

**Publication: Mothership Online**

**Date: 24 February 2022**

**Headline: S'pore Management University is 1st local uni to guarantee overseas experiences for 100% of undergrads**

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These days, it's a given that students at local universities have opportunities to go abroad — whether it's for an exchange programme, overseas internship, study trip, community service trip, or some other form of overseas experience — if they wish to.

But Singapore Management University (SMU) is taking that one step further, by guaranteeing that every single one of its students will graduate with overseas experience.

SMU highlights that the benefits of overseas experiences include letting students step out of their comfort zones, opening their minds, and allowing them to become more globally attuned and culturally sensitive.

In other words, it helps them to avoid having an overly Singapore-centred worldview.

Students do of course look forward to seeing the world for themselves, too.

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Some of the destinations SMU students bookmarked for short-term internships in ASEAN, organised by SMU. Image [via SMU blog](#).

One way to go overseas as an SMU student is a study trip, known in SMU as a “study mission” since its introduction in 2002.

Participants of study missions attend a credit-bearing course as one of their modules, over 13 weeks, with a trip to the destination country either in the middle of the semester or at the end.

The trips, which range from 1.5 to 3 weeks long, typically involve site visits, networking sessions with industry leaders, and presentations, to help students understand the region they are visiting.

According to SMU, undergraduates have embarked on study missions to countries like Argentina, Chile, China, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Germany, India, Israel, Russia, Scandinavia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, the U.S., and Vietnam.

International exchange

Meanwhile, one of the more popular ways to go overseas for a longer duration is an international exchange programme.

SMU has more than 220 partner universities worldwide, in 159 different cities.

These partner universities have agreements with SMU to host students at no additional cost beyond the school fees that they are already paying for that semester.

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While on exchange, undergraduate students can earn up to five academic credits toward their SMU degree programme, and students are evaluated on a pass/fail basis, allowing them greater freedom to pursue potentially unfamiliar courses.

International exchange in SMU is a popular option.

The list of possible destinations includes many top universities like University of Edinburgh or King's College in the UK, Ivy League universities like University of Pennsylvania in the USA, Yonsei University in South Korea or University of Kyoto in Japan.

For students wanting shorter student exchanges, many SMU students also spend part of their summer break on an exchange programme to Oxford or Cambridge University.

Financing an overseas trip

Granted, going overseas can be a privilege reserved for those with the means to do so.

Which is why SMU offers a wide range of financial assistance schemes, awards, and scholarships that help students go on overseas trips.

Some even state that preference will be given to students who have not embarked on overseas trips, such as these:

Arnoud De Meyer Exchange Scholarship: Cash allowance of S\$5,000 for international exchange-related expenses.

Han Jin Fong Overseas Experience Grant: Cash allowance of S\$5,600 for international exchange, or S\$3,750 for approved overseas internships.

Fung Scholarship: Cash allowance of S\$5,000 for international exchange-related expenses. And there are also many grants reserved for those with demonstrated financial needs, based on their gross monthly household per capita income. Here are some of them:

KMVCL Exchange Scholarship: Cash allowance of S\$6,000 for international exchange-related expenses.

Kho Yu & Chan Sook Lien Exchange Scholarship (许友调伉俪奖学金): Subsidy of S\$5,000 for airfare, accommodation, books and living expenses.

SMU International Exchange Scholarship: Allowance of S\$10,000 for exchange in Europe/Americas or \$5,000 for an Asian country, to fund exchange-related expenses.

Singaporean SMU students may also tap on the SMU Overseas Student Programme Loan, which has no income criterion.

Other distinctive SMU offerings

International exchange and overseas experiences are just some of the notable offerings at SMU.

Guaranteed second major

Besides its guarantee of overseas experience for 100 per cent of students, the university also guarantees that 100 per cent of students will be able to pursue a second major.

Students can pursue fields of study that complement their main degree, or explore their academic interests in a contrasting field through their second major.

There are over 500 double degree and double major combinations offered, and students can customise their own programmes according to their interests and aspirations.

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Interdisciplinary learning

SMU also has offerings for students who are interested in even more learning opportunities outside the bounds of traditional academic disciplines.

The university's flexible Core Curriculum allows students to experience learning across different interdisciplinary courses without restrictions.

Some of the interesting Core Curriculum courses — available to every SMU student — include:

“Epidemics - Life Sciences, Biomedicine, and Global Health”

“Climate Change: Global and Local Solutions”

“ Harnessing Robotics, UAVs, and Digital Innovation for Business”

“Food Cultures - Are We What, Where and How We Eat?”

Here are some of the interdisciplinary offerings that SMU has:

**NEWEST INTERDISCIPLINARY OFFERINGS**

<p><b>COLLEGE OF INTEGRATIVE STUDIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bachelor of Integrative Studies</li></ul>	<p><b>SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accounting Data and Analytics</li><li>• Financial Forensics</li></ul>
<p><b>LEE KONG CHIAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital Business</li><li>• Communication Management with track in Data, Design, &amp; Communication</li></ul>	<p><b>SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health Economics &amp; Management</li><li>• Data Science and Analytics</li></ul>
<p><b>SCHOOL OF COMPUTING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bachelor of Science (Computing &amp; Law)</li><li>• Software Engineering</li></ul>	<p><b>SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bachelor of Social Science in Politics, Law and Economics</li><li>• Sustainable Societies</li></ul>

Image via SMU.

Graduate employability and career support

SMU students receive comprehensive support to help them get started in their careers, including assigning each student a dedicated career coach.

The results of this can be seen in how SMU has the strongest graduate employment outcomes across local universities every year — the most recent Graduate Employment Survey by the Ministry of Education showed that SMU graduates earned mean monthly starting salaries of S\$4,896.

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The median gross monthly salary was S\$4,500 — the highest of the local universities.

Meanwhile, 95.1 per cent of SMU graduates secured employment within 6 months of their final exams (the highest rate amongst all local universities), with almost 7 in 10 receiving more than one offer before graduation.

SMU Open House 2023 on Feb. 25 and 26

For those interested in exploring SMU further, the annual SMU Open House will be taking place over the weekend of Feb. 25 and 26 at the university's city campus in Bras Basah.

The open house will be fully in-person for the first time since 2019.

On both days from 10am to 6pm, prospective students can visit the campus to learn about the courses offered, get tips for admissions, and find out more about the 150+ student clubs at SMU.

They can also attend free tours of the campus and even participate in over 40 sample classes, to experience SMU's interactive pedagogy in one of its signature U-shaped seminar rooms.

The first 6,000 early visitors who register here can also redeem a custom-made SMU backpack, among other freebies on offer.

This sponsored article by Singapore Management University made the author reminisce about his overseas trips as a student.

Top image via SMU and Bucerius Law School on Unsplash