university's teaching staff and students, making the provision of training for local university students its primary objective, and enhancing student exchange and academic exchange and co-operation between local universities and universities in the world under the premise of not jeopardizing education for local university students.*

Note: Hon WONG Yuk-man's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.

7. Motion as amended by Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye

That, as the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role and functions of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, *and ensuring that universities will not, as enterprises do, set increasing income as their objective*, including:

- (a) complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in scientific researches;
- (b) improving the mechanism for approving research funding, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, and promoting *knowledge creation, new and high technology as well as* research studies which meet the needs of the local community *and economic development*;
- (c) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; and
- (d) *improving the teaching quality and curricula as well as* promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy *and giving priority consideration to nurturing local students*, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia, *so as to broaden the international perspective of Hong Kong students*.

Note: Hon Mrs Regina IP's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type*.

8. Motion as amended by Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou

That, as the international trend is that more and more countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, etc, have abolished their university grants committee mechanism, this Council urges the Government to comprehensively review the role and functions of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, with a view to optimizing the academic quality of local universities as well as the quality of their scientific researches, including:

- (a) complementing the switch to the '334' academic structure, fostering the interface between local universities and the top universities in the world, and strengthening mutual academic exchange and co-operation in *teaching and* scientific researches;
- (b) improving the mechanism for approving ~~research~~ funding *for academic researches*, abandoning the vetting criterion of giving emphasis to quantity rather than quality, ensuring academic freedom, and ~~promoting~~ *handling research funding applications from various disciplines in a fair manner, so as to promote* research studies which meet the needs of the local community;

- (c) allocating more funds to provide subsidized undergraduate places and for the universities to determine the intake of associate degree graduates and the number of undergraduate places that need to be substantially increased after the academic structure reform; ~~and~~
- (d) promoting the development and construction of campuses under the principle of university autonomy, and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of Asia;
- (e) *adjusting Hong Kong's current development strategy on higher education which has all along emphasized the scientific, commercial and professional disciplines, and giving greater weight to humanities to enable university students to have a more all-rounded perspective and scholastic achievement; and*
- (f) *assisting the various local universities in exploring other sources of income in addition to government funding, and encouraging various sectors of the community to donate funds to the universities, so that the universities can have more sufficient resources to develop their teaching and research work.*

Note: Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou's amendment is marked in *bold and italic type* or with deletion line.