

Project X helps to bring out the best

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The idea is to help them get used to the work environment before they eventually join the real world.

City University has tweaked this system a little. Its department of applied social studies launched Project X two years ago. The aim is to inculcate in students a desire for lifelong learning while contributing to society.

Project X counts the community experience scheme as one of its programs.

It requires students to come up with ideas for activities that will make people more concerned about the plight faced by the less privileged.

This year, five CityU social studies undergraduates decided to organize a seminar to help students of CCC Kei San Secondary School in Fan Ling understand more about the 3-3-4 education system and learn things they can't get from books.

Preparations began during the summer holiday. CityU student Wong Wai-ting described the experience as very "touching."

Wong and her colleagues taught the Secondary Four and Five students how to hold meetings, make proposals on feasible policy directions and how to conduct group discussions.

The Secondary Five students are the first batch under the new 3-3-4 system. So it was not surprising that they called themselves "guinea pigs" and wanted to use the seminar to voice their opinions.

Wong said when preparations began, the students were "loosely" organized. Every time a planning meeting ended, they simply "dispersed," leaving her frustrated.

But her efforts later started to bear fruit. Despite having to work as an intern, she managed to find time to rush back for meetings at the Fan Ling school.

The school students, seeing her dedication, gradually became more involved in the activities.

There were major transformations, Wong said. For instance, a student who used to be quite passive asked to be a group leader at the seminar. The seminar itself went into overtime because the students did their presentations very seriously.

Wong said the scheme allowed her to put into practice what she had learned. She saw people changing before her very eyes - students who began the program with little enthusiasm later worked wholeheartedly for the seminar.

Wong once felt young people are rebellious and would be hard to teach, so she wanted to avoid them at all costs. But she changed her mind after her Fan Ling experience. Now she hopes to be a social worker serving youths.

I think Project X is commendable. It allows students to have a better understanding of themselves through practical work. It can also better prepare them for the time they step into society.

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