

SMU's new college offers interdisciplinary courses for postgrad research students

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Students studying at Singapore Management University (SMU) for their master's and PhD programmes can now take courses and programmes from a range of disciplines such as law, commerce and technology in a new school.

This move by SMU comes amid increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary learning, which involves learning content beyond the boundaries of a single discipline.

Professor Wang Heli, dean of the new College of Graduate Research Studies, said it will not run its own programmes.

She said: "Rather, we want to work with SMU's schools such as law and business to tap existing content and see how it can be developed into interdisciplinary content which will enhance learning for our postgraduate research students."

The college, the university's eighth school, was launched yesterday during a ceremony at the SMU Administration Building in Victoria Street.

Education Minister Chan Chun Sing said in a pre-recorded address at the event that the new college represents SMU's efforts to build up its research capabilities.

Apart from its impactful research, the university has also been good at integrating disci-

plines, he added.

He said: "These two points are closely related because to conduct impactful research, you need to be able to integrate the strengths of different disciplines.

"This is increasingly a feature of effective problem-solving in a complex world."

SMU's newly created college has worked closely with other schools, including the Yong Pung How School of Law, to launch a new interdisciplinary PhD programme in law, commerce and technology, which welcomed its first students this month.

In addition to learning legal knowledge, students will also learn organisational and computational law, preparing them for the technological changes impacting the legal services industry.

The new school will also work with SMU's new College of Integrative Studies to launch programmes such as a Master of Philosophy in Asian Urbanisms.

Mr Zhou Bowen, 29, a PhD business student at SMU, said he appreciates the importance the school places on studies involving multiple disciplines.

"In the past 10 years, interdisciplinary studies have created opportunities for radical innovation and high-impact research, and the college's establishment will provide a useful platform for the postgraduate research community to tap."

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