



Media Release

SMU marks the opening of its new 2021 Academic Year virtually with a detective themed freshmen orientation and mega CCA Fair

Singapore, 12 August 2021 (Thursday) – The Singapore Management University (SMU) welcomes its latest cohort of about 2,450 freshmen to date. The 22nd cohort will begin the Academic Year 21/22 from Monday, 16 August 2021.

To assimilate and orientate the incoming cohort, SMU's Office of Student Life created "[FOMO](#)" (Freshmen Orientation Moves Online), an online programme which was held over three days and three sessions in July and early Aug. Run by over 150 student facilitators, 30 student organisers and 10 staff trainers, the programme equipped freshmen with information on how to navigate around the campus via a virtual campus tour and they attended webinars by key SMU offices which introduced content on community service, internships, mental wellness and student life. The "detective theme" programme also encouraged freshmen to work together by using their critical thinking skills to solve several puzzles and included various online games which introduced SMU CIRCLE values. The freshmen have been enthusiastic, engaged and were grateful for the safe, fun and encouraging environment to meet and interact with others and forge friendships.

Watch the highlights [here](#).

Close on the heels of "FOMO" is the annual [VIVACE](#), SMU's largest CCA fair with more than 150 student clubs showcasing the best of Student Life. These range from sports, performing and visual arts, community service, to entrepreneurial and international interest groups, all offering students invaluable opportunities to network and hone team-building, leadership and time-management skills. VIVACE goes "live" on 12 and 13 August featuring interviews, performances, demonstrations/try-outs, games and Tik Tok challenges, and live CCA chat sessions to help freshmen choose and sign up for their preferred CCAs.

Prof Lily Kong's Welcome Address for Freshmen

In her welcome address, SMU President Professor Lily Kong congratulated the incoming cohort on their successful application and enrolment as an undergraduate. She said, "We are committed to providing a holistic education and student life experience that prepares you to make meaningful impact in a changeable world. The SMU Graduate Identities developed through our curriculum, co-curriculum and pedagogy will challenge you to think broadly and deeply, and balance thought with action to create value at home and abroad. We will work with you to develop an independent mind, and at the same time, be dependable in deeds."

She added that SMU is a cosmopolitan university with students, faculty and staff representing some 50 countries and encouraged all to engage with those from other cultures to broaden their world view by seizing opportunities for global exposure through overseas exchange programmes, internships, study missions, community service and SMU-X overseas projects.

She advised the incoming cohort. “Be bold and adventurous; be open to new experiences; discover new facets of your character; develop new skills and fulfil your potential. Embrace the unprecedented challenges and remember that every challenge creates opportunities. I believe that your generation will prove that it has the resilience, creativity and resourcefulness to thrive no matter what situations you may face.”

[New curriculum and courses with effect from AY2021/22](#)

Starting 16 August, the university’s 22nd cohort of freshmen will pursue degree programmes in accountancy, business management, economics, computing and information systems, law and social sciences. Through the redesigned [Core Curriculum](#), SMU aims to nurture distinctive identities in its graduates. Via SMU-X offerings and Work-Study Option with selected programmes, the University will also enhance opportunities for real-world, hands-on work exposure and multi-disciplinary learning.

SMU undergraduates will also have the opportunity to take up new offerings introduced for the first time in Academic Year 21/22. These include:

1. [Second Major in Digital Business](#) (jointly offered by Lee Kong Chian School of Business and School of Computing and Information Systems)

This new second major will train a pipeline of talent with the necessary knowledge and skills to support the country’s business digital transformation demands across industries. This is the first such undergraduate major in Singapore.

2. **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 50 SMU-X courses that undergraduates across all years can choose from. The new SMU-X courses include interdisciplinary topics, such as *Corporate Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, which gives students an understanding of how to design and manage innovation systems for large and small organisations and lead corporate entrepreneurship. Another new SMU-X course, *Financial Literacy, Inclusion and Technology*, prepares students with the skills to translate classroom knowledge about financial literacy into practical solutions for organisations that represent the forefront of financial innovation.

Given the current travel restrictions imposed by governments across the world as well as to ensure the safety of our students, the University has arranged for students to work remotely from Singapore with our partner organisations on SMU-X Overseas projects, and they are located in Australia, China, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam.

The University will be working with at least 60 partners across the public, private and NGO sectors to roll out the SMU-X courses through the academic year.

3. **Work-study options and electives**

Since 2019, SMU has piloted credit-bearing work-study options, which allows students in selected programmes to take up longer internships of up to six months, while concurrently studying on campus. These include the [SMU-Google Squared Data & Analytics Programme](#), the [Health Economics and Management Programme](#) with SingHealth and the [SMU-KPMG Cyber Risk and Forensic Work Study Programme](#).

From August 2021, SMU will be offering the [SMU Accounting Data and Analytics Work-Study Programme](#). Students enrolled in this programme will develop technical knowledge in the area of data analytics in the accounting domain, so as to help them stay relevant in the fast evolving job market due to the advent of new technologies. The programme consists of three courses - Data Modelling and Visualisation; Business Data Management, and Accounting Data and Analytics Work-Study Elective (a 20-week extended internship at EY).

In addition, students who opt for the [Audit and Assurance Work-Study Elective](#) course will have the opportunity to experience an extended 20-week internship at Deloitte during the semester. They will work for four days at Deloitte and study two courses on campus concurrently.

Students also have the opportunity to take up the [Wholesale Trade and Maritime Work-Study Elective](#). This Elective is a local internship open to all Year 3 SMU students where they will work in a trading and maritime related partner company for four days a week and return to campus for one day of classes in a 5-month extended internship programme.

4. Updated Curriculum for School of Computing and Information Systems (SCIS)

As the technology landscape rapidly changes, organisations need skilled individuals in the workforce who are job-ready and adaptable to evolving technologies and constantly emerging new technologies. SCIS has introduced experiential learning for foundation computer science degree core courses: Programming Fundamentals II (PF_II) for Year 1 and Collaborative Software Development (CSD) for Year 2 students. In PF_II, students work on a project by our partner PSA Singapore where they develop web applications using Java frameworks and libraries. In CSD, students are exposed to the fundamentals of collaborative software construction approaches and agile processes.

To align with the new industry demands in digital technologies, several courses for AY2021-22 such as Cloud Management and Engineering (which introduces the fundamentals and structure of cloud computing), Big Data Architecture (which provides guided paths to data architecture and experience in the use cases of Big Data applications) and Fairness in Socio-technical Systems (which provide students with extensive understanding of concepts of fairness and bias in socio-technical systems through examples across diverse domains, from healthcare to internet search) have been introduced.

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 FY2021, we have made available a total of close to \$10 million in [financial aid](#) for students, combining university resources as well as donor-supported schemes. This is a 20% increase compared to that of last year. Students can get access to the financial aid via the SMU Financial Grant, [SMU Bursary](#), [SMU Access grant](#), [Work Study Grant](#), [SMU Education Loan](#), [SMU Student Computer Loan](#), and the [Undergraduate Supplementary Assistance Plan](#) which was set up in 2020 to provide relief to undergraduates whose family members' livelihoods are being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, there are donor-supported bursaries, study awards and needs-based scholarships available to students.

With 292 scholarships and bursaries that freshmen can apply for in the new academic year, *one in three freshmen* of the new intake 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 Work Study Grant, SMU offers students help in seeking part-time employment on campus so that they may earn additional income. Currently, about 125 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

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 11,000 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 Computing and 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. www.smu.edu.sg

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