

MASTERS OF EDUCATION PROGRAM TAKES STEP TOWARD HONG KONG

September 11, 2018 | [Matt Kucinski](#)

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In August 2018, leaders from Calvin College and Lumina College joined together to sign an agreement signaling an important step forward in Lumina offering Calvin’s Masters of Education program in Hong Kong.

Wing Tai Leung spent 40 years serving in Christian youth ministry and radio/film, including starting a major Christian magazine in Hong Kong. But, as he was ready to settle down in retirement a major storm crashed his plans—the 2008 global economic tsunami.

That event shifted his thinking away from retirement and toward new opportunities of impacting culture.

Financial irresponsibility by business and political leaders, he judged, was rooted in moral and spiritual failure. “We need to rebuild values and worldview among people, and Christian higher education is the key to that.”

Unlocking new opportunities

So Leung, working with Christian academics, ministers, and other leaders, began the process of establishing a platform of Christian higher education in Hong Kong, at the border of China. He realized that the current demographics of Hong Kong didn’t show a demand for another undergraduate institution; instead he saw an opportunity to influence leaders in the region through graduate-level offerings. This vision became Lumina College.

Hong Kong law does not allow universities to offer graduate degrees unless they also have undergraduate programs. Lumina would need partner institutions and their degree granting authority to fulfill its vision.

“So where can we find the finest Christian higher education in the world?” asked Leung.

Discovering a trusted partner

One of the first places he turned to was 12,463 miles to the east in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His son had graduated from Calvin College, and Leung had some connections with some leaders at the institution. He quickly decided that Calvin would be a great partner in helping to equip current and future leaders in Hong Kong to have influence in the public square.

So, in August 2018, leaders from Calvin College and Lumina College joined together to sign an agreement signaling an important step forward in Lumina offering Calvin’s Masters of Education program in Hong Kong. The program is pending approval from the Higher Learning Commission in the United States and the Education Bureau in Hong Kong.

“Collaboration between Calvin and Lumina will rebuild the Christian mind and Christian soul into a broader vision beyond personal piety, beyond Heaven in the future, more like Christ incarnated into every domain of life and particularly into leadership positions in different dimensions, into different domains. That’s why Lumina tries to see things structurally, not individually, not personally,” said Leung. “It’s not like I work in a bank and I’m just a Christian in the marketplace. No, I need to look at the banking system, the economic system, the technological system, the business system, the education system, the systemic structure. And where in the world can you find Christian higher education looking at things structurally, at redemption and the sovereignty of God in every culture? Calvin College is a top candidate.”

Leaning into the vision

“A partnership with Lumina agreement would exemplify our Vision 2030 goal of being a trusted partner for learning throughout the world,” said Will Katerberg, associate dean for programs and partnerships. “Lumina is eager to develop a Master of Education program with Calvin because the two schools share a Reformed vision of integrating Christian faith with learning. Students in Calvin’s current M.Ed. program and in the new Calvin-Lumina program can take some of their classes together. And graduates of both will bring a Reformed vision for learning into their work and lives.

“This partnership has great potential to help schools in Hong Kong meet their need for leaders and to expand their vision of what Christian education entails. It benefits Calvin by deepening our relationships with students, schools, and churches in Hong Kong and Asia more widely. Creating and running the M.Ed. program with Lumina will also give us good experience as we develop more partnerships in the U.S. and globally.”