
INTRODUCTION

The University of Macau (UM) was founded in 1981. Its predecessor was the private University of East Asia. Through 37 years of development, UM has become a leading university in Macao, with marked progress in teaching, research, and community service. The only public comprehensive university in Macao, UM has produced more than 32,000 outstanding graduates for society since its founding.

The UM community currently consists of nearly 10,000 students. It offers more than 130 bachelor's, master's, PhD and other programmes, through its Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Business Administration, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Science and Technology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Chinese Medical Sciences, Institute of Applied Physics and Materials Engineering, Institute of Collaborative Innovation, and Honours College. English is the main medium of instruction, with some programmes being taught in Chinese, Portuguese, or Japanese.

After completing its relocation to the current campus in 2014, UM began to reform its education system by launching a new '4-in-1' model of education that consists of discipline-specific education, general education, research and internship education, and community and peer education. The purpose of implementing this education model is to provide a multifaceted education to help students cultivate self-knowledge and self-confidence, so that they will possess both 'great knowledge' and 'great character'.

UM adopts a governance and management system in line with international standards and practices. It internationally recruits outstanding scholars to create a multilingual and multicultural learning environment for students. UM has a faculty team comprised of nearly 600 people, and many of them hold a PhD degree awarded by renowned universities. In recent years UM has stepped up efforts in recruiting senior-level faculty members in an attempt to continuously enhance its teaching and research. So far it has obtained 21 chair professors, all of whom are leaders in their respective areas of expertise. UM also implements a sabbatical leave and reward system to reward faculty members with outstanding performance.

UM vigorously supports scientific research. In recent years it has developed a blueprint for transforming into a research-focused university, which, combined with a clear, shared goal among faculty members to attain first-class achievements, has led to some very good academic results. According to the ISI Web of Science database, in 2017, UM published 1,400 high-quality papers, compared to only 127 in 2008. At the 65th International Solid-State Circuits Conference of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), UM was ranked among the top six universities in the world in terms of the number of papers presented at the conference. In some areas, such as traditional Chinese medicine, and the Internet of Things, UM already ranks among the top in the Greater China region in terms of papers published at major international conferences and in prestigious journals. With the support of the Macao SAR government and the Science and Technology Development Fund of the Macao SAR, UM in November 2010 received approval from the central government for establishing two state key laboratories, namely the State Key Laboratory of Analog and Mixed-Signal VLSI, and the State Key Laboratory for Quality Research in Chinese Medicine. The approval for the two state key labs shows recognition of the university's outstanding achievements in the fields of integrated circuits and traditional Chinese medicine.

More and more UM scholars have gained recognition at national and international levels, earning prestigious titles such as fellow of the IEEE, corresponding member of the Portuguese Academy of Sciences, fellow of the ASM International, fellow of the American Association for the

Advancement of Science, fellow of the American Physical Society, fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers, fellow of the American Educational Research Association, president of the IEEE's Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Society, and fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of Engineering Sciences. The microelectronics research team received the Prize for Scientific and Technological Innovation 2010 from the Ho Leung Ho Lee Foundation, and the second-class State Scientific and Technological Progress Award.

UM has a tradition of conferring honorary professorships and doctorates upon distinguished individuals. Recipients of UM's honorary titles include George H W Bush, former president of the United States; Prof. Shing-Tung Yau, an esteemed mathematician and recipient of the Fields Medal, the world's most prestigious prize in mathematics; Nobel laureates Prof. Chen-Ning Franklin Yang, Prof. James A Mirrlees, Prof. Mo Yan, and Prof. Robert C Merton; master of sinology Prof. Jao Tsung-I; Founder of the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Order Master Hsing Yun; and the renowned novelist Jin Yong. Conferring honorary titles upon these distinguished individuals has strengthened the university's ties with local and international communities and has also enhanced its international visibility.

To better support higher education development in Macao and to meet society's need for high-quality professionals, UM in August 2014 relocated to the current campus on Hengqin island, Guangdong province. The current campus is under the jurisdiction of the Macao SAR. It covers approximately 1.09 square kilometres, is 20 times larger than the old campus, and can accommodate at least 15, 000 students. On the current campus UM implements a residential college (RC) system modelled upon the successful experience of top universities like Oxford, Cambridge, and Yale. Currently there are ten RCs on the new campus. Undergraduates of different majors and in different years of study are arranged to live in the same RCs, with ample opportunities to participate in various competitions and activities organised by the RCs. It is hoped that through such frequent peer interaction, students will improve their interpersonal skills, acquire self-discipline, learn self-management, and achieve well-rounded development.

UM is blessed with unprecedented opportunities, but with great opportunities come great challenges. How UM seizes the opportunities and overcomes the challenges will have important implications for higher education development in Macao's neighboring regions. UM is committed to nurturing outstanding graduates with professional skills, extensive knowledge, and high integrity. It also hopes to make steady progress towards the goal of becoming a first-class university with regional characteristics.