

Honorary Fellow Ms Grace Lau Mo-sheung



Public Orator Professor Ip Yuk-yiu

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

Currently ranked Number 1 by the World Karate Federation in female kata, Ms Grace Lau Mo-sheung, an alumna of City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK) (Class 2016, School of Creative Media), regards karate as a metaphor for life. To her, unlike other sports, which one may pick up for health reasons or diversion, karate is a life-long pursuit — a philosophy, really — that orients her worldview and guides her behaviour, touching on practically all aspects of her life.

Ms Lau began her karate training at the age of 11 and represented Hong Kong for the first time when she was 15. After winning a Bronze medal at the World University Karate Championships in 2012, her career can be described as a blazing success. Today, she has garnered a long list of illustrious titles and accolades: National Championship Gold Medal, Asian Karate Championship Gold Medal, World Championships Silver Medal, Olympic Bronze Medal, World Game Bronze Medal, Asian Games Bronze Medal, and World Beach Games Bronze Medal.

She was named Sportswoman of the Year in 2014 and 2015 by the University Sports Federation of Hong Kong and has received the Hong Kong Sports Stars Award multiple times. In 2024, the Karatedo Federation of Hong Kong, China awarded her the Excellent Achievement Award. The list goes on.

Yet the road to the top is long and arduous, exacting harsh demands on the body and mind alike. But though she has suffered many injuries, she has always bounced back stronger. More importantly, she has learned over the years to lead a disciplined and balanced life, where rest is as important as work and maintaining a proper state of mind does not take second place to keeping in top form.

While the sweet fruit of victory can provide a powerful enticement for athletes to do their best, the pressure that it brings has challenged many. Interestingly, Ms Lau has learned that the best way of handling pressure is to banish from her mind all thoughts of winning or even competing. Ms Lau realises that, contrary to popular belief, effort does not necessarily translate into success. In fact, quixotic as this may sound, effort is more noble and precious when it is dissociated from success because success is a confluence of factors beyond our control. What is under our control is the present moment, where we must exert ourselves to do a good job, win or lose.

In sport as much as in life, however, this does not mean that one can go about one's business without careful planning. Upsetting Japan's historical domination of kata was not accomplished within the brilliance of a moment. Rather, it was the result of painstaking strategising that required a thorough understanding of the opponents as well as oneself. Ms Lau finds it most useful to begin by acquiring a detailed knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses and then seeking to develop the former and overcoming the latter. Most importantly, never underestimate your own abilities. Nothing is more self-defeating than the thought that one is not good enough.

Ms Lau recalls with gratitude the nurturing and support of her family and her teammates. Similarly, she is thankful for the friendship and guidance that she received from her fellow students and professors at CityUHK. She learned from them the importance of time management, which has helped her to navigate through the stringent demands that athletes face daily. Enrolled through the Student Athletes Admission Scheme, Ms Lau took full advantage of what CityUHK had to offer, which allowed her potential to bloom. She now advises current CityUHK students, especially those with similar career aspirations as hers, not to be defined by what they perceive to be their limitations but to be bold in their endeavours. To step out of one's comfort zone is to give one's abilities a chance to develop fully.

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President, with her superb athleticism, Ms Grace Lau Mo-sheung has made Hong Kong and her alma mater exceedingly proud. As a sportswoman, she has put Hong Kong on the map of the field of karate. As a CityUHK student, she led the CityUHK Women's Karate Team to win the Team Gold Medal in competitions against local universities. As an alumna and role model, she selflessly shares her experiences with younger cohorts. And so I take great pleasure in presenting to you Ms Grace Lau Mo-sheung for the conferment of the Honorary Fellowship of City University of Hong Kong.