Introduction to the University

- Founded in 1890 by John D. Rockefeller
- Situated in Hyde Park, a community of 43,000 on the banks of Lake Michigan
- About 5000 undergraduate and 7000 graduate students
- 11% international students (Class of 2012)
Introduction to HKSA

- Cultural RSO (Registered Student Organisation) since 1998
- One of the 400 RSOs on campus
- Community of Hong Kong students
- Organizes activities every quarter
Justina Chung
President

- Econ major and Public Policy/Human Rights double major
- RSOs: The Blue Chips, Chicago Club for Alternate Investment
- Just having fun: volunteering for TEDx Conference, Lyric Opera, MODA fashion show, frying oreos at midnight with housemates
Alison Hung
Vice-President

- English Literature & Language double major
- RSOs: Chicago Maroon, campusCATALYST, Neighborhood Schools Program (NSP)
- Just for fun: watching Broadway shows, dinner & a movie downtown, visiting a homeless shelter, playing ping pong until 2am on a Saturday night
Tiffany Wong
Secretary

- Public Policy and International Studies double major
- RSOs: Fire Escape Films, Community Service Leadership Training Corps
- Just for fun: exploring coffee shops and Chicago neighbourhoods, scrounging for good food and Chicago culture
Martin So
Treasurer

- Econ major and French minor
- RSOs: Chicago Men’s A Capella, Motet Choir
- Just for fun: lighting for cultural shows and University theater and singing everywhere, including off-campus in KTV in Chinatown
Christina Chan
Webmaster

- Biochemistry dual-degree and Computer Science minor
- RSOs: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Opportunities through Operating Systems
- Just for fun: going on adventures around campus and the city and experimenting with food and photography
Things to do before departure

Hong Kong Student Association
Pre-Departure Briefing 2011
Things to do before departure

- Obtain your F1 student visa from the American embassy (bring water!)
- Book plane tickets
  - UA, Cathay
  - Transit outside the States – Tokyo
- Purchase TSA locks
Things to do before departure

- Obtain health insurance (school-provided or otherwise)
- Immunisation forms (ensure you have the relevant vaccinations)

UnitedHealthcare®
Things to do before departure

- **Laptops**
  - Consider a laptop lock

- **Electronics**
  - Remember to bring adaptors
  - Check the wattage
  - Check for international warranty
Things to do before departure

- Purchase some stationery
  - Cheaper in HK, more choice
  - Do note differences such as paper size, holes

- Clothing
  - Winter wear can be purchased in the US or HK. Layers rather than thick pieces
  - One or two sets of formal attire should suffice

- Food
  - Bring along favourite foods (no meats)
Things to do upon arrival

Hong Kong Student Association
Pre-Departure Briefing 2011
Things to do upon arrival

- Set up a bank account
  - Time will be set aside during pre-orientation and orientation for this
  - Bring along a bank draft
  - Definitely get Citi

- Register for cellphone plan
  - AT&T or T-Mobile
  - Consider family plans
Things to do upon arrival

- **Bedsheets**
  - US sizes different from Hong Kong
  - Target trip should be organised during pre-orientation and orientation
  - Order the bedsheets in HK to be mailed to US.
Other things to note

- **Transport from airport**
  - Free Omega shuttle for those attending Pre-O, otherwise around US$35
  - Cab fare averages about US$60 from O’ Hare to school

- **Tipping**
  - About 15% of bill
  - Optional, but not as optional as one would think

- **Sales tax**
  - Sales tax of 10.25% on most goods
  - Unlike HK, tax is not included in price
Overview of the College

- A liberal-arts college based in a research institution
- Known for the strength of its liberal arts and sciences curriculum
- Outstanding Faculty
Curriculum

- 42 credits to graduate
- Most classes are worth 1 credit
- 3 quarters in the quarter system (summer possible)
  - Each quarter consists of 10 academic weeks and 1 examination week
- Full academic course load is 3-4 classes per quarter
- More information: http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/
Curriculum

- General Education (a.k.a The Core Curriculum)
  - 6 credits in Humanities, Civilization Studies, and The Arts
    - Study Abroad programs fulfill 3 credits in the Civilization Studies component
  - 6 credits in the Natural and Mathematical Sciences
  - 3 credits in the Social Sciences
  - Foreign Language Requirement (3 credits)
Curriculum

- **Major Requirements (9-19 credits)**
  - Economics: 13 credits
  - Mathematics: 17 credits
    - With specialization in Economics: 18 credits
  - Biological Sciences: 16 credits
  - International Studies: 13 credits

- **General Electives (8-18 credits)**
  - Can be taken from most undergrad departments
  - Grad schools such as Booth GSB, Law School
Placement Tests

- Take place during the summer, Orientation week and the first week of school.
- Grant credits that count towards graduation

Language Placement
- Typically taken online over the summer
- Used to determine where a student begins language study, NOT to confer credit or satisfy requirements
- Note that placement tests are not available in languages which are not taught at the university.
Placement Tests

- **Calculus Placement Test**
  - Taken during O-Week
  - Up to 3 credits and placement into Honors Calculus, Intro to Analysis or Honors Analysis courses
  - Know: Limits, differentiation, integration, sequences and series, properties of real numbers.
  - Knowledge of A-level Mathematics, AP Calculus, or IB Mathematics may be sufficient for 0-2 credits.
  - To place into more advanced courses: study epsilon-delta proofs, proofs of calculus theorems
Placement Tests

- **Chemistry Placement Test**
  - Online test taken over the summer
  - Required for chemistry majors
  - Recommended for anyone who wishes to place into Honors Chemistry and above

- **Biology Placement Test**
  - Online test taken over the summer
  - Required for everyone
  - Typically used to gauge knowledge of biology topics and not for placement
Placement Tests

- Physics, Physical Sciences, and Chemistry Accreditation Exams
  - Much more difficult than online tests
  - Taken during O-Week or first week of school
  - Recommended for science majors and students who have studied these subjects at the college level and wish to place into higher-level classes
  - Confers credit to fulfill General Education Requirements
AP and IB Credit

- **Advanced Placement Credit**
  - Scores of 4 or 5 on many exams will count toward General Education requirements or elective credits, depending on the subject

- **International Baccalaureate Credit**
  - Scores of 6 or 7 on IB HL exams correspond to scores of 4 or 5 on AP exams
Advice

- Study and go for the placement and accreditation tests
- Remember that placement and accreditation tests are meant to gauge your ability
- Plan ahead - research on the classes and the faculty teaching the classes
- Get advice from seniors but take it with a grain of salt
- Seek help from your academic advisers if in doubt
- Take time to pursue interests and do not be too concerned with grades
Housing

- Live, work, play in **10 different residence halls**
- Make friends from the **38 houses**
- Have meals together in the **3 dining halls**
RSOs (Registered Student Organisations)

- Approved and regulated by the university, over 400
- ORCSA
- 14 fraternities and 6 sororities
- RSO Fairs held several times during the year
- [https://studentactivities.uchicago.edu/](https://studentactivities.uchicago.edu/)
Eat, Play, Sleep(Study)

- Get around campus easily on foot or on a bicycle
- Grab a bite at one of the restaurants on 53rd/55th/57th
- Chill at a student-run café in the basement of many campus buildings
- De-stress at the Ratner gym, Henry Crown gym or the ice-skating rink on the Midway
- Spend lots of time on the sofas in the Reg library
- Get your daily dose of Vitamin D at the Mansueto
- Have a lake-side picnic and study at the Promontory Point
Rejoice, city-dwellers!
A mile of shopping and culture

- Go shopping at the Magnificent Mile
- Embrace the arts at the Art Institute and the Lyric Opera
- Dangle off The Ledge at Willis Tower
- 18+ jazzclubs in northern neighbourhoods
CTA: Love ‘em or hate ‘em

- 171, 172: Free with UCID
- Free shuttles criss-cross campus after 6pm
- Downtown in 20 mins with the 6, X28
- Red/Green/Brown/Blue/Pink/Purple Lines
- Farther afield: Metra, Amtrak, Megabus, Greyhound

- Go to: Chinatown, Lincoln Park, Wrigleyville, Northwestern
Safety on campus

- Common sense
- Don’t walk alone after dark
- Be alert, nighttime, daytime
- Walk in main streets
- University measures: shuttle service, SafeRide, Umbrella Service, SOS telephones
The elephant in the room

- Winter is about 6 months a year
- Heated buildings and dorms
- Layer for convenience and warmth
- Moisturise regularly
- Good boots
- Weather and temperature fluctuates
- Always check daily forecast before heading out (weather.uchicago.edu)
Thank you!

Questions?