

Overview of our Human Practice

Our HKUST iGEM team this year has two main focuses on our human practice. First, we intend to create a new methodology to gain deep insight into people's perspectives on synthetic biology. Second, a project-specific human practice is our intent, which will promote both synthetic biology and our project. Bearing these two goals in mind, we have conducted two human practices this year – the interviews and the presentation for Hong Kong Cancer Fund.

Overview of the Interviews

Our last year iGEM human practice team conducted a survey among Hong Kong people. However, the result turns out to be that most people have heard little about this technology. Due to the difficulties in forming constructive ideas from this kind of result, we want to do something that can get deeper understanding of people attitudes toward synthetic biology, regardless of their backgrounds. Thus, we adopt the way of interview. Owing to the flexibility and other features of interview, we can achieve comprehend people's perspectives of synthetic biology deeper and also lay a foundation for future surveys and interviews. By targeting at four distinctive individuals – one politician, one journalist, one university student, and one secondary student, we indeed understand their perspectives in depth, and our interviews can be used as a foundation for further human practices.

Overview of the Presentation

The steady increase in wealth of East Asian nations during the past few decades has seen the population transition towards diets comprising more fats and less fibre. And there is general consensus among the scientific and medical community that such a diet leads to higher incidence of colorectal cancer. Public health bodies including the World Health Organization (WHO) and National Cancer Centre of Singapore (NCCS) therefore predict that current increasing trends in colorectal cancer will only continue.

Hong Kong, being a region that started developing earlier, observed a 190% increase in the crude rate of colorectal cancer incidence between 1983 and 2006. (See [this](#) document.) It is on track to overtake lung cancer soon as Hong Kong's deadliest form of cancer.

Thus we decided that at least one of our human practice activities would have to involve interacting with the local cancer therapy community in a certain way.