



## Media Release

### **SMU names new Deans for Students and International Affairs**

*Professor Paulin Straughan will be appointed as Dean of Students and Professor Ong Siow Heng will take up new role as Dean of international Affairs*

Singapore, 13 April 2017 (Thursday) - The Singapore Management University has announced today that with effect from 1 July 2017, Professor Paulin Straughan 郑宝莲 will be appointed the next Dean of Students 学生事务总监. She takes over from Professor Ong Siow Heng 王绍恒, who will be appointed in a new role as Dean of International Affairs 国际事务总监.

Prof Straughan, who has more than 20 years' experience working with tertiary students, is currently a faculty member at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), National University of Singapore (NUS). Her previous appointments include Vice Dean of International Relations and Special Duties and Vice Dean of Undergraduate Studies, FASS, and Deputy Head of the Department of Sociology. Prof Straughan's research is in the area of medical sociology and health care systems with special focus on preventive health and the importance of social support networks in health-related issues, sociology of ageing, work and family.

She was a Nominated Member of Parliament from 2009 to 2011, during which she argued for work-life balance and the nurturing of a more pro-family social environment. As part of her public service, Prof Straughan sits on the Board of Governors of Raffles Girls' School (Secondary), and is a member of the Research Advisory Panel for Strategic Group, Prime Minister's Office. She had also chaired the Accreditation Council of the Social Development Unit, served on the Board of the Council for Third Age and was a member of the Infectious Disease Task Force (Ministry of Health), NurtureSG (Child and Youth Health Task Force, Ministry of Health) and the Tripartite Committee on Work-Life Strategy (Ministry of Manpower).

Prof Straughan, who will concurrently be appointed Professor of Sociology (Practice) at SMU's School of Social Sciences, said, "I am indeed much privileged to have this opportunity to work with SMU students and colleagues. SMU is a young, vibrant university that is firmly grounded in a very strong student centric ethos. I am looking forward to getting to know our students and to add value to their tertiary experience."

Prof Ong Siow Heng who has served as Dean of Students since January 2011 will move on to assume the role of Dean of International Affairs (DIA), which will focus on promoting the international profile and reputation of the university. Said Prof Ong, "I hope to help profile the university's strengths internationally, and represent the exceptional calibre of our faculty's thought leadership and research, as well as the high quality of our students' competencies, values and abilities to impact society positively."

Prof Ong has a Ph.D. from Northwestern University and is concurrently a Professor of Corporate Communication (Education) at the Lee Kong Chian School of Business and Director, Centre for Scholars' Development at SMU. His research areas are Intercultural Communication, Public Campaigns and Communication, and Popular Culture.

Elaborating on the new role of the DIA, SMU Provost Professor Lily Kong said, "This is part of the University's Vision 2025 and its strategic plans to further raise the global profile and reputation of SMU."

She added that, "As Dean of Students for the past six years, Siow Heng has passionately encouraged and supported student empowerment and student life. Never missing an opportunity to showcase SMU's brand of education and its fine students, Siow Heng has also effectively reached out to prospective students, schools, parents and industry on the excellent qualities of an SMU education, defined by character building, growing and giving.

SMU is also honoured to have Paulin join us as Dean of Students. We will benefit from her wealth of experience working with students within and outside the classroom. I would like to welcome Paulin to SMU and congratulate them both on their new appointments."

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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 produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 10,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, SMU comprises 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 interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. [www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)

### **About the Dean of Students**

The Dean of Students looks at encouraging and supporting student empowerment and student life. The Office of the Dean of Students comprises the Student Services Hub, Office of Student Life, Dato' Kho Hui Meng Career Centre, Centre for Social Responsibility, Centre for Scholars Development, Mrs Wong Kwok Leong Student Wellness Centre, Co-curriculum Development, Residential Experience, Creative Experience and Partnerships, Diversity, Inclusion, and Integration, and, Safety and Emergency Preparedness Centre.

### **About the Dean of International Affairs**

The Dean of International Affairs looks at promoting the international profile and reputation of the university. It will embark on key international initiatives and advance SMU's strategic intents at the international level. The role will ensure that SMU is well represented at university networks and international events, thereby promoting its many promising features and demonstrating thought leadership in its areas of strength.