

## Dean's Welcoming Address to Humanities and Social Science Students' Union

Student societies play an important role in university life both to promote student fellowship and to organize meaningful social and political student activities. In this spirit, I welcome the creation of HSSSU not only as an institution of Student Fellowship but also as a force for the promotion of knowledgeable citizenship for our campus, our city, and the world.

May the HSSSU be an important vehicle for you to relax and to work together – to do something independently that reflects your commitment to your fellow students, your school, and your community.

In the words of HKUST president, Tony F. Chan, “Work Hard; Play Hard.”

And in my words, enjoy.

In my experience, the most successful, certainly the most enjoyable, student activities often have no link to the classroom nor to the academic program which sponsors them. Indeed, I hope that the activities you will organize are not linked to our school's or university's academic mission. My personal preference and certainly my personal experience recommend instead, a focus on the recreational and extra-curricular side of student life. In my own college life, the memorable activities organized by student associations centered around political protest: notably marching on Washington in 1971, and disrupting the Yale Senior Class Dinner in 1972.

What stands out in these memories, however, are not the acts of political defiance; but rather the enjoyment of shared activities and shared commitment to something which made me feel for the first time responsible as an independent adult and cool – of course back then I was both far slimmer and had not just more hair, but really long hair.

For some of you, the next three years may mark a similar high point in your personal lives – a time of personal exploration and fulfillment. To you I say, Enjoy and treasure this time which at Yale, my Alma Mater, we call the ‘Bright College Years.’

For others, the leadership, the commitment, the energy, and the fellowship you learn from the shared activities of the HKUST Humanities and Social Science Students' Union will inspire you to even greater achievements. To you I say, Seize the opportunities the HSSSU offers and make them something of which we can all be proud.

In the words of that immortal college song:

*Bright College years with Pleasure rife  
The shortest gladdest years of life*

Don't hold back. Do something. And again above all, Enjoy.