

Mr Mensah Albert

Self-introduction



I joined the CityU doctoral program under the prestigious *Hong Kong Ph.D. Fellowship Scheme (HKPFS)* from Xiamen University (Xiamen, China), where I completed an international master's program in accounting (with thesis). Before moving to Asia, I worked in the accounting industry as a hotel accounts officer and acting accountant, and in academia as a principal research assistant and course instructor at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. I hold professional accreditations as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Chartered Economist (Ch.E) and Chartered Financial Economist (Ch.FE).

Initial decision to join CityU AC

I decided to join the CityU AC doctoral program for three reasons: (1) The academic faculty staff at AC are top-notch researchers with global reputations; (2) The College of Business. is highly ranked among the top business schools worldwide; and (3) Hong Kong has a strong financial market and research at AC is relevant to this market. These factors combined drove my decision to study at CityU.

Teaching philosophy and experience

I was recently awarded the *2017 College Ph.D. Student Teaching Excellence Award* by the College of Business, which I believe attests to my teaching excellence. I wish to share a little about my teaching experience and philosophy. To make my tutorial sessions lively and interactive, I initiate student reward incentives, such as earmarking active students as candidates for bonus marks, which I later bring to the course leader's attention for consideration. Active students are those who answer random questions and come up to the whiteboard to solve tutorial questions. The latter activity allows me to point out problem areas and common errors that make getting an "A+" difficult. When encouraging students to come up to the whiteboard, I tell them that it does not matter if they get the answers right or wrong, for the goal is to get them to attempt solving questions before class so they can actively participate during class discussions and exercises. Of course, all students who answer a random question or come up to the whiteboard are applauded. I encourage everyone else to clap for those who actively participate, as I consider this another way to incentivize students.

Before I start each tutorial session, I talk about the Intended Learning Outcomes and relate them to the real world, to engage students' interest before the main lesson content is discussed. For instance, while teaching about costing methods in CB2101 (Managerial Accounting), I mentioned that those who want to start their own manufacturing or service business would be able to assign costs to all activities involved in delivering their new product or service. I gave examples of businesses that these costing methods applied to. This approach makes study more fun, as it is possible to get students to start thinking about what they would like to do after getting their first degree. I also have an open-door policy where I meet students one-on-one at my office for consultations.

To motivate students to meet all of their course deadlines, I tell them that the point of having multiple deadlines on the course is to prepare them for the job market. I mention that employers assign multiple tasks that have to be completed on time, so meeting deadlines on the course is good preparation for the future.

I wish to highlight that without passion, dedication and love for what I do, it would have been challenging for me to implement these teaching tools. I am passionate about teaching and love to make lessons fun, often mixing jokes with lessons. I love to ride on the energy of the class and as such try my best to keep the class lively. There is always room for improvement and so I try to learn from comments in student evaluation reports and from experienced colleagues about interesting ways to teach. I am ecstatic about my teaching experience thus far and look forward to greater days ahead!

Efforts, achievements and reflections

I would say that my academic experience has thus far been successful. I have no regrets whatsoever! No regrets! I believe the quality teaching and training I have received at AC and CB have impacted me significantly. For instance, not only did I obtain straight A's in all of the courses I took at CityU, but I have also benefited from exposure to econometric techniques and research methodologies relevant to my area of research. To give a hint of my successes, I have received several academic accolades since joining CityU. These awards include the *Chow Yei Ching School of Graduate Studies Entrance Scholarship Award* (awarded by the Graduate School in 2015), the *Certificate of Merit (Outstanding Performance) on the "Teaching Students: First Steps" Course* (awarded by the Graduate

School in 2016), the *Outstanding Academic Performance Award* (awarded by the Graduate School in 2017 after nomination by AC), the *Research Tuition Scholarship Award* (awarded by the Graduate School in 2017), and the *College of Business Ph.D. Student Teaching Excellence Award* (awarded by the Graduate School in 2017). I strive for excellence in all I do, so seeing that my efforts have paid off is rewarding. I am all the more motivated to reach greater heights, such as publishing in top-tier (A+) journals and obtaining a job as an Assistant Professor in a world-class research-oriented business school.

Benefits from the achievements and learning opportunities provided

There is an avalanche of opportunities at AC, CB and CityU as a whole. For instance, I have received multiple funding grants to attend leading overseas conferences in the U.S., Canada and Spain, with funding from AC, CityU and the Hong Kong government (under the HKPFS scheme). Alongside these, AC's nomination and funding helped me to attend prestigious Doctoral Consortiums organized by MIT (at the MIT Asia Conference in Accounting), SMU (at the SMU Accounting Symposium) and the American Accounting Association. There are also opportunities for research collaboration with renowned researchers at AC—a worthwhile experience for a young researcher.

Having a stress-free study life

Studying and researching 24/7 is definitely a nonstarter! I have found that the best way to be at ease while excelling as a student and a researcher is to blend academic life with physical exercise and recreation. Outside my study and research, I am a tennis fanatic. I play tennis multiple times a week with friends on and off campus and often volunteer as assistant coach for university-wide professional tennis coaching projects organized by the CityU student residence office. My other role as a student leader at the student residence (i.e., a resident tutor at the postgraduate hall) also allows me to partake in multiple social and sports activities such as movies, parties and competitions. I find this kind of life much more fun than just studying and researching all day long.