

## Honorary Fellow A Citation



### **Professor Tunney F. Lee, BArch**

The founding mission of the discipline of Architecture at The Chinese University of Hong Kong was summed up a few years ago in a single sentence. It was to “begin the education of architects who will be aware, responsible, and capable of using creative design process to integrate context, form, and technology into settings that will support and enhance people’s potential.” This statement is visionary in several ways. Architectural education is seen as a life-long process that is merely begun at university. As well as high levels of technical and problem-solving skills, architects must be imaginative in the integration of built forms into their physical and cultural settings. They also need to have a strong ethical awareness of the impact of their buildings, both on the natural environment and on the people who will work and live in them. In the end, buildings are for people, at best frameworks for human growth and well-being. Graduates in Architecture at Chinese University are expected to be “active and responsible citizens – broadly aware of Hong Kong’s role vis à vis China, the Pacific rim and the world – both historically and in the future”. The man who articulated this challenging vision was Emeritus Professor Tunney Lee, the founding Chairman and Professor of Architecture at this University.

Professor Tunney Lee was an inspired choice for the job. Himself an eminent architect and town planner, he had taught for many years and had been Head at one of the most distinguished schools of built environment in the world, the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. After his appointment in 1990, Professor Lee started working with the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee and designed the excellent undergraduate curriculum of Architecture at Chinese University. The curriculum reflected his values and philosophy, with its emphasis on buildings as part of a human habitat, which made the most appropriate home for the Department in the Faculty of Social Sciences. It is a curriculum that has made our Architecture graduates distinctive in Hong Kong and highly valued by the profession. In honouring Professor Lee’s “outstanding contributions to architectural education” last year the Hong Kong Institute of Architects said that his time here was “of great significance to the architectural profession in Hong Kong.”

The first class of Bachelor of Architecture students graduated in 1994 and the Master Degree of Architecture Programme was launched in 1995. Professor Lee made sure that the Department was well equipped with first class teaching and research facilities, including a professional library collection and laboratories for multimedia and virtual reality simulation. Under his guidance, the Department became very active in research, since 1994 developing and promoting work on urban housing in China. A Centre for Housing Innovations was established to achieve high quality and affordable housing in densely populated areas of mainland China. The Centre has been actively engaged in collaborative research with the ministries, public and academic institutions in such areas as housing prototype, energy efficiency and GIS for housing.



In his time at the Chinese University, Professor Lee also made outstanding contributions to the University Council, the Senate, Chung Chi College and the Campus Planning Committee, where he gave invaluable advice that has helped to shape the beautiful campus we all enjoy today. Since his retirement from the University in 1998, Professor Lee has been an active member of the Architecture Academic Advisory Committee. He has continued to give support and advice to the University in promoting the development of our Department of Architecture.

Since his graduation as Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Michigan in 1954 Professor Lee has been active in his profession. He has been a Member of the International Congress for Modern Architecture, an Honorary Member of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects and an Honorary Affiliate of the American Institute of Architects (Hong Kong). He has also done important public and community work in Hong Kong, as a Member of the Building Committee of the Housing Authority, a Member of the Hong Kong Housing Society and a Member of the Advisory Council of the 2022 Foundation. In this latter role, he led a team of MIT faculty and others that compiled a briefing report on “Linking the Delta – Bridging the Pearl River Delta.”

Professor Lee still teaches at MIT. He offers planning studios that focus on such diverse topics as community development in downtown Santiago, Chile and sustainable residential development in Shanghai. His seminars raise such fascinating questions as “What is a Chinatown?” These are partly answered by visits to Boston’s Chinatown, exploring with his students the shops and restaurants he has known for almost seventy years. It is easy to see from the course descriptions on the web that Professor Lee has always been an inspiring teacher, with whom his students have shared what the HKIA called a “filial bond”.

Mr Chairman, it is my privilege to present to you Professor Tunney F. Lee, distinguished architect, town planner and visionary educator, for the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the University.