



## **Media Release**

### **SMU marks the opening of its new 2019 Academic Year with a New Core Curriculum**

*Singapore, 16 August 2019 (Friday)* - The Singapore Management University (SMU) welcomed its 20th cohort of 2383 freshmen today. This is the largest cohort to date.

The day's celebrations began with freshmen being welcomed at their individual schools, followed by the annual mega co-curricular activities fair [VIVACE](#) (SMU's largest CCA fair with more than 100 student clubs showcasing the best of Student Life) at the Campus Green and Concourse, and ended with the Academic Year Opening Ceremony in the evening at the SMU Hall.

About 500 guests comprising SMU Board of Trustees, senior management, faculty, staff, donors, alumni, freshmen and student leaders, entered the "lush garden" at the SMU Hall, School of Law and were treated to a sit-down dinner, interspersed with student performances.

#### **New curriculum and courses with effect from AY2019/AY2020**

Starting 19 August, the university's 20th cohort of freshmen will pursue degree programmes in accountancy, business management, economics, information systems, law and social sciences.

#### **Core Curriculum**

This new cohort will embark on a new [Core Curriculum](#). It stands on three pillars of learning, or three inter-related paths of development – *Capabilities*, *Community* and *Civilisations*. The existing mandatory internship and community service components for undergraduates are now integrated into the redesigned Core Curriculum as credit-bearing programmes. Through this new Core Curriculum, SMU intends to nurture graduates who have an independent mind while being dependable in deeds, and graduates who think deeply and broadly and at the same time, act to create value at home and abroad.

Two new courses that freshmen will take on this year are "Economics and Society", in the *Communities* pillar of the new Core Curriculum, and "Big Questions", in the *Civilisations* pillar.

"Economics and Society" will introduce students to the economic way of thinking about societal issues. The course will use the themes of incentives and empiricism to illustrate the power of simple economic ideas, and their ability to explain, predict, and improve what happens in the world.

"Big Questions" on the other hand, will help students understand the global challenges we face. The Big Question theme for AY2019/20 is "*Happiness and Suffering*". Apart from regular

interactions with their instructors in seminar-style settings, we will be incorporating public lectures and field trips to deliver a shared intellectual and cultural experience to our freshmen.

To this end, and as part of the delivery of “Big Questions”, SMU has invited major speakers to deliver public lectures to all our freshmen taking “Big Questions”. In Term 1, Dr. Steve Hickman, a licensed clinical psychologist and the founding director of the UC San Diego Center for Mindfulness will deliver the TY Lee Lecture on 3 September 2019. On 26 September 2019, Sonu Bedi Hans ’80 and Kate Morris Director of the Ethics Institute at Dartmouth College will deliver the Ngee Ann Kongsu Lecture. Finally, Michael Norton, Harold M. Brierley Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School, and a member of Harvard’s Behavioral Insights Group will deliver the Shaw Lecture on 26 October 2019.

As part of our community outreach efforts with our precinct partners, we have partnered with the National Heritage Board (NHB) to bring all freshmen to visit specially curated galleries and special exhibitions in the national museums and heritage institutions that speak to the 2019/20 Big Question theme of “*Happiness and Suffering*”. NHB will also showcase shortlisted research papers and projects on various platforms that form Singapore’s national inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

SMU undergraduates will also have the opportunity to take up new offerings introduced for the first time in the forthcoming academic year. These include:

1. **[Bachelor of Science \(Computer Science\) degree](#)** (offered by the School of Information Systems)

This degree programme aims to equip students with technical skills to build computing products and solutions to thrive in the marketplaces and society.

2. **[Second Major in Sustainability](#)** (offered by the Lee Kong Chian School of Business)

The first major of its kind in Singapore, the curriculum will include what businesses can do to reduce their negative impact on communities and the environment. It will also address the issue of sustainability in the business sub-disciplines.

3. **[Second Major in Data Science and Analytics](#)** (offered by the School of Economics)

This new major aims to train students with the ability to transform large amount of data into useful information for decision-making in an increasingly data-driven world.

4. **[Maritime Business Operations Track](#)** (offered by the Lee Kong Chian School of Business)

The track aims to develop students who have specialised knowledge in maritime business operations that is contextualised to meet the needs of industry stakeholders.

5. **Exciting new SMU-X Courses**

In addition, the University continues to ramp up its offering of **SMU-X courses** in the new academic year, with at least 40 SMU-X courses that undergraduates across all years can choose from. The new SMU-X courses include interdisciplinary topics, such as *Legal*

*Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in Law, Digital Marketing, Auditing Information Systems, and Analytics Application for Smart Living.*

With a greater focus on (but not limited to) ASEAN, several **SMU-X Overseas courses** will also be offered, such as *Accounting Study Mission (Thailand and Indonesia)*, *The Business of Creative Industries (USA)*, *Corporate Culture and Values (Philippines)*, *Belt and Road Initiative (China)*, and *Psychology Study Mission: Cultural Impact on Creativity and Innovation (Taiwan)*.

The University will be working with at least 50 partners across the public, private and NGO sectors to roll out the above SMU-X courses through the academic year.

## **6. Work-study options**

SMU is also piloting a new credit-bearing work-study option, which allows students in selected programmes to take up longer internships of up to six months, while concurrently studying on campus.

### **(i) SMU-Google Squared Programme**

SMU and Google Singapore are offering the SMU-Google Squared Data & Analytics Programme to SMU's undergraduate students. This partnership marks the first time that Google is extending its [Google Squared Data & Analytics Programme](#) to the undergraduates of a local university. This collaboration provides SMU students with the opportunity to undergo a six-month internship programme at a Google partner company in the media industry. During the internship, students will have the opportunities to analyse and propose possible solution for an industry-specific problem, demonstrate synthesis of information, apply their domain knowledge, and understand the industry contexts and constraints.

### **(ii) Health Economics and Management Programme**

SMU and SingHealth are training SMU's undergraduates in the new Health Economics and Management (HEM) second major. First-of-its-kind in Singapore, the programme commenced in January 2019 and aims to nurture a pipeline of local graduates who are equipped with knowledge in healthcare administration. The curriculum, jointly developed by SMU and SingHealth, includes courses that are of increasing importance in the healthcare sector including Health Economics, Healthcare Management, Health Systems and Policy, and Introductory Data Analytics in Healthcare. Beyond the classroom setting, students will have an option to undertake 10-week internship or six-month work-study elective at SingHealth's healthcare institutions, providing students with valuable opportunities to observe what they have learnt in classroom being applied in practice. The work-study option is scheduled to start from 2020/2021. Students can look forward to acquiring hands-on experience that will prepare them to be effective healthcare administrators under the mentorship of our experienced healthcare staff/administrators.

## **Scholarship and Financial Assistance Schemes Available**

At SMU, we practise a 'needs-blind' admission policy where no deserving student will be deprived of an education because of financial hardship. In FY2019, we have made available a total of nearly \$7.28 million in financial aid for students, combining university resources as well as donor-supported schemes. Students can get access to the financial aid via the SMU Financial Grant, SMU Bursary, [SMU Access](#), Work Study Grant, SMU Education Loan, SMU

Student Computer Loan, as well as donor-supported bursaries, study awards and needs-based scholarships.

With **296 scholarships and bursaries** that freshmen can apply for in the new academic year, one in three freshmen of the new intake will stand a chance to be awarded a scholarship or award by the University. Some of these give preference to students with financial needs, and all of them are bond-free.

Additionally, tuition fee financing schemes – in the form of the Tuition Fee Loan and Study Loan (both supported by the government), as well as the CPF Education Loan, are available for students, the former two being interest-free during the course of their study. SMU also offers student employment opportunities, such as the Work Study Grant, to help students seek part-time employment on-campus and off-campus for additional income. Currently, about 177 students are working with offices in the University.

The University is focused on delivering a high quality SMU education that will develop our students into confident, well-rounded young men and women, who are capable of being trusted leaders and responsible global citizens, and whose contributions will make meaningful impact in Singapore and beyond.

Please refer to SMU Chairman's remarks in Annex A.  
Please refer to SMU President's remarks in Annex B.

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### **About Singapore Management University**

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and to produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning

Home to over 10,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and post-graduate research programmes, SMU, is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community.

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