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On Clubs' Days and Clubs

Louisa Leung
Editor, English Content

For the past few years we have seen Chinese clubs mushrooming UBC campus. Names such as CCS, DSC, CASS, and CSA are well known to most Chinese students. A large number of us may even have membership status in at least one Chinese club.

As the size of the Chinese student population on campus grows, it seems reasonable for a parallel growth in the number of Chinese clubs as it reflects the broadening of interests among the student body. After all, a club is formed when a group of people has found similarities between them that they can't find in any other clubs. However, as I was browsing through Inside UBC, I am amazed by the abrupt similarities between these Chinese clubs. Examples:

Club A, "We bring to you unforgettable social, cultural, sports, special and volunteer events."

Club B, "One of the fastest growing clubs on campus, we offer a range of sporting, cultural and social activities."

Club C, "As one of the largest clubs at UBC, we provide community service opportunities, sports events, workshops and seminars-even shopping discounts for our members!"

Question: Are these clubs really distinct student organizations? How do these clubs differentiate themselves from others?

Seeing the difference between them is diminishing, these clubs adopt another tactic in attracting new members: membership privileges. As the pioneers in membership privileges, Chinese clubs are the only clubs at UBC that offer sponsorship discounts to their members. By joining the club, its members get purchase discounts from a list of sponsors. One of these clubs even bound a charming 30-page booklet that lists all of its sponsors. A powerful marketing tool to lure people into the club.

Besides discount sponsors, these Chinese clubs also give out free dance ticket, free stationary, free sticker photos, even free

air tickets to Hong Kong. Perhaps it won't be long until a club display a sport car as a prize for its membership lucky draw.

Clubs may defend these sponsors and free prizes as benefits given to their members rather than strategies taken to let them win their implicit battle over membership population. After all, many people join these clubs just because of these discounts.

I do not despise having discount sponsors as one of the privileges one can get out of a club. However, I wonder if these discounts and free gifts are the right marketing tools for these student-formed organizations. As university students and the future leaders of society, should we be so materialistic and settle for these benefits? I do believe that a membership in a student club means more than a 10% discount from your pearl milk tea. Rather than competing on the number of sponsors or the location of the dance being held, I feel that clubs should compete on their activities or events that can truly benefit their members in the

long run, whether these activities are for relaxation or personal enhancement.

Sadly, not only these clubs have become increasingly addicted to discounts sponsors and dances at high-class hotels, they have also grown more hostile toward other clubs. Tearing each other's posters off from bulletin boards becomes a routine activity, and printing out posters continuously to replace the lost or stolen ones becomes a regular and unnecessarily large expense to most clubs. Despite of the fact that these activities are inefficient use of resources and manpower, we, as university-educated people, are committed to such work. We even feel proud when we have successfully "defended" the bulletin boards from the "invasion" of other clubs.

It's noticeable that one finds such characteristics only in Chinese clubs. Does this situation merely reflect the cultural difference, or is it implying a twisted meaning in our clubs? □

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熱鬧過後

吳國璋
中文版編輯

自水
此日

進入這個熟悉的地方，今天似乎特別擁擠。倒也不是甚麼稀奇景象，年中也不時有各種攤位在大堂內進行推廣活動。行近一點，才開始察覺到這並不是那麼簡單。一個個身穿整齊制服的學生已經站立在大門等候，黑白藍綠的襯衫異常奪目。他們對每位進入大樓的人微笑，有不少途人更樂意停下來聽他們的推銷。言者有心，聽者也有意。整個學年，沒有任何活動比這次更大規模和成功，吸引到這樣多的學生參與。甚麼大型商業機構入侵校園？對不起，這並不是甚麼企業發起的宣傳活動。是政府全力資助的推廣運動嗎？也不是。

不要少看他們，他們將會是社會發展的支柱，國家經濟的棟樑，充滿著活力和熱誠。他們是誰？卑詩大學的學生。他們在幹甚麼？一年一度學會日(Clubs Days)的招收會員活動。成功之處？別的不說，三天內各會合共(保守估計)數萬元的收入足以說明一切。當然，成功非僥倖，總有背後的原因。

「你好，請問你參加了我們某某社沒有？」

「還未，我剛剛才進來。」

「那麼你就一定要參加我們某某社了。今年我們找到很多贊助商戶，平時也會到這些地方購物娛樂吧？」

「有的。啊，原來這間也是你們的贊助商？我常常到那裏買東西的。」

「是麼？那你就更不可以錯過這次機會了。只要加入成為會員，你到我們的贊助商購物時便可享

有特別折扣。還有，你現在加入更可以獲贈精美文具和參加大抽獎，頭獎是來回某地的機票啊！」

「似乎很吸引，我決定入會。」

開始有點頭緒吧？在你驚訝他們的生意頭腦之餘，有沒有留意這一點：那究竟是一個怎樣性質的組織？從以上的對話得不到答案，可見這點並不甚重要。在那三天裏，他們目的只有一個，爭取最多的會員(及入會費)。其他的事，還是以後再算，反正不少人也是單單爲了那些折扣優惠而入會。今年會員人數不夠別人多嗎？明年便去找更多的贊助商。「好的開始是成功的一半」對他們並不適用，招到最多會員的好開始便已是全年的成功。

當然，全校百多個學會，有以上思想的只是少數。無獨有偶，那些全都是華裔學生爲主的組織。難道這就是所謂的文化差異？身為華裔的我們，應否爲華裔學生擁有商業頭腦而深感榮幸？這現代商業社會裏，那些現象只是物競天擇、適者生存的不變道理，還是大學生只看重物質生活、被潮流牽著走的最佳例證？大學是社會的縮影，難過這就是社會的錯？還是根本沒錯，而是有人痴心妄想，以爲大學生不應隨波逐流、課餘應關心社會的一場誤會？

學會日到了尾聲，眼有人爲得到有龐大贊助商爲後盾的會員證而滿足，也有人爲了會員人數打破紀錄而高興。他們你情我願的樣子，或多或少反映了他們的心態。□

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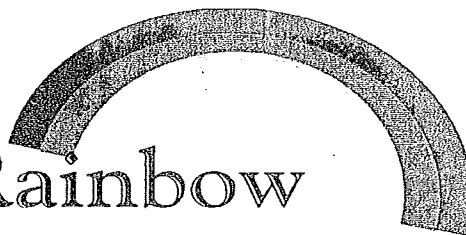
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Campus Rainbow



University is composed of students from different background: culture, age, and gender..., just like a rainbow. In this issue of Perspectives, we have talked to three students, each has their unique stories to tell. Do you find their stories echo to yours?

As smooth as university life appears to be, Fiona admits that she sometimes finds it hard to make intimate friends on campus.



Everyone has their own faults and accomplishments in life, their dreams and their desires, and Lilian is no exception. This simply shows that, she is actually very similar, in this respect, to other students at all.

Freshman at 15

Just like other third-year Science students, Fiona has to drag herself out of her warm bed for the morning lectures. Just like the others, she has to survive endless midterms and quizzes. However, unlike the majority, she is only 17.

Fiona's interest in the academics was seen at an early age. She was enrolled in the Challenging Program at Eric Hamber in grade 8. It was not long after that she learned from her acquaintances in a Mathematics contest about the Transition Program at University Hill. Feeling the urge for more challenges to satisfy her ambitious soul, Fiona entered into the second year of that program.

The Transition Program is a 2-year curriculum offered by University Hill Secondary School. In the first year, students study basic grade 8 material with some higher level courses. The second year works towards graduation and focuses on the Provincial Exams. As Fiona entered the second year directly from high school,

she practically "jam-packed" 4-years worth of high school materials into one. At only 15 years of age, she was successfully admitted into the Faculty of Science at UBC.

Fiona did not encounter unbearable obstacles during her new life on campus. As she dived into the first-year Science curriculum without any biology background, she initially found the courses a bit difficult, but eventually got used to them. Although she was a few years younger than her fellow classmates, she rarely encounters obstacles in making new friends. When people first knew about her young age, they were initially very amazed, but they soon forgot about that after working with her on a daily basis. She never feels that she is smarter or superior to others. On the contrary, she said that university has been one of the most humbling experiences of her life.

As smooth as university life appears to be, Fiona admits that she sometimes finds it hard to make intimate friends on campus. However, she believes that huge

class size, rather than her young age, is the reason behind this problem.

Nevertheless, Fiona has never regretted about her decision to enter university at such a young age and missed out all the fun that one might experience in the five years of an ordinary high school. She knows that she would have missed out a greater number of wonderful opportunities of meeting a lot of amazing people if she didn't choose the Transition Program. For all these years, her parents have been supportive of her and most of the pressure she has on her shoulders is just self-imagined.

Because of her love for biology, and due to the influences from her animated chemistry teacher at University Hill, she chose biochemistry as her major in the beginning. However, she eventually found physiology a much more appealing area. At present, she describes her future as "school, school, and more school." Her plan is to finish her B.Sc. in physiology, after which she would like to pursue a graduate degree.

"This is my second undergraduate degree in pharmacy."

It was a little after ten o'clock when Lilian Hu, a friendly looking individual with a petite stature, quietly entered the humble home of Perspectives. After a brief introduction, I discovered that Lilian was 43 years old. Now, there is nothing really spectacular about being 43 years old, but soon I found out that at the age of 43, Lilian had already graduated from another university. Despite of that, she is now undertaking the same undergraduate program at UBC that other students quite younger than herself are taking here at UBC.

Lilian received her first undergraduate degree in Pharmaceutical Science from the Pharmaceutical College of Shanghai and Medical University thirteen years ago. Unfortunately, Canada does not recognize her degree in China, hence she has to repeat the same undergraduate program here at UBC.

There are many reasons why Lilian wanted to leave China and started a new life in Canada. Although she initially went to the States, she eventually moved to Canada when she felt that Canada was a much safer and peaceful place to live. In addition, Lilian wanted to escape from her working life in Communist China. As she explained: "My boss wanted me to authorize unsafe and contaminated drugs so he could make big money. He only cared about money. Since I refused to do so, we always had big arguments. This is another reason why I want to go to North America."

Even though Lilian enjoyed her study at UBC, which offers more developed courses in Pharmaceutical Science than China, she sometimes finds it hard to communicate with other people, due to different cultural background. Nevertheless, the language barrier for Lilian does not affect her studies, though, since she has learned most of the scientific and technical terminology back in Shanghai: During

her years in Shanghai, Lilian studied and performed pharmaceutical research using English textbooks.

Not married nor employed, Lilian is a full-time student at UBC and is supported by her retired father. Since her father and her live in Surrey, Lilian spends four hours each day commuting to UBC. The 24 hours in a day are, therefore, very precious to Lilian, who explained that she has no time for a social life. What little time Lilian has, is devoted entirely on her studies.

There are many students with similar experiences and situations like Lilian and it takes a lot of courage to go in pursuit of one's own goal. Everyone has their own faults and accomplishments in life, their dreams and their desires, and Lilian is no exception. This simply shows that, she is actually very similar, in this respect, to other students at all.

常
來
的
人
都
注
意
到
她



她
總是在三點半背著紅色小背包上樓
點了東西, 坐到電梯口
就像回家一樣熟悉
熱騰騰的麵線每次總是吃上兩碗
偶而翻著書
偶而左顧右盼
好像在等朋友但朋友始終沒出現
吸管上的泡沫亦逐漸破滅
今天已是第七天
常來廣場的人幾乎都注意到她
秀髮垂肩
甜甜的脸蛋帶著調皮的微笑
一個穿著牛仔褲的男孩終於按捺不住好奇從對桌過來
【嗯...妳好像我小學同學! 我們可以做個朋友嗎!】
她微笑不語.....
跟著從她的紅色背包拿出手提電話
【嗨! 小珍我...贏...了!】

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“Some students avoid me, thinking that I cannot talk or that I am weird.”

A Target for Prejudice

Alex is a Political Science student. He has a degree in Business already, and he is doing his second degree at UBC. He speaks Cantonese, English, and Mandarin fluently. He is a cyberpunk in his free time, and he spends his other time fishing, sailing, and travelling. The only major difference that sets him apart from other UBC students is that he has hearing disability.

Although Alex was born deaf, either him or his parents realized the problem until they saw his results at the routine school auditory tests. Alex remembers that he was the target of prejudice when he studied elementary school in Hong Kong. “At first I thought it was because my father is Scottish. Some kind of racial prejudice.” Alex recalled. However, the situation did not improve even after he went to study at a private school in England; “Then I realized that it was because I am deaf.” Dissatisfied with England, he went to the United States to study. It is the place that seems to have influenced him the most.

As the foundation of disabilities, America offers all kinds of schools and facilities for people who are physically challenged. It was then when Alex learned to see himself as a normal person, rather than an outcast from society.

Alex thinks that the difference between him and hearing students lied on the means of learning, not on the learning method itself. Since Alex has hearing problem, he needs sign language interpreters during lectures as well as a note-taker, as he has to watch the interpreter

and cannot write notes. He said that his instructors must speak slowly and clearly for the interpreters. The situation becomes more difficult if the lecturers did not stay on the topic, such as making a joke. When this happens, the interpreters have to ask them questions and the only thing Alex could do is to remain helplessly seated, feeling extremely frustrated.

Alex's interpreters come from the UBC Disability Centre. He needs them only during lectures, because the professor speaks quickly, and often he is seated too far to hear or to lip-read. Outside of the classroom he can communicate very well --- with the help of his hearing aid and lip-reading skill. “The problem with depending on interpreters is that I cannot change courses,” he mentioned. “Sign language interpreters are rare and it's not easy to find another one who has time to come to another class.”

On the question of how other students have treated him here at UBC, he answered, “Some students avoid me, thinking that I cannot talk or that I am weird.” “He also added that friendship depends on his own as well as other people's attitude. Like most of us, Alex also finds e-mail a very handy way of communicating with other people.

Alex sees his future as challenging yet hopeful. While many other students have to cope with occasional depression attacks, Alex's constant optimism and enthusiasm struck us as exceptional. When asked how he can keep such a positive view on things, he answered, “The main thing is to keep open. Never lock yourself up.”

有故事的人

撰文 張焯欣 趙雯 陳家欣
攝影 林川

早上八時半，校內的第一節課開始。

講室內坐滿了幾百個學生：有些在仔細聆聽教授的講義、有些與鄰座的朋友指手劃腳地討論、也有一些同學徘徊在夢與醒之間。但只要鐘聲一響——下課了！幾百個同學紛紛魚貫地離開。你又可有想過，這幾百位一起上課的人都有自己的故事呢？今期《瞻》請來三位同學：Alex、阿思、和胡令嫻女士，細說他們不平凡的小故事。

對於將來，阿思略為遲疑了一會，精簡的答道：「讀書、讀書、再讀書。」

快人一步

對很多人而言，上大學是中學畢業後一個非常自然的延續，之後或許再升讀博士，要不然就要立足社會。現時於卑詩大學就讀第三年生理學的阿思也不例外，唯一特別的是她只得十七歲。

初中的時候，阿思偶然在一數學比賽中得知University Hill中學舉辦了一個挑戰課程，讓參加者在兩年內完成中學課程，然後直升大學。阿思當年沒有多考慮就參加了。被問到有否後悔過，阿思非常肯定的回答：「沒有！其實我的野心相當大，這個課程正好給我一個鍛鍊的機會。況且，我喜歡較自由的大學生活，中學時的歲月只能用枯燥乏味來形容。」「假如我沒有參加這個課程，我會錯過了很多人與事。」

那麼，當她跟一群至少比自己大兩三年的同學一起學習，會否感到困難或與眾不同呢？她很冷靜的解說：「基本上也沒有大問題，只是起初要惡補從前沒有接觸過的生物學罷了。外表上同學也認不出我的年紀，當他們知道我的年齡都會投以驚奇的目光，反復再問：『我不是聽錯吧！』但不久以後他們也不會將我的年齡放在心上，照常一起學習。」

但她也承認，或許是她較年幼的緣故，再加上學生們都只是各自的上課，她的確沒能在校園裏結識一些好朋友。對此，她也沒太大的遺憾：「我也可以從其他校外的活動中結識朋友，也有以前中學時認識的。」

對於將來，阿思略為遲疑了一會，精簡的答道：「讀書，讀書，再讀書。」

「十五歲那年在沒有多選擇的情況下就入讀卑大。當年沒有寄予特別的厚望。幸而至今仍享受大學生活。自己也沒有想過以前決擇的對錯，只覺得這一切的發生都非常自然。」

訪問完結時，她仍是戴著一副淡定而冷漠的表情。阿思其實跟大部份的大學生沒有分別，只是出生年份遲了兩年。她雖然沒有明言，但還是從這副冷淡臉龐中隱若顯示這兩年差距所給她的額外負擔。