



## Media Release

### **SMU introduces specialisation tracks and compulsory Law Capstone to its Bachelor of Laws and Juris Doctor programmes to nurture future-ready and practice-ready graduates**

*Singapore, 16 March 2023 (Thursday)* – Singapore Management University (SMU) [Yong Pung How School of Law](#) (YPHSL) will allow interested law students to specialise and gain a higher level of proficiency in the practical and **interdisciplinary areas of Corporate Transaction; Law and Technology; and Dispute Resolution via a new Tracks scheme**; as well as **require all law students to complete a Law Capstone Course** before they graduate.

The law school announced these enhancements to its Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and Juris Doctor (JD) programmes following a recent review of its curriculum, which took into key consideration the impact of global trends on the legal sector. The review, part of an on-going process to ensure that the SMU LLB and JD are constantly innovated to meet new and future challenges, collected input and feedback from a panel of over 50 practising lawyers in the private and public sectors.

Professor Lee Pey Woan, Dean of SMU YPHSL said, “The Tracks scheme guides students in elective selection for key and emerging practice areas, gives them the flexibility to tailor their curriculum, and allows them to gain a head-start in their preferred field. More than simply a curation of law electives within a law subfield, this scheme builds upon the multi and interdisciplinary nature of our existing LLB curriculum in recognition that the law does not exist in the abstract but to serve business and broader societal needs. It also recognises the growing diversity in legal career options and the inevitable shift towards more complex work.”

“The legal industry is evolving and is demanding in its workforce a higher level of competency in skills and knowledge in adjacent disciplines that are important to the practice and study of law. These changes will further strengthen and distinguish SMU’s LLB programme, and nurture future-ready and practice-ready SMU law graduates; they also give students a distinct competitive edge when they enter the workforce,” she added.

Currently, all law undergraduates at SMU get baseline exposure to adjacent disciplines (including finance, technology, etc.) as part of the SMU LLB curriculum. Students enrolled in the SMU LLB on and after Academic Year (AY) 2021-2022 who are keen to delve deeper into the interdisciplinary areas can choose to declare a Track, which will be reflected in their official transcripts. This allows students to signal their interest and expertise to their employers in a formal way. YPHSL is the only law school in Singapore that offers specialisation in law, which is yet another testament to SMU’s innovative approach to education.

Every law student from the AY2021 cohort enrolled in the LLB programme will also be required to take a Law Capstone course. Commenting on the motivation of this new requirement, Professor Lee said, “Recognising that real world problems are increasingly complex, the Law Capstone course adds the polishing touch, training students to look across traditional boundaries by working on projects that span three or more areas of the law and through a practical lens. Rather than looking for fixed or standard answers, students participate in the process of creating new solutions.”

Building upon the university's [flagship SMU-X programme](#) – project-based experiential learning where SMU students work in small groups and apply their interdisciplinary knowledge on real-world projects with industry and faculty mentors – every Law Capstone course going forward will be an SMU-X course. YPHSL has also integrated the Law Capstone requirement into the LLB Tracks. For those who have declared a specific Track, there will be a designated Law Capstone that must be taken.

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Enclosure:

- Annex 1: SMU LLB Tracks write-up

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**Media Contact**

Huang Peiling  
Senior Assistant Director, Corporate Communications  
Office of Corporate Communications & Marketing, SMU  
Mobile: 98453361  
Email: plhuang@smu.edu.sg

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**About SMU Yong Pung How School of Law**

SMU's law school was renamed Yong Pung How School of Law (YPHSL) on 11 April 2021 to celebrate and honour the late Dr Yong Pung How, Singapore's former Chief Justice and SMU's third Chancellor.

The law school had proudly welcomed its first cohort of 116 students in August 2007. Taught by a dynamic faculty with postgraduate degrees from renowned universities, the School aims to nurture its students to become excellent lawyers who will contribute significantly to society. Trained with the ability to contextualise legal expertise and to think across disciplines and geographical borders coupled with SMU's interactive pedagogy, SMU's law graduates are confident articulate and analytically agile.

The School offers a four-year full-time Bachelor of Laws programme, a five-year double-degree programme which combines law with Accountancy, Business, Economics, Computing & Information Systems or Social Sciences, a three-year Juris Doctor programme, a Master of Laws programme, as well as continuing legal education. From Academic Year 2020-2021, the School also jointly offers a new Bachelor of Science (Computing & Law) with the SMU School of Computing and Information Systems. This new degree will produce IT and legal professionals who are adept at bridging technology and law.

Research at the SMU YPHSL has a strong focus in three main inter-related areas – Law and Technology, Transnational Commercial law in Asia, and Dispute Resolution. The School has also set up legal research centres focusing on A.I. and data governance, computational law, commercial law, and international dispute resolution. [www.law.smu.edu.sg](http://www.law.smu.edu.sg)

**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 12,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and postgraduate research programmes, SMU comprises eight schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Computing and Information Systems, Yong Pung How School of Law, School of Social Sciences, College of Integrative Studies and College of Graduate Research Studies. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters', and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with its 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. [www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)