

Preface

I am pleased to present the first 2015 issue of the *AAOU Journal*. This issue features enhanced versions of selected papers from the 28th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities last year (AAOU 2014).

All seven papers in this issue are winners and finalists in the paper awards of the conference on the theme ‘Advancing open and distance learning (ODL): Research and practices’. Two papers focus on ODL practices of student learning support: Sembiring’s discussion of factors that affect student satisfaction and persistence; and Yilmazel and Ekin’s exploration of students’ use of mobile campus applications to be constantly connected to the campus and its resources. The paper by Walsh, Woodward, Solly and Shrestha considers the potential of mobile phones for teachers’ professional development for ODL practice. As regards the use of ICT in course delivery, Nandana, de Mel and Priyankara present an online laboratory platform to deliver laboratory experiments in a distance mode. Hori, Ono, Kobayashi, Yamaji, Kita and Yamada share the practice of a learning platform to demonstrate the development and adoption of open education resources. In terms of blended learning, Shu presents a case study of a flipped classroom in a translation course. Finally, in a discussion of multi-mode education, Tso shares experiences in teaching presentation skills via a blended learning approach.

We wish to express our thanks to all the authors for contributing and sharing their experiences in these articles. We would also like to thank the reviewers for their thoughtful suggestions and comments in the review process. Thanks also go to the staff of the AAOU Secretariat for their support and assistance in handling the papers and follow-up work.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the *AAOU Journal*, and find this collection of papers a useful reference to stimulate further high-quality research in open and distance education. Should you wish to submit a paper on an ODL topic, you are welcome to send your manuscript to aaou@ouhk.edu.hk.

Kam Cheong LI
Executive Editor