

Address by President

Good afternoon, students, colleagues, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honor and a privilege to stand before you today as the new President of Lingnan University. I am humbled by the trust and confidence that you have placed in me, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve this remarkable institution.

Lingnan University has a proud history of excellence, innovation and social responsibility. For 135 years, it has been a leader in liberal arts education, fostering critical thinking, creativity and civic engagement among its students and faculty. Lingnan was established in 1888 in Guangzhou as “格致書院”, or the Christian College in China. Subsequently, it took the name of Lingnan Xuexiao and in 1927 it's renamed Lingnan University. Operating until 1952 before it's re-organised into several universities, Lingnan had 64 years of glorious achievements and unmatched prominence in higher education. Lingnan had served as a bridge between China and the West, promoting a rich exchange of information, learning and communication – for both teachers and students.

In 1967, Lingnan was re-established in Hong Kong as Lingnan College and in 1999 it's renamed Lingnan University. It has been a pioneer in liberal arts education in Asia, addressing diverse challenges of our time with cutting-edge solutions. And it has been a partner in community development, contributing to the well-being and prosperity of Hong Kong and beyond.

Lingnan is now an internationally recognised global leader in providing quality education and conducting high-impact research. Lingnan is currently ranked second in the world for "Quality Education" in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. Additionally, Lingnan has achieved the highest rating of 5+ Stars in the recent QS 5-Stars Assessment.

As we embark on a new chapter of our journey, we face unprecedented opportunities and challenges. The world is changing rapidly, and so are the needs and expectations of our society. We must adapt and evolve, while staying true to our core values and mission. We must embrace diversity and inclusion, while fostering a sense of belonging and identity. We must pursue excellence and innovation, while maintaining academic integrity and quality. And we must balance local relevance and global impact, while enhancing our reputation and influence.

We are determined to make the following four connections.

First, we must build connections between traditional programmes and the digital revolution. We are providing Lingnan staff and students with free access to ChatGPT and GPT 4.0, enabling us to remain at the forefront of digital breakthroughs. Technologies like artificial intelligence are empowering every part of our life and work. We are set to become a leading liberal arts university of the digital age. We have to revitalise everything about the institution to embrace the ongoing process of digitalisation.

Second, we need to connect well between arts and sciences. To advance liberal arts education for whole-person development, both the arts and the sciences will be enhanced with human-centric themes. To provide a truly liberal education environment, students will study with the freedom to choose among interdisciplinary subjects. We strive to equip our students with critical thinking skills and competitive professional skills.

Third, we must enhance our connection with the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and globally. We have built a network of over 270 partners worldwide and are actively forging partnerships within the GBA to expand our impact. Geographically, we are the closest local university to Shenzhen. We are poised to lead the development of higher education in the Northern Metropolis, leveraging our proximity to it.

Fourth, we need to connect well to Lingnan's past, drawing inspiration and confidence from Lingnan's rich history and heritage of 135 years. We hold our motto, “作育英才，服務社會”, or "Education for Service", close to our hearts. Our Lingnan spirit is characterised by passion, loyalty, perseverance, openness, and a commitment to service. With this spirit, and a shared goal to excel in the digital era, we will make a significant difference and propel Lingnan to new heights.

Last but foremost, student education is at the very core of our mission. We will expand initiatives and activities to enrich our student experience and foster our community engagement. We will instill the spirit of innovation in everything we do as a way of life. We have established the Lingnan Entrepreneurship Initiative (LEI) to provide training, mentorship, funding, and networking opportunities for our students. We have also launched the Lingnan Arts Festival (LAF) annual gala to showcase our cultural diversity and creativity. Moreover, we will continue to support our students in participating in various local and international competitions, internships, exchange programmes, service-learning projects, and other co-curricular activities that enhance their experiential learning and personal growth.

To achieve these goals, we need the collective wisdom, passion and commitment of our entire Lingnan community. We need to work together as one team, with a shared vision and a common purpose. We need to listen to each other, respect each other and support each other. And we need to celebrate our achievements, learn from our past and grow from our experiences.

I pledge to do my best to lead this university with courage, compassion and humility. We will uphold the highest standards of governance and accountability. We will consult widely, communicate openly and collaborate effectively. And we will inspire, empower and serve you, our students and colleagues, as we strive to make Lingnan University a **world-class liberal arts research institution in the digital era**.

Thank you for your attention. Thank you for your support. Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey. And thank you for making Lingnan University a place where we can all grow, thrive, and make a difference. Thank you.