BRE Student Won Best Paper Award in International Surveying Conference

Being the only nominated undergraduate presenter from HKSAR this year, Mr Chris Cheng MA – a final year Candidate in B.Sc (Hons) in Surveying from the Department of Building and Real Estate, won the Best Paper Award in the 3rd RICS-ISM International Surveying Conference for Undergraduates 2011 under the supervision of Dr. K.F. Man from BRE Department. This is the first time the Hong Kong Polytechnic University participated in the international event and won the award.

The Conference

The international academic conference was jointly organised by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Malaysia and Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (ISM) on 18 and 19 Mar 2011 at the University Sains Malaysia, Penang. The theme of this year was “Surveyors of the Future: The Challenges of Change”. By providing an open forum and networking platform for undergraduates taking the RICS accredited courses in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Mainland China and Hong Kong SAR, the conference aimed to understand contemporary issues on surveying and the environment. It achieved this through the participation of 350 surveying undergraduates from 9 local and international universities.

The Awards

A total of 18 papers were submitted by undergraduates this year and a vetting panel consisting of RICS members, mostly in the academic field, was appointed to vet the papers a week before the conference. One ‘Best Paper’ and three ‘Special Mention’ Papers were selected by the vetting panel. Entitled as “A Study on Speculative Bubbles in the Hong Kong Luxurious Residential Market”, Mr Cheng Ma, Chris’s paper was awarded as the Best Paper.

Special thanks were given to Dr. K.F. Man for his kind suggestions and guidance throughout his period of supervision. Chris would also like to express his heartfelt thanks to his supervisor in the 2010 Swire Internship, Dr. NG Mei-Ling, for her generous support.

Paper Preparation

During the paper preparation, Chris overcame many difficulties. His laptop suffered from a virus attack and all the data were removed from hard disk two days before his presentation to the BRE Judge’s Panel. As a consequence, he worked more than 30 hours without sleeping to re-do the modelling and presentation slides. In February (including the Spring Festival), Chris slept only 3-4 hours every day working on complicated calculation and modelling to catch the paper submission deadline. As studying the property bubble phenomenon requires statistical treatment and financial knowledge far beyond an undergraduate course requirement, Chris self-studied various materials in econometrics and finance, as well as the application of statistical packages to perform the tasks. In his spare time, Chris constantly read Wall Street Journal and FinanceAsia. The market sense built up from his extra reading enabled Chris to quickly master the necessary theory in econometrics.