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SMU ushers in Academic Year 2024-25 with a celebration of Talent, Diversity and Impact

Singapore, 16 August 2024 (Friday) – Singapore Management University (SMU) welcomes its latest cohort of about 2,400 freshmen. The 26th cohort will begin the Academic Year 24/25 from Monday, 19 August 2024.

To set the stage for an enriching university life, [SMU Freshmen Orientation 'SMUtopia'](#) offered a valuable platform for incoming students to cultivate new friendships and immerse themselves in the vibrant SMU culture. The programme provided many interactive opportunities, where freshmen navigated campus grounds and took part in engaging games centred around the SMU CIRCLE values. Held over three days with three sessions in July and early August, Freshmen Orientation catered to a total of 1,800 freshmen. The orientation involved 41 passionate student organisers, over 200 student facilitators, game masters and staff trainers who were crucial in ensuring the orientation's success.

Watch highlights of Freshmen Orientation [here](#).

[Vivace](#), SMU's annual CCA fair with more than 150 student clubs, showcased the best of Student Life. These ranged from sports, performing and visual arts, community service, to entrepreneurial and international student organisations, all offering students invaluable opportunities to network and hone teambuilding, leadership, and time-management skills. Held on 15 and 16 August, it featured an exciting lineup of CCA performances, interactive CCA booths, and fringe activities such as a photobooth and games. Through a Bingo card game, students had opportunities to learn about new CCAs and win attractive prizes.

On 16 August, the **SMU Academic Year Opening Ceremony** was held in the evening at the SMU Hall. About 580 guests comprising SMU Board of Trustees, senior management, faculty, staff, donors, alumni, freshmen (undergraduates and post-graduates) and student leaders ushered in the new Academic Year with a Grand Procession, a 4-course dinner, and themed student performances.

This Academic Year Opening 2024, Singapore Management University embraces the theme of 'IMPACT', drawing inspiration from the transformative analogy of light passing through a prism. Much like how light fragments into a spectrum of vibrant colours, we celebrate the discovery of hidden potential and multi-faceted talents as we embark on our SMU journey. This is the impact of SMU's unique pedagogy and holistic education. These new-found hues of strength and qualities have the power to make colourful differences and create meaningful impact in our pursuit of excellence and societal contribution.

Enhancements to Core Curriculum Graduation Requirements

From AY2024/2025, undergraduates will benefit from an enriched educational experience with SMU's enhanced Core Curriculum graduation requirements. The enhanced SMU Core Curriculum aligns with the University's strategic priorities of *Digital Transformation, Sustainable Living* and *Growth in Asia*, nurturing graduates who are adept at addressing the realities of modern economies and societies.

The enhanced SMU Core Curriculum graduation requirements encompass three key areas:

- **Digital Technology/Data Analytics:** This requirement acknowledges the pivotal role that digital technology and data analytics play in today's workplace. Graduates will be equipped with the technical digital competencies to thrive in industries that are being transformed by digital technology and data analytics at a rapid clip.
- **Sustainability:** Sustainability is a pressing global concern. Graduates will be equipped with an intermediate understanding of sustainability issues, contributing to a more sustainable future.
- **Singapore and Asia Studies:** Singapore is a vibrant global hub and Asia is a region of immense significance in today's global economy. Graduates will gain a strong understanding of the dynamics of Singapore and the Asian region.

Developed in line with robust academic standards, SMU's graduation requirements are continuously reviewed and updated to reflect the evolving needs of society and the workforce. The areas of Digital Technology/Data Analytics and Sustainability are constantly evolving, with new technologies, methodologies and best practices emerging regularly. SMU's enhanced Core Curriculum graduation requirements ensures that graduates are equipped not only with current knowledge and skills but also with the adaptability and critical thinking abilities needed to navigate future developments in the field.

1. New Tracks/Programmes and Graduation Requirements by Schools

College of Integrative Studies (CIS)

CIS will welcome its first batch of 44 students pursuing the Bachelor of Integrative Studies (Individualised Major), where students can design and customise their major. These majors include Artificial Intelligence and Finance, Urban Development Governance, Intercultural Communications in Contemporary Media, and more.

Several students in this cohort have a demonstrated passion for societal concerns and the goal of service to the community. Zachary Tan, 21, has not let cerebral palsy stop him from pursuing a Bachelor of Integrative Studies degree, with an Individualised Major in Artificial Intelligence-Driven Accessibility in Business. As a person with disabilities (PWD), he is passionate about leveraging technology to drive positive change and promote accessibility and inclusivity.

Please refer to **Annex A** for selected profiles of SMU undergraduates taking the Individualised Major.

School of Computing and Information Systems (SCIS)

SCIS will offer a [Product Development Track](#) in the BSc (Information Systems) degree programme. This prepares students to navigate the challenges of digital transformation and technological disruption in organisations. It focuses on developing skills to engineer IT solutions that enhance operational excellence, integrate information-processes-people, and drive innovation. The track offers a comprehensive curriculum covering areas such as software development, product management, and quality, risk, and security.

Modules include Object Oriented Programming (compulsory), Advanced Programming & Design, Managing Customer Relations with Analytics: Asian Insights, Cloud Management and Engineering, Internet of Things: Technology and Applications

Lee Kong Chian School of Business (LKCSB)

In AY 2024-2025, LKCSB will open application for the new [TRicontinental Exchange in Business and Leadership Education \(TREBLE\)](#), an 18-month immersive exchange programme that spans three continents – Asia, Europe and the United States (US). Organised in partnership with University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) in the US and Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, this exchange programme will enable students to gain exposure to different business environments and practices. In addition to academic pursuits, students will hone their soft skills through immersive experiences in diverse geographic and cultural settings and will be able to grow their global network.

Each year, the programme will offer 15 undergraduates from each of the three institutions the opportunity to spend 1.5 years (i.e. three academic terms) rotating between three campuses. The 45 TREBLE students will build camaraderie as a cohort and take a set of specially curated courses at each institution. 15 LKCSB students will be selected in AY2024-2025 to form the inaugural TREBLE cohort, and will participate in preparatory sessions before they join UNC Kenan Flagler in August 2025, followed by SMU in January 2026, and then at CBS in August 2026.

Yong Pung How School of Law (YPHSL)

YPHSL will introduce a financial literacy and/or Accounting (FinAcc) **Graduation Requirement** which will apply to freshmen commencing their Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree in AY2024-2025. Given that the practice of law and financial literacy are in many situations intertwined, this graduation requirement will ensure that future law graduates from the YPHSL develop practical commercial competencies and are financially literate.

The graduation requirement can be fulfilled by completing one of the following:

- Having previously obtained a recognised degree or diploma in finance, accounting or business administration
- Attaining a B- grade and above for any SMU module starting with 'FNCE' or 'ACCT'
- Passed the CFA Level 1 Examination

School of Computing and Information Systems (SCIS)

To meet new IT demands in Singapore industries, SCIS will offer new courses including Computer Graphics and Virtual Reality, Quantum Computing in Financial Services, Digital Ethics for Responsible Computing, and Advanced Programming and Design.

For more details of the courses, please refer to **Annex B**.

School of Social Sciences (SOSS)

Keeping pace with developments in the economy, SOSS will offer new courses including Research Methods in Economics, Big Data Analytics with Spark, Data Science with Python and a BSc-MPhil fast-track programme.

For more details of the courses, please refer to **Annex B**.

School of Accounting (SOA)

As the global business landscape face heightened emphasis and expectations on sustainable business practices, SOA aims to prepare learners for the new demands required of the accounting profession. The School will introduce a **Sustainability Accounting Work-Study Elective**, where students will undergo an extended internship exploring the real-world applications of sustainability accounting. New courses in Robotic Process Automation for Accounting and Sustainability Reporting will also be introduced.

For more details of the courses, please refer to **Annex B**.

2. New SMU-X and XO courses

In addition, the University continues to ramp up its offering of SMU-X courses in the new academic year, with at least 55 SMU-X courses that undergraduates across all years can choose from. New SMU-X courses include a focus on interdisciplinary topics, such as 'Forecasting and Forensic Analytics', offered by School of Accountancy. This course explores the use of data to address accounting issues in financial, managerial, and audit contexts, focusing on problem-solving, theory, application, interpretation, and communication. Students will learn techniques for using financial and non-financial data to forecast events, detect discrepancies, predict defaults, optimise operations, and determine business strategy, with some programming and advanced analytics methods included.

Beyond Singapore, students will have the opportunity to travel and work on exciting projects with our overseas partner organisations located in Belgium, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam; including a new SMU-X Overseas course offered by School of Social Sciences to Indonesia, 'Overseas Project Experience: Sustainability Practices in Asia'. This course focuses on helping Southeast Asian private and public entities strategise for sustainability transitions by balancing economic growth and environmental protection through systemic changes in socio-technical and socio-economic systems. Students will combine problem-solving skills, sustainability theories, and cultural context, collaborating with organizations in Indonesia and participating in on-site activities.

Another new SMU-X Overseas course offered by LKCSB to Hong Kong, 'Overseas Project Experience: Strategic Communication in Asia,' aims to equip students with the ability to apply strategic communication theories and understand the integration of paid, earned, shared, and owned media in Asia, focusing on the socio-political-cultural-economic factors that influence business outcomes in the region.

CIS will also be introducing its first SMU-X Overseas course, 'Korean for Business,' which equips students with the skills necessary for effective communication in Business Korean, covering scenarios

such as job interviews, colleague interactions, and business calls. This course enhances students' professional abilities for engaging with native speakers in a Korean business environment. As part of the SMU-X Overseas programme, students will visit South Korea to participate in project work with local universities and organizations, gaining practical insights into Korean business practices and developing cross-cultural competencies.

The University will be working with at least 100 local and overseas partners across the public, private and NGO sectors to roll out the SMU-X courses through the academic year.

3. 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 FY2024, we have made available a total of around \$12 million in financial aid for students, combining university resources as well as donor-supported schemes. This is a 12% increase compared to that of FY2023. Over the past 6 years, there had been a significant 70% increase in financial aid since FY2019.

Students can gain access to the financial aid via the SMU Study Awards, SMU Access grant and SMU Work-Study Grant. Furthermore, there are donor-supported bursaries, study awards and needs-based scholarships available to students.

With about 350 different scholarships and bursaries schemes that freshmen can apply for in the academic year, close to 40% of freshmen may receive a scholarship or award from 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 are interest-free during the course of a student's studies. Via the SMU Work-Study Grant, SMU offers students help in seeking part-time employment on campus so that they may earn additional income and learn useful skills in the process. Currently, 78 students are working with various Offices in the University.

The University is committed to delivering a high-quality SMU education that will develop its 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.

About Singapore Management University

Established in 2000, Singapore Management University (SMU) is recognised for its disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research that address issues of global relevance, impacting business, government, and society. Its distinctive education, incorporating innovative experiential learning, aims to nurture global citizens, entrepreneurs and change agents. With more than 13,000 students, SMU offers a wide range of bachelors, masters and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with six of its eight schools - Accountancy, Business, Economics, Computing, Law and Social Sciences. Its seventh school, the SMU College of Integrative Studies, offers a bachelor's degree programme in deep, integrative interdisciplinary education. The College of Graduate Research Studies, SMU's eighth school, enhances integration and interdisciplinarity across the various SMU postgraduate research programmes that will enable our students to gain a holistic learning experience and well-grounded approach to their research. SMU also offers a growing number of executive development

and continuing education programmes. Through its city campus, SMU focuses on making meaningful impact on Singapore and beyond through its partnerships with industry, policy makers and academic institutions. www.smu.edu.sg

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