

## The Great Academic Shift

**Come 2006 the academic term for polytechnics will start in the month of April instead of in July. By CANDICE CHAN and MELINA WONG.**

The long-term impacts of the recently-announced change in the academic calendar for all polytechnics, junior colleges (JC) and Institutes of Technical Education (ITE) are fairly significant, but have only received scant mention in the mainstream press following Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam's announcement on 20 February.

From this year, term for polytechnics will begin a month earlier every year until 2006, when it starts on 17 April.

In an e-mail reply to Tribune, Mr Leonard Lim, Senior Head (Policy) for the Higher Education Division, Ministry of Education (MOE) said that "The shift of the polytechnic and ITE academic calendar was a joint decision made by the six institutions involved [and] MOE fully supports this decision."

In an MOE press release, the acting Education Minister had said of the benefits: "This move will reduce waiting time for students, and allow them to graduate and enter the job market earlier... benefit 13,600 students who enter our polytechnics, and 3,200 students who enter the ITE via the 'O' level route each year."

But because JCs will now have a single intake of students in mid-March, instead of two in January and March, it also means that 'O' level graduates will not have the opportunity of trying out JCs before deciding if polytechnics might be a better choice for them.

Leon Zhu, 19, a final-year Biomedical Engineering (BME) student feels students "will have less time to decide... their future plans".

More importantly, the change impacts school holidays, which will no longer coincide with the primary and secondary schools ones.

It also affects the duration of Industrial Training Programme (ITP) for second-year students and shortens the academic term by one week. For the first time in our student life, we will also be having classes during Christmas week.

NP is trying to ease the pain by taking its own initiative to "ensure that the vacation falls during the Christmas and New Year period", said Mrs Yola Lim, Deputy Director of NP's Academic Affairs Office (AAO).

She revealed that in NP, "The mid-semester break in June and December will also be increased from one week to two weeks, so that there are least two weeks of coinciding holidays."

Mrs Lim says that NP is trying to be "caring about the family-life of not just [the] students, but... lecturers as well". However, this will only take effect after 2006.

Until then, Ms Koh-Phang Cheng Mun, a lecturer from the School of Business Studies & Accountancy (BA), with an eight-year-old son feels the shift in the academic calendar "will affect the amount of time that [she] is able to spend with [her] son".

However, she also admitted that this allows her to supervise him during his exam period.

The only other potential benefit of the change in calendar is it allows polytechnic graduates to apply directly to the local universities, instead of waiting a year because of

the misalignment of the current release of final results in polytechnics. This can possibly stem the numbers who leave for foreign universities that have more than one intake a year.

However, Mrs Jennie Ong-Lim, Senior Manager from the National University of Singapore (NUS) Office of Admissions, revealed in a phone interview that "starting this year, NUS will [already] allow polytechnic students to apply

for Poly, MINDEF will also shift its enlistment schedule accordingly so as to reduce the waiting time for Poly/ITE graduates. Hence, starting 2007, the bulk of Poly and ITE students will be enlisted in March and June instead."

### What to Expect in the next two years

Ms Swe Swe Min, 33, lecturer at the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT) feels this shift might only be messy "in the near future". For now, she does not expect "much impact because the changes will be gradual".

A taskforce committee, headed by Mrs Lim, has been formed to ensure the transition over the next three years is as seamless as possible, and to help the school cope with the many changes.

This change includes the shortening of the academic syllabus from 15 weeks to 14 weeks. Mrs Lim feels the reduction will not have a big impact as it can be evenly spread out over the 14 weeks, and "is equivalent to moving half a day forward per week".

However, Mr Ong Poh Leng, a lecturer for Business Studies (BS) still feels that some adjustments must be made to accommodate this because "by hook or by crook, we must finish the syllabus". There may be "more classes held on Saturday or extended lectures and tutorials".

The shortening of the school break also means that the school holidays will also be reduced from eight weeks to seven or six weeks.

First-year Electrical Engineering (EE) student Wong Kok Chin, 23, says he does not like this new system because the transition period would mean shorter holidays and fewer opportunities for long trips abroad.

The shortening of the school break will also affect ITP. As a result, 30 percent of students who are taking courses that conduct the ITP during the holidays, will have this reduced from eight weeks to about six weeks.

Some students and companies already find the ITP duration too short. By lopping off a quarter of this, students might not fully benefit from ITP. Nonetheless, Mrs Lim feels that "It can't be helped... Employers have also been informed about the changes."

She reassures students, however, that this ITP arrangement is temporary. Once the new academic calendar is fully implemented in 2006, ITP will be 7 weeks long.

For the remaining 70 percent of students who undergo six-month attachments, the Industrial Attachment Programme (IAP) will also be shortened from 24 weeks to 22 weeks. Mrs Lim added that even fewer students will be affected in future because "more and more courses are opting for IAP rather than ITP".

Although this shift in the academic calendar might prove to be more of a hindrance to some, Mr Lim from the MOE said that "the institutions have conducted their own feedback sessions [and] most parents and students agreed that earlier admission is a good move as the current six to seven months' wait is too long."

He also added that MOE "believes that this change will, as a whole, be beneficial to polytechnic students".

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26 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS DAY

**A BLUE CHRISTMAS:** Students will now have to attend classes in the month of December. [Graphic by Valerie Chen and Jachin Pousson]

for a place in university with their first five semesters' results... and submitting their final semester's results when they graduate."

As noted, the waiting time of 'O' level leavers taking the polytechnic route, will shorten from about seven months to just four months, but this is not necessarily beneficial.

Just ask those who use the pre-enrolment holidays to work for their school fees, such as a final-year Business Studies (BS) student, who declined to be named, "I worked after my 'O' levels because I needed to make money. I don't get allowances from my parents [at all]."

Also, as Ben Lim, 22, a final-year Mechanical Engineering (ME) student, noted, "students will [can be disadvantaged because they] have less exposure to the outside world [in future], and as such, less experience in life".

However, in the email reply, MOE believes the three months lost from "doing vacation work would now become three more months as a graduate with a polytechnic diploma".

Poly graduates need not worry about waiting for National Service (NS) enlistment either.

Mrs Felicia Tang, who is Senior Media Relations Officer of the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF), said in an email reply to Tribune that, "Currently, the bulk of Poly and ITE students are enlisted for NS in June and September. With the shift in academic calendar

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# For The Time of Our Lives

BY THE TRIBUNE EDITORS

In two months' time, we will all have graduated from Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and gone our separate ways - some of us will go on to further education in Singapore or overseas, and others will join the workforce.

Think about it - no more sleeping in until noon for a 3pm class, no more meeting up with classmates for project discussions at the King Albert Park McDonald's, no more sleeping over on the pretext of working on projects at classmates' houses, no more dressing in sync with group members for presentations ("Let's all wear black long-sleeved shirts and pants, alright?").

After graduation, we will no longer be within the comfort and safety of those familiar yellow, blue and red zones. We will truly be alone in the wide world - at least until we join another educational institution - please see our supplement special on the diverse choices available for further education - or a company.

Luckily for our generation, at least, we have had some experience in being in the post-graduation, pre-enrolment limbo. Those of us

who decided to enter a polytechnic after our 'O' levels found ourselves with six long months on our hands.

Some of us filled this by working and learning skills, mainly in the service and retail industry, while others enrolled in junior college, helping us to better make up our minds on whether the 'A' level or the polytechnic route was more suitable for us. Still others decided to take a six-month-long holiday.

Whether we spent the half year constructively or not, one thing was certain: That was a period of time in our lives when we were free to do as we pleased. Volunteer to paint schools in Cambodia? Job-hop from Burger King to a Jurong factory? Take up relief teaching? Sleep all day and wake up at night to spend quality time with our Playstation? We could have done all that, and more.

But after the gradual shift in the academic calendar is complete in 2006, future polytechnic first-years will start school in April. They will have only about a month after the release of their 'O' level results to decide where they want to go and what they want to do with their lives. Worse, they will not have the privilege of experiencing junior college before entering polytechnic.

Is this decision too difficult to ask a 16- or 17-year-old to make in a month? Most of us, after three years of tertiary education, have some idea of what we want to do for a living in the future. For someone fresh from 'O' levels, however, the situation may be starkly different.

Still, at the end of the day, regardless of the choices we make, the only thing we can be sure of is that nothing is certain. Engineering graduates can become event management specialists as our story on SgEventors shows. The economy could go any way. Stock markets might crash, brave new industries such as nanotechnology may open up and provide jobs for tens of thousands of people. Employees can be retrained or upgraded.

It is the very same uncertainty that, ironically, sustains hope.

It can be said then, that the situation for future cohorts is no different, despite starting three months earlier. All of us will graduate and face the same worries, fears, triumphs and joys - and most of all, the same uncertainty over what life will bring us next. This generation, and those after us, will do well to remember that it is not the destination that matters, but the journey and the process of learning. ■

Tribune is a publication by third-year print journalism students of the Diploma in Mass Communication course in Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

**TRIBUNE**  
Ngee Ann Polytechnic's campus newspaper

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For more stories: <http://www.nptribune.com>  
Tribune, 2004

## Singing the Graduation Blues

BY PATRICIA HO  
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic will soon see another cohort of students graduate. With this last chance to be heard in this paper, Tribune finds out what's on the minds of some members of the Class of 2004 as they look to their graduation. ■

"At last! I feel kind of stressed ... You don't have much time to think about graduation while you are very busy preparing for your final-year project. On the other hand, it's eight more weeks till I'm a free man!"

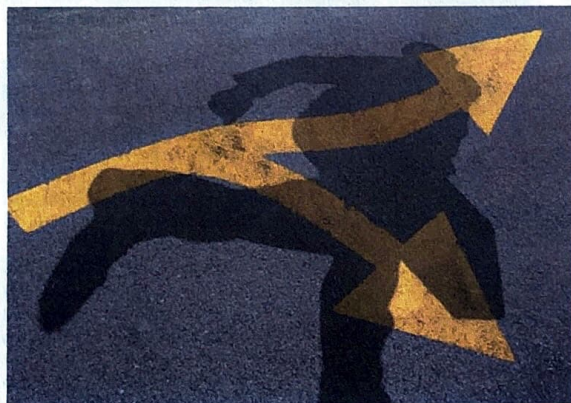
Gary Lee Chao Wen, 20, Electronic Telecommunication Engineering (ETE)

"Nothing special really. I just wanna be enlisted into army and finish it so that I can pursue my interest. Like apply for the Musician's Institute (MI) in Los Angeles."

Li Faji, 21, Quality Management Engineering (QME)

"Basically I can't wait to graduate because the projects are very taxing. And I'm definitely gonna miss school, the lecturers, the discussions and the tutorials. Also, I'm nervous about going to the working field because as a Diploma holder, people are going to expect more from me as I'm no longer a student-teacher but a full-fledged teacher."

Aminah Bte Abdul Latif, 19, Early Childhood Education (ECE)



**CROSSROADS:** A plethora of paths, or choices await NP graduates, not just educational ones (learn more about them in our supplement special: *Aspire Abroad*)  
(Picture courtesy of <http://www.gettyimages.com>)

"I'm exhilarated to be finally graduating. I've made a lot of good friends and had a good time in Ngee Ann."

Sabrina Mustopo, 19, Biotechnology (BIO)

"When you think back, time just passed by so fast. Polympics is the last event [I am organising]. So I want to make it really memorable before I leave."

Huang Weiqi, 20, Business Studies (BS)

"It feels wonderful to be graduating soon. Knowing that I have many options to pursue after this is very comforting. It's my stepping stone to further studies!"

Zhu Junhao, Leon, 19, Biomedical Engineering (BME)

"I feel glad that finally I can leave Ngee Ann and go out to join the workforce. I'll definitely miss the food here."

Germaine Chia Yi Qian 21, Early Childhood (ECH)

"Closure sets relief in one's heart. I just hope to walk out with the satisfaction that I learnt something."

Aloysius Norman, 21, Film, Sound & Video (FSV)

"Three years of learning have made me more creative in different perspectives. Now I'm excited to graduate, to find a good job and support my parents."

Nurul Ashikin, 19, Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE)

## Upcoming Events

Virtuoso XI

3 April  
6.30 pm to 9 pm  
Convention Centre

The Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) Strings presents songs ranging from "Yu Jian" from the movie *Turn Left, Turn Right* to classical favourite "Minuet" by Luigi Boccherini. Tickets at \$6. Contact Edward Chua at 9126-4352 for further details.

Inter-Polytechnic Debating Championships 2003/2004

3 April (Grand Finals)  
8 am to 3.30 pm  
Lecture Theatre 26

Watch the two top debating teams picked from all five polytechnics battle it out verbally on a variety of current affairs topics. Organised by the NP Debating Club. Admission is free.

Project Nutz Campus Road Relay

8 April  
4 pm to 7 pm  
Sports Complex  
An annual 1.2 km relay around the campus for students and staff of NP with three categories: "Student Inter-Programme Open", "Students Inter-Programme for Level 2" and "Staff Open". Application forms are available at schools and division offices.

The Straight Times

- Shut up and watch the show!  
25 and 26 June  
6 pm to 8 pm  
Convention Centre

The Poly Stage F'Actor presents one play titled *Hide It About Four Teenagers* in a polytechnic, their version of American television programme *Whose Line is it Anyway?* and one short documentary film. Tickets at \$5 will be sold at the Atrium in early April.

By Loretta Neo. All details correct at press time.



# A Divine Effort: For the Love of God

BY NOELLE PERERA  
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A group of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students will soon see themselves published in an anthology alongside international award-winning writers, poets, musicians and religious leaders.

For the Love of God, a union of literature and religion, is produced by final-year Mass Communication (MCM) students taking the Book Writing & Publishing (BookPub) elective module.

Put together by a team of eight student editors, guided by their lecturer, Mr Desmond Kon, the anthology offers poetry and prose by Booker Prize-winners Arundhati Roy and Graham Swift, and Pulitzer Prize-winner Rita Dove in addition to the students' writings.

Other contributors include multiple Grammy-winner Peter Gabriel, religious leaders Martin E. Marty, Geshe Tashi Tsering, Philip Yancey, Hans Küng, Tariq Ramadan, Harun Yahya and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

They come from countries as diverse as Nigeria, Australia, Philippines, Cambodia, United Kingdom, America, Switzerland, India, Turkey, Israel, Korea, Poland, Argentina and South Africa.

The compilation is the first of its kind in Singapore. According to Mr Kon, 32, there has never been "an anthology so ambitious... produced by a team so insignificant".

One of the editors, Lisa Tan, 19, felt that having her poetry published with "works of such prestigious authors was unimaginable".

While the students involved with the project may worry that their work will pale in comparison to the well-known authors featured in their anthology, local award-winning writer Felix Cheong put their fears to rest in his praise of the anthology where he says, "The students'



**A TAPESTRY OF WORDS:**  
The soft-cover art for *The Love of God* stretches over four versions of the anthology. (Picture courtesy of BookPub)

writing can stand shoulder to shoulder with the world's best."

The international writers were approached by the book editors for permission to publish their works without payment in the 1,000-copy book run, which will be distributed free, thanks to the co-sponsorship of printers CraftPrint International Limited, and NP.

Student editor Maryam Abdullah, 22, is still in awe at the willingness of the acclaimed writers to contribute to the anthology without gaining profit from it.

She said, "[It's] very heartwarming...[it] really says a lot about the international literary community."

Naturally, it wasn't easy securing the 30 writers for the anthology. Lisa recalled treading very carefully in dealing with "such big names", and added, "Each contributor to this book has to be dealt with differently. I even had an author who questioned [the nature of] our project being non-profit."

For the Love of God takes a step towards not only promoting religious harmony, but also

inter-religious dialogue, something Mr Kon feels "you can't put a price on".

He added, "The point [of the project] is that both the empowered and the dispossessed can come together to talk about something as rich and as powerful as our love for God."

Published by Beaumont Publishing, the anthology features four covers for the soft cover books, as well as one hardcover, with gilded edges, all designed by BookPub students.

The anthology has received praise from Trinity Theological College and The Muslim Reader, and has also been approved by Media Development Authority (MDA).

In addition to the anthology, the BookPub team is also putting out an audio book.

Selected poetry from the anthology was converted into lyric form and performed by first-year MCM student Vanessa Fernandez, female vocalist of the local hip-hop group Urban Xchange.

As managing editor of the CD, Germaine Lim, 19, faced the uphill task of approaching international music producers and asking them

to produce tracks for the CD, again for free.

Revealed Germaine, "It [was] crazy work and sleepless nights. The only thing that [kept] the entire thing going is the fact that I enjoy all this... I would rather [do] this over anything else."

The anthology will be exhibited in the Czech Republic at the First Prague International Poetry festival in May.

This reporter, as well as Mr Kon and Vanessa, will make the trip, thanks to a grant from the Singapore International Foundation.

The team is bringing over 200 copies of BookPub titles, and will distribute 100 copies of the anthology.

The only Singaporean delegates at the festival, the BookPub representatives also have patron bookstore Shakespeare & Sons Bookstore & Cafe to thank for distribution in Prague. ■

*Limited copies of the anthology and audio book will be given away to the public at the Singapore Art Museum on 30 April and Tango's Restaurant & Wine Bar on 1 May. For the Love of God can also be found at selected independent bookstores and cafes.*

## Heatwave Touring Malaysian Airwaves

BY SANGEETHA NAIDU  
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Undergraduates in Malaysia tuning into the internet radio station of the Radio Multimedia University (RMMU) in their capital were introduced to Singapore's first campus radio station over the late February school break.

Sasha Shahira Bhanu, 20, Programme Director of NP's Radio Heatwave co-hosted an impromptu segment with Nicholas Kueh, 22, the Technical Manager from RMMU, not forgetting to plug the 12-year-old station she helms.

The final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student was part of a 23-strong student and lecturer study trip delegation from Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP).

The student managers and presenters visited both RMMU and popular Malaysian radio station hitz.fm, marking Heatwave's inaugural visit to overseas radio facilities.

Lecturer Mr Kwek Chin Ling, 47, advisor to Radio Heatwave, said that the trip was not narrowly focussed on radio: "Radio Heatwave, as a specialist project is not only for radio. This is also an opportunity for the students to apply what they have learnt from other modules like Principles of Marketing and Public Relations to this trip."

Radio Heatwave was warmly welcomed by RMMU, run by students as a co-curricular

activity. The internet-based radio station offers 24-hour listening pleasure to students on campus.

Tiew Wah Seng, 24, President of RMMU said humbly, "Radio Heatwave is the first station to come visit us... we are a very young station. We only started in 1998 and [Radio Heatwave] is considered our senior station, so we want to take this opportunity to learn from [them]."

Faculty advisor for RMMU, Mr Abdullah Lazi Nordi, also sounded keen to continue the exchange of ideas, adding that possibly "during the next academic year... I'll urge [the president] to come up with a programme to visit Radio Heatwave in Ngee Ann Polytechnic".

After an in-depth presentation on the station's history and happenings and some

interaction, the team took a campus tour.

20-year-old Zheng Xiu Hui, Heatwave's Chinese Promotions Manager, particularly "enjoyed visiting the e-gallery where all of the students' photography pieces and animation works were displayed in a huge art gallery like room".



**ON AIR WITH ROSS:** hitz.fm's DJ Ross allowed the Heatwave contingent to be heard live on Malaysian airwaves. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

was, it was Malaysian-based multimedia group, Astro, that wowed the team, with its 16 radio channels, six of which are terrestrial.

Final-year MCM student Ashlynn Sum Yoke Leng said, "The highlight of the trip has to

be... interacting with the deejays from Malaysia."

The visitors sat in with deejay Roslan Hamid Yusoff, as he presented his late morning show on hitz.fm, Malaysia's leading English Top-40-radio-network.

Better known as Ross, the well-known deejay who had a stint in Power 98 also gave his insightful take on the cutting-edge technology in Astro radio stations and a few tips and tricks on presenting a radio programme.

The trip, which lasted from 23 February to 25 February, had been postponed three months due to several reasons. Besides funding, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) was an issue, said organiser Ms Anita Kuan, 37, MCM lecturer and Radio Heatwave advisor. "We actually wanted to go earlier to benefit our third-year students more, to come back and hopefully learn something and set up some collaborations during the second semester," she said.

Although delayed, the trip proved fruitful as the students agreed that it was a learning experience in every way, and not just for the academic and professional aspects.

"The trip was very well-rounded because we [also] got to take in the many sights and sounds of KL," said the 19-year-old Ashlynn, echoing the sentiments of her peers. ■

Log on to <http://radio.rmmu.edu.my/> to listen to RMMU.



# IS Commemorates Three Years with ISpark

BY LYDIA TEH  
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It has been three years since the opening of the School Of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS), and marking this triumphant milestone was IS Week that came with a series of talks, games, and the opening of the ISpark studio.

The introduction of IS Connects, at the newly-built ISpark studio, made for a thematic celebration of IS Week, which lasted from 8 to 19 March.

"[IS Connects] aims to show students the relevance of their IS modules by appealing to their five senses, which is why [there are] food, dance and video presentations," said Ms Elizabeth Thorarajoo, 44, who teaches Promoting Corporate Relations and the Individual and the Community modules.

Using the theme of connection, there were activities, talks and presentations to help understand a variety of topics.

'Connecting Talent' was an introduction to communicating through music while 'Connecting Knowledge' taught the basics of success in the knowledge-based economy.

Ms Lydia Chan, who teaches Creativity and Applied Thinking Skills (CATS) a module for first-year students, manned a workshop for 'Connecting Minds'. Students taking the module were given simple materials such as straws and ice-cream sticks and asked to make a stable structure. "CATS helps you to think in a divergent way, stretching your thinking skills to a greater extent," said Ms Chan.

Jaraidah Bte Mohd Jahari, 20, a final-year Electronics & Computer Engineering (ECE) student, set up a stall at the entrance of the studio and drew henna designs for free, an initiative to promote Insights into India, a new module.

She said, "IS allows me to have exposure to other courses ... and the ISpark can help make IS more exciting". Other activities included dance performances by students, that also got some IS lecturers on their feet as well.

The ISpark studio, on the fourth floor in block 50, houses computer labs, screening and presentation rooms and displays showcasing outstanding work done by IS students.

On top of that, the ISPark is also designed as a cosy and appealing meeting place that is open every school day.

In an e-mail interview, Ms Pauline Liang, Deputy Director of IS, explained the acronym for ISpark. "[It is a] play on IS as the acronym for Interdisciplinary Studies and the studio being an incubator to spark ideas."

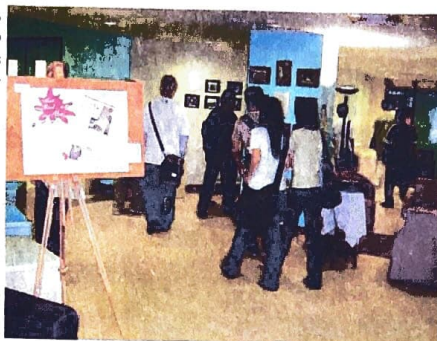
"The ISpark will showcase our [dynamic curriculum] and the challenge of an interdisciplinary methodology," said Ms Liang.

For 20-year-old second-year Electronic & Telecommunications Engineering (ETE) student, Vincent Chia, IS may take up a lot of time from his usual modules, but he is "beginning to enjoy the module called Man and Machines and [I am] glad to have learnt problem-solving skills."

Through surveys, focus group discussions with students, staff and employers, we have been looking into ways to enable students to appreciate the value of studying beyond their discipline," added Ms Liang.

The school of IS offers 96 modules from five categories, namely communication, life skills, entrepreneurship, media and the arts, and science and technology.

In the next academic semester, there will be three new communication modules and one life skills module introduced to all second-year students.



HOPING TO SPARK CREATIVITY IN STUDENTS: The new ISpark thrived with activity, featuring thematic displays and various events. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

# Japanese Student Exchange

BY SUMMER NEO  
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Some 14 Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students from the Japanese-language Enrichment Programme under the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) participated in the 5th Annual Bi-Lingual Youth Forum held in a classroom of Waseda Shibuya Senior High School on 24 February.

NP was invited for the first time to take part in the annual event, organised by the locally-based Japanese school's Oral Communication Department.

There were also participants from Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) adding up to more than 50 students being present.

The forum began with oral presentations by the students, which were followed by games.

NP students were the only ones who spoke in Japanese, with the others presenting in English on the theme of "Festivals and Celebrations".

Besides speeches, some of the students gave demonstrations on how various festivals such as the Japanese Summer Festival, Chinese New Year and Deepavali are celebrated.

Marlyn Wong, 19, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student at the Advanced level of the Japanese-language Enrichment Programme said, "I felt very happy, because [after] studying three years of Japanese, this is the first time I [have] interacted with real Japanese [students]."

She added, "I think everybody put in a lot of effort, they practiced [for their presentations] like us. Although [we were] very busy, we still put in time to do this."

The NP students started researching and preparing for their topics about three weeks prior to the event. Their respective Japanese "Sensei" [teachers] monitored their progress on



COLOURFUL GATHERING: NP and NYP students posing with their Japanese counterparts during the short get-together session. (Picture: Ms Keiko Shimozono)

drafting the speeches and checked on their presentations every week after class.

Ms Keiko Shimozono, 35, who led the NP delegation encouraged her students greatly, which boosted their confidence.

The IS lecturer said, "Of course this is the first try for everyone, I have to say that it's a little bit disorganised, but still we [tried] our best and it looks like the students enjoyed and took the most out of it and I'm happy about it."

Ms Hilary Pearson, Head of Oral Communication Department and the English language teacher of Waseda Shibuya Senior High School said, "This forum is for intercultural exchange and understanding. We want students of all levels of speaking ability to have the opportunity to use the different languages to communicate."

However, as the event started late, there was little time left after the presentations for students to interact.

Final-year ACC student, Jess Chong Pei Ting, 19, who continued studying the Japanese language under the Enrichment Programme after taking Japanese as her IS Communication module in Year 2, said, "I enjoyed myself because I learnt something from [a] different culture [and a] different people, [I] know more about Japanese [culture], and I [met] new friends... but I hope the event would be more interesting, more interactive [in the future] because today we just [sat] there and watch[ed]."

Participating in the Youth Forum for the first time was an enjoyable experience and good exposure, according to NP students.

"I learnt more about the Japanese customs, culture and festivals," said Nichole Teo, 20, a second-year Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE) student in a phone interview. She looks forward to participating in such events in future, but hopes "the duration can be longer, and things should be more well-organised".

# Downloading Trouble

BY JENNIFER KOH  
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students caught distributing, copying or using pirated files and illegal software on campus can face punishment like fines and scrutiny by the Polytechnic Discipline Committee, said Ms Cheong Foong Keng.

The officer in charge of financial assistance, who is also the Disciplinary Mistress at the Student Services Office, said she will call the student up to investigate the matter before the punishment is decided. A statement from the student promising that he or she will not repeat the offence will be taken and a warning letter sent. The student may also be sent for counselling.

Repeat offenders of minor cases will be fined \$40 and major cases will be referred to the Polytechnic Discipline Committee which will size up the situation and mete out punishment accordingly. So far no NP student has been caught. This contrasts with at least 25 students nabbed by the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) for illegally sharing or downloading music from the Internet, according to an article in *The Straits Times* on 20 February. NUS fined each of their students \$200 and NTU fined at least five students an undisclosed amount.

A spokesperson from Support@CC, the helpdesk arm of NP's Computer Centre (CC), said that if they found students engaging in such illegal activities, they would be referred to Ms Cheong. All Internet traffic on campus is routed through the CC, which tracks the guilty students down through their login student numbers.

Commenting on the punitive actions taken by the universities, Angela Tan, 17, a first-year Biomedical Science (BMS) student said, "I think the punishment is fair. Unfortunately, not all student offenders were caught. If NP were to catch such offenders, they should probably fine them [based] on the seriousness of their offence."

Second-year Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEE) student Cho Zhi Seng, 19, thought, "\$200 is a bit too much. NP should also fine offenders - maybe \$10 to \$15 fine for first offenders and higher fines for repeat offenders."

The penalty in school is a lot kinder than outside. The Recording Industry Association of Singapore (RIAS), which protects the copyright of artistes and music labels, actively tracks down individuals who download or share a large number of songs with the help of automatic software and manual searches, recording the username of the individual at the downloading site as well as the Internet Protocol (IP) address of the individual's computer.

Individuals who access and download from peer-to-peer file sharing networks, such as Kazaa, could find their Internet accounts suspended by their Internet Service Providers (ISPs). More importantly, they may also face legal action.

School of Film & Media Studies (FMS) lecturer Ms Teo Yi-Ling, in her early 30s, said, "The acts of downloading and file sharing are essentially acts of reproducing material that is protected by copyright. If such reproduction takes place without permission, the copyright in such material is infringed."

The author of Media Law in Singapore added, "Section 136(2) of the Singapore Copyright Act makes it an offence to possess such infringing material, and the penalty that this offence carries can be a fine ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years."



# Dissatisfaction with Doing Away SATs

BY JENNIFER KOH  
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In a surprise decision, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) announced at the end of February that from this year, they will no longer require student applicants to take SAT 1 (Scholastic Assessment Test 1) as part of their entry requirements.

This means that the Composite Admission Score (CAS) for polytechnic graduates to the two universities has been changed to 75 percent polytechnic grades, 20 percent 'O' level grades and Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) five percent.

Last year, the CAS for polytechnic graduates was 60 percent polytechnic grades, 15 percent 'O' level grades. The remaining 25 percent came from the applicant's SAT 1 score, and up to five bonus points could be awarded for participation in CCAs.

Singapore Management University (SMU) has chosen to keep the SAT requirement in its admission criteria for students. SMU only admits applicants with a minimum score of 1200, including a minimum score of 500 each for the Mathematics and Verbal components.

Response from NP students on the two universities' move is mixed.

Chen Keyi, 20, a final-year Business Studies (BS) student, had sat for her SAT 1 paper. She obtained a score of 1080.

A relieved Keyi said, "I think poly students normally don't do well in SAT 1. A lot of my poly friends don't score above 1200, so it's good that they're [the SATs] not required now."

First-year Biomedical Science (BMS) student, Eugene Tan, 18, felt otherwise.

He said, "I think it's ridiculous that they are scrapping away [the] SAT 1 score as one of the requirements after just one year. Not everyone does well for exams."

Describing the SAT as a "life jacket", Eugene cited *The Straits Times* report on 2 March on a student named Terence Tan who had done badly for his 'A' levels, scoring a mix of C, D, E grades and a 'B' for his General Paper. He later scored 1530 out of 1600 for SAT and managed to enter SMU.

Also affected by this change is the Mathematics, Science & Computing (MSC) Division of the School of Engineering, which has been offering all NP students a preparatory SAT

1 Mathematics course running for 10 weeks each semester since January 2002.

Mrs Tham-Ng Nget Lyen Christina, an MSC Lecturer in her 40s, has been in charge of it from last January. She said that MSC offered this course as a service to students. Registration fees are \$30.

"We familiarise students with the test format, brush up on their mathematics skills and teach them test strategies and the fastest ways to solve problems," Mrs Tham-Ng explained.

Shi Jia Fu Benjamin, 20, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student who is taking the course, said of the math standard in SAT 1, "It is actually that of 'O' Level Elementary Mathematics. Only one or two questions are of 'O' Level Advanced Mathematics standard." He said that he will not be sitting for SAT 1 after hearing that it is no longer required to enter NUS or NTU.

As many as 170 students were enrolled in the Preparatory Course in the 2003 January semester. For the following semester, some students even had to be turned away as all 240 vacancies were taken up. This semester, only 152 students enrolled. A surprised Mrs Tham had prepared 410 places.

The low enrolment may have been because students were unaware of the course in the first place. Although Mrs Tham-Ng said she had posted information at the MSC notice boards, Student Services Office, Library as well as televisions at different blocks, half of the 30 students polled by *Tribune* said that they were unaware of it. Of those who knew, most had heard of the course from their friends or lecturers.

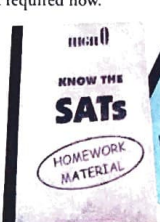
Only three had learnt about it from NP announcements, notices at the Student Services Office and from the MSC website itself. "Most of our Prep course students are from BA and [are] likely to need SAT 1 scores if they intend to enter SMU," Mrs Tham-Ng said.

At press time it was still undecided whether the prep course will run next semester, after the MSC Division held a meeting on 8 March with other polytechnics. The division appeals to students to give their feedback on this issue.

Students may dial the MSC Helpdesk line at 64608322.

*Lecturers from the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) will be conducting a SAT 1 Verbal Enhancement Course for final-year NP students from 2 April to 10 April. The registration period is from 18 to 29 March and a fee of \$15 applies.*

Visit [http://www.np.edu.sg/is/is\\_events.htm](http://www.np.edu.sg/is/is_events.htm) or call Ms Carol Lee at 64606710 for more details.



[Picture: Jennifer Koh]

## Shoe Run - An LEM Success

BY LORETTA NEO  
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The Inter-School Shoe-run Competition 2004, organised by Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Logistics Engineering & Management (LEM) course was an event of fun learning for excited secondary school students on 21 February in the computer laboratories at Block 46.

Held for the first time, the competition, which began at 9 am, proved challenging for the participants.

Each of the five teams school had to order a certain number of sports shoes as goods according to their imaginary customers' demands. Then they had to go through a supply chain by taking on the various roles of producer, distributor, wholesaler and retailer. The six-month process of doing business was shrunk to a three-and-a-half-hour-long competition.

While performing their roles in the supply chain, the participants had to remember not to carry excessive stock to keep their operational cost down.

The winning team of Swiss Cottage Secondary School was the one with the lowest overall cost. Bukit Batok Secondary School and Bukit View Secondary School followed respectively. Dunearn Secondary School and Hillgrove Secondary School were the other two schools that fielded teams.

LEM lecturer Mr Victor Tan, 45, one of the organisers said that the competition's aim was to clear up any misunderstandings of the term "logistics" and reach out to secondary schools to engender better understanding about the logistics industry in Singapore as well as the LEM course.

"Many of our school students have misconceptions about the term 'logistics'. They link it with truck driver, fork-lift driver, delivery man... Nowadays, logistics is very sophisticated, especially the physical flow and the information flow," he explained.

However, participants did not have to worry when they met with difficulties during the game. Student helpers from the LEM course were



PREPARING TO RUN FOR THEIR SHOES: LEM Course Manager, Mr Poon Ooi Theng welcoming the contestants. [Picture: Loretta Neo]

close at hand to give advice and guide them through the game. This has also allowed LEM students to learn even more about the supply chain and to relate it to their studies.

"I will be clear about how the whole supply chain works since it deals with distributor [and] wholesaler, which will help me in my studies," said Jess Teo, 18, a first-year student from LEM who was one of the student helpers.

Like her junior, second-year Gina Teo, 19, was glad that such an event was held, as she not only learned more about her own course, it taught her how to interact with younger people and to guide them.

Said a grateful Teo Shi Min, 15, from Swiss Cottage winning team, "[The] student helpers are very friendly and helpful. They gave us a lot of advice because they have some experience."

With the first Inter-School Shoe-run Competition being such a success, there is no doubt that a second one is in the works. A web-enabled one that will allow more schools to take part is also in the pipeline.

"The programmer [for the web-enabled version] will be from the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC). They can help us to convert it... so that it will be an internet game," said a pleased Mr Tan.

## Reaching Out to Children for Art's Sake

BY KAYAL VIZHI  
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Some eight Early Childhood Education (ECH) students have so impressed Art Outreach, the social development project they volunteered help, that the organisation is keen on recruiting help from other departments in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP).

The project aims "to increase art appreciation and art literacy" among youth, according to its website.

Marissa Teo, 21, a final-year ECH student, the first NP student to join as a volunteer, has received free training to teach art appreciation to children in schools. Her mother used to be the programme's coordinator. Marissa only realised after her training, that "there's more to art other than just looking at it".

She then recruited other course-mates with the blessing of ECH Director, Dr Kathleen Walsh, and course co-coordinator Ms Leong Pek Kay.

Ms Lianne Wong, Programme Co-coordinator for Art Outreach, 33, said that they "were very impressed with Marissa's effort and passion".

Art Outreach's initial pool of 15 volunteers grew to 60 within five months.

In nine months, Art Outreach has reached 2,000 students in 10 schools, including Fuchun Primary School, Balestier Hill Primary School,

Kranji Secondary School and Henderson Secondary School. Ms Wong said that she hopes this will balloon to 5,000 students monthly.

Volunteer Tay Yu Ying, 19, a final-year ECH student, said "The free training is really beneficial both ways. We get to learn [how] to conduct ourselves as well as pass on knowledge to the younger ones."

Aryany Abdul Manab, 20, a graduating ECH student, has been volunteering for them for the past five months. She added, "We also have to read up so that we can get ourselves familiar [with] the art works."

Aryany explained that in a typical session, she would bring and present an art portfolio to a class of about 40. What follows "is a two-way discussion, where opinions are shared about the piece".

To be a volunteer, Ms Wong said that one only needs "love for art, [to be] energetic, [have] positive thinking and passion". She was quick to reassure that "you don't have to be an art critic to be able to volunteer".

"Art was always thought to be for the high brow community. We want to break that perception and foster in the young minds that art appreciation is for all," added Ms Wong, with regards to the strong emphasis on art.

Ms Wong plans to collaborate with other schools in NP, including the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS).



IN APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS: Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Primary School students look in awe at Eunice Tan explains the finer details of a painting [Picture: Ms Lianne Wong]



# Engineering and IT Students Fostering Entrepreneurship

BY JENNIFER KOH  
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**W**ithin two months of being registered as an events company, SGEventors, owned and run by five Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students, ran and sold as many campus bazaars.

BazaarONE at the Atrium held on the two days before Valentine's Day, was followed by BazaarTWO, between 15 and 17 March.

Despite being a fledgling company, it sold all 30 BazaarONE stalls days before the event, thanks to publicity posters on campus notice boards and mass e-mails sent to NP student accounts. It cost \$34.80 to rent a stall for the two days.

The grander BazaarTWO saw stall rental at \$54, working out to be \$18 per day, higher than the \$17.40 per day stall rental at BazaarONE.

This was despite there being twice as many stalls, with about half reserved for NP students. The rest were for students from secondary schools, junior colleges and universities. Items sold included students' goods and services like handmade earrings, necklaces and personal manicure services.

It may come as a surprise that none of the five entrepreneurial students in SGEventors are from the School of Business & Accountancy (BA).

They had met at a Young Entrepreneurs cum Team Building Camp organised by Ngee Ann's Office For Innovation And Enterprise (previously known as Innohub) last November. Inspired, they decided to form a company that helps to nurture students' entrepreneurial skills.

Second-year Electrical Engineering (EE) students Chew Siew Wai Alex, 19, and Heng Yi Jian Eugene, 18, are SGEventors' Finance and Operations Directors.



INTREPID ENTREPRENEURS: Alex Chew, Cindy Lye, Eugene Heng, Alex Seah, Pardeep Singh Kang (Picture: Jennifer Koh)

The only female in SGEventors is Lye Zhijun Cindy, 19. A second-year Internetworking and Communications (INC) student, she is the Administrator cum co-Marketing Director. Final-year Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE) student, Pardeep Singh Kang, 20, who is the Publicity Director, created the company website.

Final-year Information Technology (IT) student, Seah Tian Yong Alex, 20, is the only non-Engineering student in SGEventors. He is the Marketing Director.

When asked what SGEventors stands for, Eugene replied, "SG stands for Singapore and Events describes us - people who organise events. We aim to make our company known throughout Singapore."

The five credited staff at Ngee Ann's Office

For Innovation And Enterprise for providing the information for registering SGEventors as a sole proprietorship.

Their company was registered on 13 January and they will continue running SGEventors even after graduating.

Some may say that starting a company in today's uncertain economic climate is risky and especially so when the owners are students and none of them are studying either business or event management.

Rebutted Alex SGEventors' Finance Manager, "Yes, we aren't business students, but we're brave enough to take the risk. We were all inspired at the camp and are confident of our organisational skills. Besides, the staff of Innohub are there for us if we have questions or need help."

Meetings are held every other weekday. The canny entrepreneurs ran a mini-bazaar stall at the NP Open House (5 to 7 February) as a warm-up before their first atrium bazaar.

On why they chose BazaarONE as their first official event, Cindy answered, "BazaarONE is timely, being so near Valentine's Day when many people are willing to splurge on their friends and loved ones. It was also our smartest move as a January event is too soon, SGEventors only being thought up in mid-November and registered in January this year."

BazaarONE featured stalls selling items like flowers and soft toys, in line with the Valentine's Day theme, to more unusual items like baby hamsters and comic books.

Other schools and educational institutions, including the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) and the National University of Singapore (NUS), booked five stalls at BazaarONE. SIM private degree programme students sold flowers and movie card calendars at their stall. Tanglin Secondary School students sold Ferraro Rocher chocolates in flower bouquets, which were very well received. Their teachers were delighted that their students had learnt entrepreneurship first-hand.

Most stall vendors refused to disclose their profit figures, preferring to give an estimate of 30 to 50 percent profits instead. Stalls that sold roses, Valentine's Day gifts and manicure services were among the most popular.

Stall rentals collected from each bazaar is spent on atrium space bookings, with the remaining cash going towards funding SGEventors' publicity for future events.

Besides bazaars, SGEventors hopes to organise entrepreneurial camps for NP students, birthday parties and even formal corporate events like Dinner & Dance. ■

## Cleaning up After Ourselves

BY HAYATI HARON  
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**S**tudents can now look forward to being rewarded at Canteen one with a gift and a tune, just for returning their trays after purchasing their food.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Campus Green Team has set in place an ongoing 'Be Hip! Return Your Trays' Campaign in canteens to encourage students not to leave their trays behind.

According to Mrs Tam Li Phin, 50, Chairperson of Campus Green Team, the campaign aims to promote a "clean and healthy environment for students to study and dine [in]".

She added that the campaign [could] help to "instill an atmosphere of social grace [and] care for fellow campus users".

Mrs Tam stated that the chief reason behind the current campaign is to "discourage crows to come into the canteens". She added, "These birds [can] carry diseases and [possibly] transmit diseases to us...[it is] a chain effect. This is a reality [that] can happen in Singapore."

Anthea Yam Chiew Yen, 20, feels that the campaign might be a good deterrent against bird flu. The final-year Information Technology (IT) student said, "I think it's a good practice [to] keep the canteen clean [and] prevent bird flu."

Mrs Tam said that the campaign was first implemented in 1996, but the response from staff and students have been discouraging, leaving Mr Michael Ng, 52, a cleaner at Canteen one to observe, "[The situation is] still the same. Trays are still lying around. Students just eat and go."

The Campus Green Team however, hopes to improve the current dismal response towards the canteens. Students who return their trays will be given a gift.

The gifts of key-chains and souvenir items are tokens, which Mrs Tam hopes will encourage students to be more pro-active in returning their trays.

The scheme, which had been implemented previously with help from the Environmental Rangers Society (ERS), will be continued from either end of March or in April.

The second action plan entailed getting the campus radio station to help spread and reinforce the message in a less serious form by producing and airing jingles.

In a phone interview, Shahira Bhanu, 20, Programme Director of Radio Heatwave said the jingle, which was aired in Canteen one from 15 March, would urge "students to eat faster, so that others [can] occupy [their] seats in canteen one. [as well as to] clear their trays".

Whether the efforts by the Campus Green Team to publicise the campaign will work remains to be seen, but the task is an uphill one going by students' reactions.

Echoing many of her peers, Yasmin Arifa, 22, a final-year Early Childhood Education (ECH) student said, "[The campaign will] probably take some time. All the while, we've not been returning [our trays] and it will take more than just a banner to get an immediate reaction." ■

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# Overseas Dreams Beyond Polytechnic

By Amanda Tay

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As final examinations and graduation draws near, it is definitely time to start planning for a future beyond Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), if you haven't already begun. With one of the more popular options being further education in a foreign country, Tribune asks some final-year students just what they wish to get out of an overseas education.

"The new culture, new people, new surrounding[s], new everything! It will probably take me a while to get used to studying overseas, but I think just the experience of living in a totally different country alone would be quite worth it already."

*Quek Tai Chuan, 19, Mechanical Engineering (ME)*

"A new environment and new experiences. And a widely recognised degree of course."

*Kwa Shu Hui, 19, Business Studies (BS)*

"[This will be] my big chance to strike it out on my own. [I'll get] a sense of achievement, knowing that I can survive in a foreign land all by myself."

*Khoo Kiat Siong, 19, Multimedia Computing (MMC)*

"Not really adopting the culture, but probably learning new things. Hopefully I'll come back a grown up person."

*Ann Koay, 19, Biotechnology (BIO)*

"To [be] more knowledgeable [about] other culture[s] and lifestyles. Also [to become] more independent."

*Estella Khin Thidar Win, 20, Information Technology (IT)*

"Learn different things, gain new traits, make friends and network."

*Marvin Ruben, 21, Accountancy (ACC)*



AWAY FROM HOME SWEET HOME: NP students know what they want after graduation, seeking different viewpoints, new networks, cultural and self knowledge as well as exposure to different lifestyles and educational systems when they go overseas after polytechnic. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

"Knowledge that I may not know if I keep myself in Singapore, like how to cope with natural disasters, for example. Because we are exposed to a different education system... we may be able to learn more from there."

*Goh Choon San, 20, Accountancy (ACC)*

"The exposure overseas, which would be more as different people from different cultures will gather, especially if it's a reputable school. [I will] get to know different kinds of thinking."

*Jonathan Goh, 19, Film, Sound & Video (FSV)*

## Get a Degree in a Different Language

By Summer Neo

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You may never have considered furthering your studies in countries like Japan, Germany and France because you are worried about the language barrier and entry requirements. Still, Tribune finds you don't have to narrow your choices to English-speaking countries such as Australia and the United States.

### Japan

Degree programmes in Japanese universities take an average of four years to complete. Non-residents have to pass the Japanese University Admission for International Students before gaining admission. The test is conducted in June and December in Singapore by the Japanese Cultural Society.

Students can either take Japanese lessons at language centres here first or go to Japan to study in language schools until they attain the required proficiency to take the test, which is usually the Advanced level.

According to Ms R. Ninomiya, Student Adviser at the Japan Information & Culture Centre, Embassy of Japan, there are universities that offer intensive language courses for between six months and two years for learning Japanese from scratch, which helps you follow undergraduate classes.

Some private universities, such as

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, have a unique system of allowing the study of some subjects in English as well.

Ms Ninomiya added that at the public universities in Japan school fees are about half the cost of private universities due to government subsidies, and these schools will relax the admission criteria for international students.

The fees in Japanese public universities, at about S\$12,000, are about twice that here. According to the website, [http://www.la.us embassy.jp/e\\_web2003/e\\_m05\\_20\\_08.htm](http://www.la.us embassy.jp/e_web2003/e_m05_20_08.htm), the living expenses for a month will set you back around JPY 117,238 (S\$1,817) to JPY 158, 920 (S\$2,463), depending on where you live in.

### France

Bachelor degree courses in French universities take about three years. International students must sit for language tests such as the Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française (DELF) and the Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DALF).

The annual tuition fee for public French universities is heavily subsidised, ranging from EUR 150 (S\$314) to EUR 250 (S\$523), for both local and international students. The tuition fee for private universities can reach several thousand euros. However due to the high cost of living in France, the average monthly cost of living ranges from EUR 700 (S\$1,467)

to EUR 1,050 (S\$2,201), according to Education Deputy of Ambassade de France, Ms Sng Sok Hwee, who is in her early 30s.

Engineering programmes are one of the popular choices among foreign students due to the "prestigious system" for the selection of students to enter the universities.

Students who want to learn French from scratch can take intensive courses in French universities such as Université Michel de Montaigne, Université de Perpignan and Cours de civilisation Française de la Sorbonne.

It would be best if students know some basic French before going to study in France. The Alliance Française de Singapour provides French language courses at various levels.

For more information, log on to [http://www.france.org.sg/scac/en/ledul/higheredu\\_univ.htm](http://www.france.org.sg/scac/en/ledul/higheredu_univ.htm).

### Germany

Good news for foreign students: Education in Germany is almost fully subsidised by the government, except for private universities and some second-degree programmes. The monthly living cost in Germany is estimated to be from EUR 540 (S\$1,129) to EUR (S\$1,401).

Degree programmes in Germany generally take about four years to complete, with the new semester starting in September.

According to Ms Annika Walter-Schantz, Director of Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst,

German Academic Exchange Service Information Centre Singapore (DAAD), polytechnic graduates from Singapore can only apply for Fachhochschulen (FH), the universities of applied sciences, which are more hands-on compared to the general or technical universities (Uni).

Foreign students have to pass an assessment test as well as the German language proficiency test, Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerber (DSH), to gain entry to the universities.

Students will need to attend a free two-semester preparatory course at Studienkollegs (study colleges) where an adequate proficiency in German (no less than 400 - 600 hours of German study) is required in order to qualify for the course.

According to a university brochure, "most Fachhochschulen (FH) - universities of applied sciences - offer language courses to prepare applicants for the DSH", but prior to admission into the universities, students "must provide proof of a good knowledge of German".

In Singapore, students can also take TestDaF-Niveaustufe 5, which is recognised, instead of going to Germany to take the DSH. Interested students are advised to start taking German language classes at Goethe-Institut Singapore before applying for German universities.

For more information, log on to <http://www.daad.de/inf>



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# No Fear of Racism Overseas, Safety Measures Taken by Aussie University

By Loretta Neo

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Not even recent local newspaper reports of racist attacks in Perth, Australia, are enough to deter students from going to western countries for further education.

Some 50 Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students, out of a total of 70 polled by Tribune, felt that while racism was present in these countries, the positive experience of studies there outweighed the small risk. Voicing a common mindset, Yachicko Masda, 22, a final-year student from Business Studies (BS), said, "I don't think racism should stop you ... [from achieving] whatever you want to achieve, because it's just a small issue compared to other factors."

She added that the adjustment to the different lifestyle in another country would be a far more important factor to consider.

Agreeing, Alvin Wong, 19, a final-year student from Banking & Financial Services (BFS) said, "It's just meeting people who have different mindsets about Asians. Just be open."

Going by the confidence of Singaporean students there, security is really not a concern.



PERTH UNIVERSITIES STILL WELCOMING: Despite recent media reports of racist attacks in Perth, NP students feel that racism is not an issue when it comes to pursuing their dreams of studying overseas. [Picture: Melody Tan]

Stanley Tham, 25, a Strategic Procurement undergraduate from Curtin University of Technology in Perth, Australia, told Tribune that the situation there is stable.

"It's not really an alarming concern because generally here in Perth, the Aussies [Australians] go about their own business, living their

own lives. The racist incidents that have been reported of late are just one of the few. These things do not always happen, [only] once in a long while," he said in an email interview.

Brenda Lim, 24, an Accountancy graduate from the Queensland University of Technology in Australia, feels that it is important for Asians and

other minorities to make the first move in a social situation to break the ice and ease the atmosphere.

"Generally people do not [choose to treat minorities as] outcast[s]... however as minorities, it is important to attempt to communicate with people rather than to wait for others to approach [us]. Once the first move is made, locals can make up equally fun people to be with," she said in an email interview.

Stephanie To, 22, a Marine Biology and Biochemistry undergraduate from the University of Queensland in Australia, said in an email interview that international students are actually very protected by the school.

"It is against university laws or policy to practise racism here in University of Queensland. Students can be expelled and dealt with severely," she shares.

Schools such as the Curtin University of Technology in Perth, have also taken steps to ensure the safety of the international students.

"It has initiated a range of safety

measures with the help of the police and Curtin's own security staff to ensure the University is and remains a safe and welcoming environment at all times," assures Colleen Liston.

Ms Liston is in her 50s, and is the Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor of International Quality and Enterprise in Curtin University of Technology of Perth, Australia.

"In addition, Curtin provides students with practical information on personal safety and security to ensure their university experience is a happy and safe one," she said in an email.

Ms Liston stressed that support services for international students are available throughout their course of study in Curtin.

"Our Singapore and other Asian countries' student enrolments appear not to have been affected by any media reports [about racism] offshore or here. We are very pleased with [the] enrolments," she added.

Ultimately, it is clear that most NP students are fairly optimistic about overseas educational experiences.

They also take a pragmatic approach to the issue of racism interfering with their studies overseas.

Reasoned Priscilla Ng, 19, a first-year BS student, "Since [an overseas education is] for the future, it's for your own good. Go ahead."

## Changes for Local Uni Admissions

By Carol Liu

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Changes in admission criteria announced on 28 February have made it easier for polytechnic graduates to secure a place in local universities National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU), a move that has 20 Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students feeling glad.

According to a Ministry of Education (MOE) press release from this year, applicants can opt whether or not they want to use their Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) as part of their university admission.

This flexibility is likely to bring relief to poly grads, as only about 70 secured places in local universities last year when SATs were compulsory, according to a Channel News Asia report on 28 February.

Students also now have the choice of whether or not they want to use their Mother Tongue grades as part of their admission, as long as they obtain a minimum grade of a pass to be able to apply to the universities. This, too, is good news to some who enrolled in the polytechnics because they were weak in their Mother Tongue.

A new ruling allows universities to take in as much as 10 percent of their students on their own grounds.

This implies that promising athletes and possibly people of other talents, some of whom can be poly graduates who may not meet the academic requirements of Singapore's universities, can still be offered places.

A poll of 20 NP students by Tribune showed that most of them are either not going to university or are planning to go to NUS or NTU.

Wong Kok Chin, 23, a first-year Electrical Engineering (EE) student, said that he will not be going to a university for another three years.

When he does, he said that although he prefers an overseas school, he will consider studying in the local universities as well.

However, Jasmine Yong Ling Ling, 18, a second-year Accountancy (ACC) student, said that she only wants to study in a local university.

### More Options

Currently, there are many distance-learning programmes from universities in Australia, the United States (US), and the United Kingdom (UK).

There are also collaborations between NUS, NTU and SMU and reputable foreign universities such as Cornell University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU).

As early as next year, the first foreign private university could open

in Singapore, thus broadening the options even further.

The Economic Development Board (EDB) is in the talks for a foreign private university in Singapore.

It is still tight-lipped about the identity of the university, but revealed that it is reputable.

An EDB spokesperson said in an email interview with Tribune that it will be "out of the government system [and that] it will be a private system".

He added that it is "likely to be a comprehensive type of arrangement which will offer a wide range of courses... like a 'mini NUS' that is not publicly funded", and that it will have more international students.

Tan Xiao Chuan, Randy, 18, a first-year Building & Real Estate Management (BEM) student, said that he will most likely be going to a foreign university after he finishes his National Service (NS) because of the course that he will be taking.

However, if a foreign private university offers what he wants to study, then he might study in the private university.

Despite the recent announcement, not all students know about the change in the admission criteria for the universities.

Priscilla Wong, 21, a Banking & Financial Services (BFS) student who heard about it, felt that the removal of the SATs was a good change.

## Take Singapore Along

By Amanda Tay

amanda\_tribune@mail2world.com

You would think that with webcams, Internet radio and the cheapest IDD rates in years, that people wouldn't miss home. But there's one thing technology will never do - cure homesickness. So don't forget Tribune's list of the top 8 items to pack before you fly off.

### 1) Photographs of family and friends

"I brought photo albums of my family and friends with me," said Joel Ng, 20, a National Serviceman who studied Information Technology and Computer Science at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). Place photos of loved ones somewhere visible such as on your bedside table.

### 2) Recipes for Singaporean food

If you can't imagine life without our hawker favourites, pack a local cookbook or get recipes online (www.makantime.com). It may take effort to find local ingredients there. Try checking the English names for local spices and ingredients such as *laksa* leaves (also called Vietnamese mint) first.

### 3) Kit Chan or Stefanie Sun CDs

When the going gets tough, listening to the music of these two Singaporean success stories will help strengthen you enough to carry on.

### 4) Chilli

Chilli fiends, don't suffer withdrawal symptoms. "I brought different types of chilli such as *sambal belachan* chilli, knowing that the Aussies do not like to consume 'real' hot chillis," said John Chia, 18, a second-year student at Kilmore International School, Melbourne.

### 5) A T-shirt with "Singapore" emblazoned across the chest

It could be a Hard Rock Café Singapore T-shirt, or one of those "Singapore is a Fine City" T-shirts. Wear it proudly wherever you go.

### 6) Your Singaporean personality

Take pride in being 'Uniquely Singaporean'. Vivek Ashok Kumar, 19, studying bio-medical engineering at Northwestern University, Chicago, USA, said, "I [brought] my heart and my life, both of which... are more Singaporean than anything."

### 7) Mr Kiasu comic books

Laugh at yourself and your fellow ugly Singaporeans with the original comic books that depict the misadventures of Mr Kiasu and his equally Singaporean cousin Kiasue.

### 8) Soft toys with sentimental value

National Serviceman Daniel Lee, 19, who did high school Grade 12 in Coquitlam, British Columbia, said, "I brought a small red devil soft toy my friends bought for me when I left for Canada. When I go to university in US next year it will go with me."



Friday 26 March 2004

So I'm finally in Melbourne, Australia, at the university of my choice! I've been here for about a month and a half, and I'm settling down just fine. I've been in a constant whirl of activity - meeting new people, starting new classes in a new campus and best of all, getting to know and enjoy my new surroundings.

Everything in Australia is fresh and exciting, from the food to the clothes to the cities and the country. The other day Vivian and I took the tram down to South Yarra's Chapel Street for a bit of clothes-hunting, and it was great - we walked for hours and shopped, shopped, shopped for over 2 km. (I wonder if shopping qualifies as exercise?) We're going to St Kilda next weekend, and I'm looking forward to that immensely - I can't wait to see the Sunday arts and crafts market, and the clear blue-green sea waters.

Since I've taken "work hard, play hard" as my motto, I haven't been slacking off at school either. My professors are really nice and so far, school is manageable and very interesting. I'm learning to look at things and analyse them in a different way, and to express myself fluently and precisely. Mum says she can rest easy and not worry too much about me, since Australian universities are known for their high academic standards and rigorous course-work. Their graduates also do well in working life, and college students are exposed to the real world via internships and research programs.

But I knew all that even before I left, thanks to IDP Singapore, an independent non-profit organisation owned by 38 out of Australia's 39 universities. IDP helps students like myself decide which course of study and which institution we are most suited for, and assists with our school application, enrolment and student visa application. When I went to IDP, their graduate counsellors - all educated in Australia - gave me a free in-depth consultation, and answered all my questions from lodging to course syllabus and recommendations.

They even told me which universities gave credit for the work I'd done in polytechnic, and calculated my grade point average for me. IDP made the whole process of going to Australia really smooth. I definitely made the right choice by coming to Australia for my university education. Every day I fall a little more in love with the country and I feel safe that my education is in good and capable hands. Here's to my next three years in Australia!



classmate Vivian doing a spot of studying at our campus library.





Ben and Mark on one of our weekend cycling trips



Me and some really good friends from school.

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Layout and text by Melody Tan, photos provided by IDP



**idp** EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA



# The Magic United Kingdom

By Carol Liu

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If asked to name the most boring place to study, the United Kingdom (UK) will more often than not top the list. Despite that dowdy image, the strong Pound, and the high standard of living, more Singaporeans are going there to study.

According to the British Council in Singapore, the enrolments had gone up by four percent, to about 4,160 students from 2002 to 2003.

However, the British Council was unable to give a breakdown as to whether or not the students were from junior colleges or polytechnics, as the information is considered confidential to the universities.

According to the British Council, the most popular courses in 2003 were Business and Management, Engineering, Medicine and Law.

Although there was a record number of Singaporean students studying in UK from 2002 to 2003, the British Council does not have an estimate to the number of students

going there this year.

However, even with the increase in the number of students and fees for the local students, Miss Lucy Wong, Education UK Consultant in the British Council said that "it will not affect" Singaporean students headed for the UK.

Competition for admission into UK universities has been increasing as Singapore is not the only country that saw an increase in the number of students studying there.

More students from Brazil, China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia and Russia were also choosing to make their way there. All these countries, including Singapore, are listed as top priority markets for the Prime Minister's Initiative (PMI). British Prime Minister Tony Blair launched the PMI in 1999.

PMI's aims were to "increase the number of international students and to build long-term, sustainable relations between the UK and other countries through education and training", according to a British Council report.

The PMI countries alone saw an increase of 39 percent, which was an

increase of more than 21,000 students. The British Council said that the increase was due to changes in the UK Visa, which made the UK more accessible and also because of the "British Council's own global marketing campaign [which] has been a great success in promoting the benefits of an UK education", according to a British Council report.

The marketing campaign included getting celebrities for the campaign - Real UK, starting an awards scheme - The International Student Awards, which "recognise[d] the contribution made by international students in the UK", wrote a British Council press release. Come May 1, it might become a lot harder to get into UK universities because of the inclusion of 10 more European countries into the European Union (EU).

A Straits Times article reported that there will be at least 20,000 more students from Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Malta, going to UK universities.

Currently, Singaporean students prefer to go to top-name universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial

College and the London School of Economics.

Even if this means stronger and tougher competition, students like Enric Oon, 17, a first-year Marine & Offshore Technology (MOT) student still stands by the fact that he will most likely go to the UK to study because "it is one of the few countries that offer [a] degree in the course".

## Study in UK with Advice From the British Council

If you're interested in finding out more about studying in the UK, check out our local branch of the British Council's website at [www.britishcouncil.org.sg](http://www.britishcouncil.org.sg).

The website features information on scholarships, British qualification recognition in Singapore, distance learning programmes, immigration and visas, and a link to a useful UK course search that you can tailor to your specific criteria. There's even an alumni section for Singaporean UK graduates.

aspire abroad is an overseas and post-polytechnic education supplement by Tribune.

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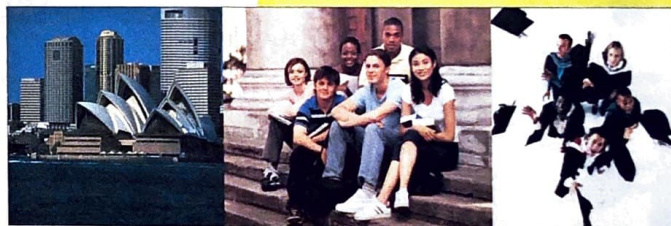
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Monash University  
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Swinburne University of Technology  
The University of Melbourne  
Victoria University

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KvB Institute of Technology (Specialist Institute for Fashion, Design Studies, TV & Video, Visual Communication)  
Macquarie University  
Southern Cross University  
University of Newcastle  
University of Sydney  
University of Technology, Sydney  
University of Wollongong

#### Perth, Western Australia

Australia School of Tourism & Hotel Management (ASTHM)  
Edith Cowan University  
Murdoch University  
The University of Western Australia

#### Adelaide, South Australia

Flinders University  
International College of Hotel Management (ICHM)  
Le Cordon Bleu  
University of South Australia

#### Brisbane, Queensland

Bond University  
Griffith University  
James Cook University  
Queensland University of Technology

#### Canberra

Australian National University  
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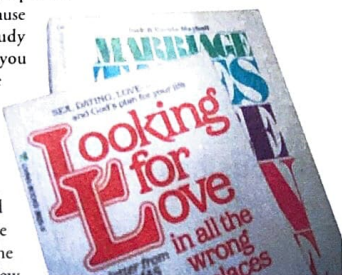
**Bored with your current course? Need a new direction in life? Always dreamed of playing a more creative role in the workforce? Or maybe you just feel like taking a few years off to pursue a childhood dream. GLORIA WONG presents you with some unusual study options that may lead to exciting and fulfilling careers.**

**Y**ou could have woken up one bright morning and realised all of a sudden that the polytechnic course you'd been studying for three years is not what you really want to do for the rest of your life. Maybe you just can't stand the thought of sitting in an office from 9 to 5 every day. Or you might just want to spend time broadening your horizons in a different, possibly wacky field just to keep the conversation interesting at parties.

Whatever the case, fret not, because there are some interesting study options available - it's up to you whether or not you want to take the plunge.

## Dr Love

This is the perfect course for a *kaypoh* who loves to be involved with other people's love lives, and also for those just in love with the idea of people falling in love. The Matchmaking Institute in New York offers courses, which are also available online (<http://www.matchmakinginstitute.com>) for those who are unwilling to spend US\$750 (S\$1,284) on a 22-hour course at the Institute. Now you know what you can do if you're spending a week in the Big Apple. Make use of the communication skills you picked up in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and start work on your network of single friends from poly.



## Mr Magic

Be the life of your next family party by dazzling them with a few tricks. If you've always had a strong yearning to pull rabbits from hats and confuse everyone with a deck of cards or a colourful banner of scarves, the Academy of Magical Arts in Hollywood

(<http://www.magiccastle.com/f/index.htm>) offers a course on tricks by in-house magicians. While showmanship isn't a recognised module yet in NP, the creativity and innovation you sharpened during your time in Ngee Ann can be used to come up with new and exciting tricks. Don't expect to be learning how to cast spells and hexes, though - real life magic is mostly misdirection, sleight of hand and cleverly placed props and mirrors. Harry Potter would be disappointed.

## Ms Designer

Jewellery is beautiful and works wonders in brightening up a drab outfit. If creating something out of nothing is your thing, then jewellery design is definitely for you. The seriously-inclined budding designers can consider the prestigious Central Saint Martin's (<http://www.csm.linst.ac.uk>), a renowned design school which offers degree courses in Jewellery Design. Instead of dealing with copper wires and electrical circuits, you'll be twisting precious metals and stones into objects of beauty that will ensure an electrifying entrance at any gala or costume ball. The entrepreneurial training you had here in NP could see you setting up a cosy little business selling designer pieces to your friends, family and anyone else in love with precious stones and glittering intricate jewellery.

## Life Goes On...

While these three options may seem off-beat and unusual, they certainly won't leave you with a routine job. You need never fear boring days trapped in a tiny office cubicle. Welcome to a new world filled with endless possibilities, where doing something different doesn't always mean taking a step backwards. In fact, you may discover a whole new meaning and purpose to life, and to the word "study".

**Affordability is a huge factor for a lot of us when it comes to deciding where to study. Tribune has put together a list detailing the average cost of living in the four countries most Singaporeans choose to study in. Because of the size of the countries, you can expect quite a lot of variation depending on where exactly you study. Still, a rough guide can come in useful at times. CANDICE CHAN takes us on a spending tour.**



	United States	United Kingdom	Australia	Canada
<b>Exchange rate</b> (as of March 12)	S\$1.71 to USD1	S\$3.07 to £1	S\$1.25 to AUD1	S\$1.28 to CAD1
<b>Car Splurge</b> In big cities, you might consider buying a second-hand car.	You can buy an impounded car for a mere USD300 or less.	£1,000 for a second-hand European car like a Renault.	AUD5,000 for a decent second-hand car. You can get an old car for about AUD500.	CAD6,000 for a used American car.
<b>Local entertainment</b>	*Some cinemas have student concessions for movie tickets. Always check beforehand.			
Movie ticket	USD5 - 7.50	£4 - 8	AUD10.50 - 12	CAD5 - 12.50
Club cover charge	About USD25	£6 - £12	AUD25	CAD6 to 25
Cost of a vodka shot	USD7	£1	AUD8	CAD14
<b>Food Facts</b>	*Prices indicated are all average amounts. Take note that they may differ within cities.			
Loaf of bread	USD1.40	50p	AUD2.30	CAD2.50
Simple meal out (i.e. at a food court)	USD8	£8	AUD8	CAD6
Slice of pizza	USD2	£1 - 2	AUD2-3	CAD2
Cup noodles	USD1	80p - £1	AUD1	CAD0.50
<b>Lifestyle</b>	*Haircut price figures indicated are not indicative of higher-range hair salons.			
A music CD	USD12	£7 - 15	AUD22 - 29	CAD18 - 20
A haircut at a salon	USD5 up	£5 up	AUD30 - 40	CAD30 up
<b>Taxation</b>	Varies from state to state but ranges from 3% to 7%. Some states like California and Virginia have local tax on top of federal tax.	17.5%	10%	Adding to the 7% GST is a Provincial Sales Tax (PST) levied that varies from 7% to 8%. GST and PST form the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

All information gathered came from 12 students who are studying abroad. Take note that prices are generally higher in the city than the suburbs.



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# Mentor to Hearing-impaired Students Honoured

BY HAYATI HARON  
hayati\_tribune@mail2world.com

**N**gee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) School of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) lecturer, Mr Chan Yoke Khiong, has been named the Singapore Deaf Association's 'Teacher of the Year 2004' for his dedication and zeal in working with hearing-impaired students.

A humble Mr Chan, 47, who was not even aware of his nomination, said, "I hope that people will help the less privileged ... not because of winning awards, because life is not about winning awards."

What thrilled him about the win was an "indication to both friends and students [that] it's okay to give yourself [for a good cause]. You don't lose anything, [it is a] win-win situation [as] you not only learn from deaf students but [from] hearing students too".

Ms Dawn Lee, Executive Officer (Programme and Volunteer Coordinator) of the Singapore Deaf Association said in a phone interview, "The objective of the annual awards is to recognise the efforts and contributions of individuals and organisations' contributions to the deaf community."

Ms Lee, who is in her late 30s, added that according to the panel of judges who had given the award to Mr Chan, "He had gone the extra mile in helping students - doing home visits [for students], which is not in his job scope."

Mr Chan's efforts in learning sign language helped his hearing-impaired students greatly; he

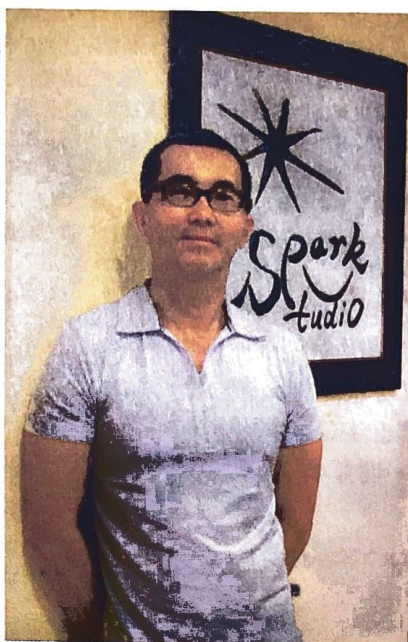
has been practising for 10 years, ever since he saw a group of hearing-impaired people communicate outside YMCA.

Mr Chan had previously taught hearing-impaired students while he was teaching at the School of Engineering.

He did not hesitate to make personal home visits and help them with their schoolwork when they required additional help.

Mr Adrian How Tsu Jian, 26, a hearing-impaired former student of Mr Chan, recalls his mentor's methods fondly.

The Assistant Staff Development Officer at Singapore Prison Service said, "I recall Mr Chan being very helpful in assisting his hearing-impaired students, including me [when] I joined EE in 1997... he is also my best role model [that] I have never



**HUMBLE WINNER** Mr Chan Yoke Khiong went out of his way to help hearing-impaired students. (Picture: Hayati Haron)

forgotten."

He added, "Actually I owe all [my] success to him."

Mr How also shared how popular Mr Chan was with his students, "He is [a] very easy guy to get along with when you talk [to] him. He is [a] very good teacher. Actually I regarded him as both [my] lecturer and good friend even during my poly[technic] days."

Mr How agreed, saying that his teacher's ability to sign did make communicating his problems to Mr Chan easier.

"After all he is like a pillar of strength to hearing-impaired students."

Hearing-impaired students really need to put in more efforts in studies than normal

students," he added.

Mr Chan said that patience is paramount and a lot of faith is essential when teaching hearing-impaired students. Letting them know he is always there to support them is important he said, adding, "You don't give up hope on them. They are [just] like normal kids."

Director of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS), Mrs Pee See Hua said in a phone interview that Mr Chan's achievement has been an inspiration for the department.

"He is an inspiration to all of us for being a good teacher [with the] kind of qualities that we want to have. He inspires us to believe in going the extra mile [not only] for his students, but for any [other] student."

"At the end of the day, he shows that teaching is not just a job, it's more of a calling," added Mrs Pee.

Mr Chan has been a role model also to his other students, some of whom decided to take up sign language as well.

He said, "Normal students were interested in [learning] sign language. They [both groups of students] were having and sharing [in the] fun together."

However, he hopes that NP can do more to help hearing-impaired students, not just in the area of studies but with issues such as family problems and personal development.

Elaborating on his plans for the future, Mr Chan said, "There is a hearing and non-hearing world out there. I want to teach both [worlds] and link them together." ■

# Tertiary Institutions Wired for Net Access

Tertiary students will soon be able to access their school's intranet services from other campuses. CAROL LIU and MELINA WONG find out more.

**T**ertiary students will benefit from having easier access to the Internet as well as their school's online resources, at a campus that is most accessible to them.

This is possible because all 10 local institutions of higher learning (IHL)—universities, polytechnics, National Institute of Education (NIE) and Institutes of Technical Education (ITE) are participating in a wireless Internet network collaboration called the Education Wireless Integrated Network (EDUWIN).

Currently, students can only access the network when they are physically at the institution they belong to.

EDUWIN is also working on ordering computer hardware and software in bulk. The greater economy of scale should mean better prices and discounts for laptops and computers for tertiary students.

## Beginnings of the Collaboration

Said Mr Gong Wei, 29, Senior Systems Engineer of NUS Computer Centre, the idea to connect the existing wireless network systems was hatched in 2002 by the centre's director Tommy Hong when he was with the Singapore Management University. He added, "We believe ... it will bring a lot of value to students."

Temasek Polytechnic, the Institutes of Technical Education (ITE), and the National Institute of Education (NIE) are still in the testing phase. The other institutions are ready to roll.

## How it Works

Having access to the wireless Internet network in other schools does not mean a student gets equivalent access as students of those campuses.

Mr Gong said that in the case of NUS, a non-

student will always be put into a restricted zone. This only gives the right to establish a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection, to connect to his own school's network and online resources.

He also added that at NUS "you can't use the Internet for anything except dial-up".

However, Mr Gong said, "[currently] each of the IHLs [is] working on a documentation for their own students", and that these should be available on the school's own website.

## Implementation dates?

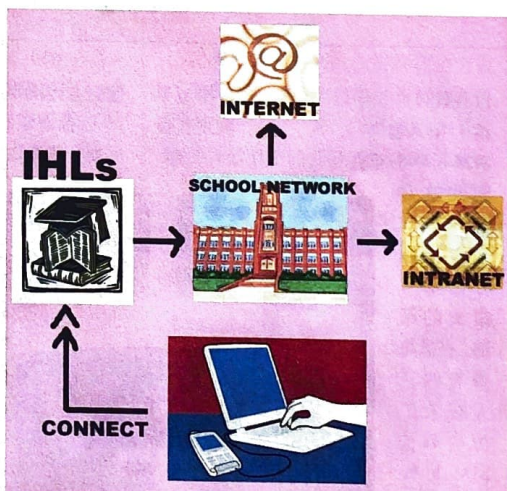
Implementation dates for the whole collaboration would depend on the pace of the individual institutions.

SMU, NTU, NYP, RP and SP are the only institutions that have most parts of their school divided into surf zones.

For NUS, the only hot spot that visitors can use is at the University Cultural Centre. Mr Gong said that the current IHLs that have the most access areas or hotspots are SP and RP.

According to Mr Gong, as of 14 March, NP finished all the necessary testing, and has also become an institution that other students can come to.

NP's Deputy Principal, Mr Lee Tuck Seng confirmed that NP has finished testing, and is starting the "pilot testing" for the project, so as to see if there are any problems that will occur. If



[Graphic by Carol Liu and Melina Wong, images courtesy of <http://www.gettyimages.com>]

there are none, NP will probably have open access in June or July.

He has also said that NP's designated hotspot will "be the atrium".

## Security Issues

With an increase in visiting students on campus, there may come a corresponding increase in security issues that each campus will have to deal with.

On-campus crimes such as theft, internet crimes like illegal downloading, undesirable characters loitering around school could all increase, resulting in student safety being compromised.

However, Mr Lee feels that these security issues will not be a big problem as most of the student visitors will likely be there for work or study purposes. Moreover, he feels that, as educated citizens, they should know how to conduct themselves properly.

Mr Gong said that NUS will not be implementing new security measures. However they will keep a closer vigilance on the activities of students through a sophisticated CCTV system, according to Mr P Samynathan, Manager of NUS's campus security, in a telephone interview.

According to Mr Gong, NUS has an Open-campus policy, where there are no restrictions placed on visitors.

## Student Reactions

The five students Tribune spoke to were not aware of EDUWIN and this could be due in part to the little media coverage that it received.

However, after finding out how the system worked, some students clearly saw the benefits of the collaboration.

Muhammad Luqmanhakim, 18, a first-year InfoComm Technology (IT) student who lives in Woodlands, was clearly elated.

He usually connects to the Internet at school because the Internet speed is a lot faster than the 56 kb/s modem he uses at home.

Since RP is also one of the institutions that has most parts of its school divided into surf zones, when Muhammad Luqmanhakim needs a fast internet connection, all he has to do is go there, which is a lot closer to his home.

As of now, whenever he travels from his house to NP, he spends over an hour on the bus and Mass Rapid Transit (MRT). ■



# SAT 虽删除 学生反应却冷淡

区柏廉, 唐诗慧联合报道

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新加坡管理大学 (SMU) 和南洋理工大学 (NTU) 于 3 月 5 日在学生服务中心 (SSU) 的邀请下, 到义安理工学院 (NP) 为同学讲解政府和教育部在 2 月 29 日所公布修改后的大学入学标准。

在位于第 26 座的讲堂举办的讲座反应热烈, 一共吸引了 500 多名同学到场。

在新的条例下, 学能评估测验 (SAT) 将不再是本地大专学府的强制性入学要求。实行不到两年的 SAT 被取消, 教育部这项决定, 引起了多方的争论。对此, 教育部的回应是因为新加坡 - 剑桥 (GCE) 'A' 水准的新课文与 SAT 的题目有所相似。此外, 有关数字显示去年凭 SAT 成绩而考上大学的学生也只有 199 名初级学院及 71 名理工学院学生, 总数微不足道。

虽然如此, SMU 的蔡爱玲博士表示 SMU 仍然会继续采用 SAT 做为收生的考虑因素之一。此外, SMU 也会考虑学生在入学面试时的表现。所以就算成绩一般, 只要显示出与课程有关的长处及优点的话, 也一样会有被录取的机会。

除了 SMU 以外, NTU 发言人林育朱女士也介绍了 NTU 的各种科目及校园生活。她还鼓励学生有机会的话一定要尝试住在 NTU 校园里 15 个度假村式的宿舍。

两所大学的招生态度诚恳, 但这份热忱却似乎打不动 NP 同学的心。Tribune 访问了 20 名同学, 发现半数以上没有在当地深造的打算。

“... 外国 (尤其是澳洲) 的大学费用其实和新加坡差不多。花多点钱买个海外留学经验, 我觉得很值得。”

林思玲

三年级生物科技工程系

就读三年级会计系的何秉生就表示: “需不需要考 SAT 都不重要。我不会在新加坡读大学。”

另一名就读三年级商务系的同学, 吴庆伟也深有同感地说: “我来 [参加] 这个讲座只不过因为好奇而已... 从来没有想过在新加坡上大学。”

不想或没打算在新加坡念大学的人不少, 在 20 名受访的同学当中, 就占了 13 名。就读三年级生物科技工程

系的林思玲就是其中之一。她说: “没有在新加坡读大学的计划是因为新加坡不重视理工毕业生。一直以来, 本地大学只专著于录取初级学院毕业生。理工毕业生就好像是二手货似的, 永远比不上新货。而我想没人喜欢被当成次等货。何况, 外国 (尤其是澳洲) 的大学费用其实和新加坡差不多。花多点钱买个海外留学经验, 我觉得很值得。”

国外教育的确是有一定的吸引力。无限的自由和新鲜有趣的异国文化也确实诱人。不过, 尽管如此, 有意留在本地念大学的也尚有人在。就读三年级商务系的许伟铭, 就打算报读新加坡国立大学 (NUS) 的商务课程。他认为: “在新加坡念大学没什么不好。起码金钱方面已经省了一大笔。再加上熟悉这里的环境, 找份兼职 [工作] 赚点外快也容易得多。”

另一名不愿透露姓名的三年级电子工程系同学则表示他选择留在本地深造的原因是因为舍不得家人和朋友。

有人想出国, 有人选择留在新加坡, 反应参半。但尽管意见分歧, 所有受访的同学都一致表示 SAT 的删除显示了政府对理工生逐渐的重视。而如果日后真的要在新加坡念大学的话, 删除 SAT 的政策改变, 也是有利无弊的。

他们会比较专业, 脑筋也转得很快。”

像有顺和秋燕这类聪明但选择以另类方式索取大学文凭的人其实很多。

据数字显示, 在过去五年里, 报读兼职课程的学生人数有直线上升的趋势。去年, 单单 SIM 的兼职课程学生就达到了 1,500 余人之多。

但在

Tribune 所访问的五十名同学当中就有七成表示不会考虑这类途径索取大学文凭。其余三成则表示除非真的没有选择, 要不然他们也不会考虑修读兼职学士课程。就读三年级会计系的吴伟良就说: “我觉得 SIM 的文凭不怎么受认识。我始终不信任这种长途课程的好处。”

有人半信半疑, 有人一口赞好。怎么都好, SIM 50 年来所教育的无数学生就是它良好教育的最好见证。



新加坡管理学院 (SIM) 是兼职课程的老字号。[照片: 何敬堂]

以我就放弃了学位, 出来工作, 半工半读。但塞翁失马, 焉之非福, 我现在在 SIM 所学的东西和我的工作很有关连, 因此这对我在学业和工作两方面都有很大的帮助。虽然每周有两三天在放工后要赶往 SIM 上课, 实在没有多余空闲的时间。但生活却过得非常充实, 非常意义。”

另一名同样修读 SIM 夜间工商管理学士课程的前英华初级学院学生林有顺则是因为当年 'A' 水准成绩欠佳, 无法考上大学, 而在服完兵役后重考 'A' 水准, 以两课 A, 一课 B 的优异成绩报读 SIM。

有顺说: “SIM 的学习环境真的很好。因为大部分的学生都是上班族, 思维上比较成熟。所以在合作做作业时,

## 大学文凭 你要就有

区柏廉, 陈艾薇联合报道

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在凡事讲求学术成绩的新加坡, 手持一张理工文凭已不足以生存。大学文凭变成了必需品, 但又非人人所能负担得起。因此, 许多如新加坡管理学院 (SIM) 和新加坡发展管理学院 (MDIS) 等 ‘另类’ 学府的兼职课程便成了那些无法付出时间或金钱的学生索取大学文凭的途径。

正在修读 SIM 夜间工商管理学士课程的义安理工学院 (NP) 商务系毕业生刘秋燕就是其中受金钱约束而无法报读主流大学的学生之一。

秋燕说道: “其实我曾经申请过新加坡国立大学 (NUS) 的工商管理课程, 也被他们录取了。但是家境实在不怎么好。就算有奖学金也帮不上什么忙。所

## 有话说!

有话不怕说, 就怕说得! Tribune 每期都会以街访的方式征求您对一些热门时事话题的意见和看法。

这一期的话题: 你在毕业后有什么打算?

“如果有钱的话我想到国外留学。如果没有的话我只能留在这儿做工。主要是不要浪费家里的钱上大学。”

赵音, 20 岁, 二年级电子工程系

“毕业后我当然想继续读书。[但]我可能会先工作, 吸取一些经验再继续深造。如果有能力 [到国外读书] 那当然最好, 因为国外的经验会比较丰富。”

邱燕倩, 20 岁, 二年级商务系

“如果成绩好 [好的话] 先读大学, 可以读本地大学最理想。如果成绩不好 [的话] 就 [会] 出国, 这样 [一来] 我就得先工作, 因为 [外国] 学费比较贵。”

杨凯云, 19 岁, 二年级商务系

“如果成绩允许 [的话], 我会在 [新加坡] 念大学。我是马来西亚人。我觉得 [新加坡] 大学都很不错。而且这里的文凭也相当受肯定。如果到 [了] 外地, 不熟悉那里的环境, 而且我在 [新加坡] 也适应了, 所以读本地大学较理想。如果真的要出国 [的话], 我会选择美国或英国, 因为的科技比较发达。”

陈凯运, 二年级资讯传播科技系

“我会出国读大学, 因为成绩很差, 要进本地大学比较困难。我不愿学费因为我姐姐和我老公有做工啦。所以有两份收入还可以供我读书。”

蓝邦维, 19 岁, 三年级电子资讯传播工程系

“我打算继续读大学。是有金钱上的问题, 可是我的 [亲戚应该可以帮忙]。因为不想跟银行借钱。多多少少是会有点压力。[老实说, 外国人] 的成绩会比我们 [好]。我们要加倍努力, 才能达到大学的要求。在澳洲的 Monash 大学有很好的早期孩童教育课程。如果一切顺利 [的话] 我会想去。”

胡家仪, 20 岁, 三年级早期孩童教育系

“我已经申请了入读几所外国学校。如果它们收我的话, 我五月毕业后就会马上离开新加坡。在国外毕业后我想我也不会立刻回来。应该会在外国做几年工才回来。到那时我的市场价值会比较高。”

赵音, 20 岁, 二年级电子工程系

“我打算半工半读在本地读外国大学。上午教书, 晚上上学。辛苦是一定的。可是我要一比较, 也必须要经验才能读这个课程。工作可以吸取经验, 也可以存钱读书。”

陈思慧, 20 岁, 三年级早期孩童教育系



# 斩新时间表 有利也有弊

梁思慧报道

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从下个学期起,各理工学院将经过两年的过渡期,并逐步调整学期时间表,渐渐提早开学日期,直到2006年固定每年四月开学。

义安理工学院(NP)下学期将定在六月开课。

在这项改革下,新生们除了能提早入学外,毕业生也能更快地步入社会工作。两年后,2006年毕业的理工生更将能和该年'A'水准毕业生同时考获成绩,申请报读本地或国外大学,无须浪费几个月到一年的时间等候下个人学期。

学术事务部副处长余传永小姐对这项改革作出回应时说:「[各部门]意识到这项调整所带来的好处,所以我们(特别)设立了一个工作小组,以探讨和确保改革计划能顺利进行,还有拟定一个尽可能配合全体师生的时间表。」

学术课程表将因受到时间表的影响而被浓缩,假期也会因而缩短。余小姐表示,学术事务部在策划新时间表时会考虑到学生是否有足够的时间办理入学手续,同时确保学生们能够在2006年的三月份如期毕业。

海事离岛科技系(MOT)的三年级学生,颜雪佩表示学期时间表的调整对在新加坡读书的马来西亚学生带来许多便利。她说:「因为马来西亚学生在年底或隔年初便得知成绩,然后必须等

上七个月才开学,有点浪费时间。新的[时间表]可让我们提早办理入学手续,不会浪费太多时间。」

另一名就读电子工程的马来西亚同学沈茂禧也觉得这对新生来说是件好消息,因为有好些学生因不愿等上七个月的时间而转读别的学校。他对这项改革唯一的不满之处是教育部的宣布来得有些突然,影响了他已安排好的假期计划。

学期时间表的调整也对某些外国学生带来不便之处,影响了他们在假期回国度假的计划。

来自印尼的同学庄丽香因学校假期和正在念中学的弟弟们有差距而有所埋怨。「我们很难得可以一起回印尼玩。现在的假期时间不一样了,如果我在他们还没放假时就先回去,就没有人照顾他们。但若是我等他们一起回去的话,我和家人团聚的时间就会缩短。」就读会计系(ACC)二年级的丽香说道。

目前的理工学院一年级学生将是首批经历两年过渡期,成为在2006年三月份的毕业生。

虽然有许多学生对缩短的假期有所埋怨,或是因假期时间的改变而无法与家人配合一同出国旅行,但这只是一些表面上的负面影响。NP的工作人员,包括教师在内,工作量也会因此加重,改卷的时间也从原本的七天减至四天。

尽管新的学期时间表对师生们有利也有弊,但只要学校各方互相配合,彼此谅解,相信双方最终都可从中获益。

# 义安 - 浙江签协议 促进两校关系

何碧莹,陈艾薇联合报道

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义安理工学院(NP)与中国浙江大学为促进两学校之间的合作关系和师生交流计划而正式签下一份协议书。

这份协议书包括了两校之间交流计划中的许多细节。

近来,到新加坡工作和念书的中国人有显著的增加,而到中国进修与发展的新加坡人也与日俱增。两国之间的交流相当的密切。



浙江大学面对西湖,风景怡人。[照片: www.princeton.edu]

NP意识到与时俱进的重要性,所以设计了这项计划,鼓励有兴趣到中国发展的同学们先去了解与熟悉当地的环境。

NP校长谢名章先生在受访时说:「我非常支持学生们到中国进行交流,因为中国有着无限的发展空间。如果同学们有到中国发展的计划,这是让他们先到当地观摩的好机会。」除了浙江大学,谢校长也提到另外两所优越的大学。他说:「深圳大学和南京大学的名誉响亮。如果想在中国工作,这几所大



每当秋季,柳树随风起舞,诗情画意。[照片: www.thebeijingcentre.org]

学的文凭是很好的踏板石。」

在过去的两年里,NP每个学期都派出八位成绩优越的学生和一位讲师到浙江大学接受五个月的训练,这个学期也不例外。

八位来自电子工程系,会计系和大众传播系的学生已在今年二月间出发了。

虽然能够参与此计划是个千载难逢的机会,但由于语言上的问题,并不是每一位学生都向往到中国留学。

一位受访的学生陈魏玲说:「我的华语说得并不流利,因为我在日常生活中都是以英文交谈。如果到中国去的话,不知会不会及格。」

大众传播系的杨应辉讲师也参与了去年二月的交流计划。他觉得在那五个月当中获益不浅,大开了眼界。

杨讲师说道:「[中国]的学生都非常积极,吸收能力很强。我将八个月的课程浓缩成四个月,他们还能应付自如,令我感到很惊讶...相信[NP]的学生也能够在这类型的计划中学到许多知识和吸收到宝贵的经验。」



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国家发展部兼国防部高级政务次长顾慕劭副教授最近在国会上参加政府财政政策辩论时,抨击那些不断在报章上埋怨华文难学的家长,指他们过分夸大华文难学。

蔡副教授以中国市场猛速增长为例,警告国人如果不乘现在学好华语赶搭这个经济列车的话,不到十年内,当中国人把英文学好,能直接和

外国人洽商时,也就轮不到我们这些所谓精通双语的‘人才’分一杯羹了。

在更大的层面上,蔡副教授也道出了新加坡过度重视英文所带来的后遗症。从每年举行的讲华语运动,到‘O’水准华文‘B’,到大学不再规定申请者起码要‘A’水准及格。

华文真的那么难学吗?就算难学,身为华人的我们就可以不学吗?



陈艾薇著  
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本人向来不属于非常积极的人;怎么会在误打误撞的情况下当上本报的华文编辑自己也搞不清楚。

原本以为编辑的工作范围不过是改改稿,是份轻而易举的事。但接踵而来的却是为着改稿数日不眠的夜晚,任劳任怨,可谓鞠躬尽瘁,死而后已。

在接下这份重任后的一个星期

内已发现并不如想象中的容易。虽然黑眼圈让本人成为名副其实的‘熊猫眼’,却发现自己不知何时已爱上了与时间赛跑的快感,有着一份对写作的热忱。

这期间,与英文组的合作无间,在他们的帮助下使一切工作都顺利完成。

手持着一份Tribune,心里的骄傲和满足是笔墨难以形容的。一切的努力和付出都没有白费。



## A Small Taste of Hamlet's Methods

BY LORETTA NEO  
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Some 17 Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students joined 301 secondary school students for William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* Workshop.

The drama and theatre appreciation workshop on 22 February, presented by the renowned drama company, TNT Theatre Britain, lasted from 3 pm to 5 pm. It was organised by the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA) Council to foster interest in the arts among Singaporean youths.

Students were given an insight into *Hamlet*, and an analysis of the play's characters by the company's Artistic Director, Mr Paul Stebbings, who led a cast of five members. The cast acted out a few short scenes from the famed tragedy before chairing a mini-forum with the students to answer questions that they had.

Mr Paul Pimentel, 26, the NYAA Council communications executive said the objective of the workshop was to enable youths to be inspired and to gain knowledge from the experts.

"The workshop was a rare opportunity for young Singaporeans to learn about drama and theatre from internationally acclaimed professionals," he said in an email interview.

He added, "The response was excellent and I believe the youths that attended learned a great deal about how to interpret a great literary work and how it can be turned into a creative and dramatic performance. I believe the workshop helped the youths who attended to think about the arts in new ways."

Mr Pimentel was also pleased with holding the event in NP's Lecture Theatre 26 to give the students an opportunity to appreciate the play



TO BE OR NOT TO BE: Students attending the *Hamlet* workshop were treated to a selection of scenes from the legendary tragedy acted by the experienced performers from TNT Theatre Britain. (Picture courtesy of Penoramic Publishing)

and to allow them to develop their critical thinking.

"Ngee Ann Polytechnic is a strong partner of the NYAA Council and we are very grateful for its assistance in organising this event. The workshop was an excellent example of how like-minded organisations can work together for the benefit of young Singaporeans," he said.

Students interviewed praised the workshop unanimously.

"I have learnt a lot about acting and the actors' points of view during [the play] and when acting their parts, and how different theatres come up with different points of view on the same play," said Carolyn Lee, 12, a student from St. Margaret's Secondary School.

Gregory Varghese, 14, a student from Northbrook Secondary School, said that this workshop helped him to better understand the emotions involved in *Hamlet*.

"We have a lot of problems in life that we don't know sometimes how to solve and so we try to solve them ourselves, but sometimes when they can't be solved, we tend to use human emotions such as anger, madness, death and suicide," he concluded.

## Making Small Waves on Campus

BY EUGENE KHAW  
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A new event-organisation club in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) called Youth DNA could well be renamed the undaunted club.

Despite having its application to register as a Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) in NP turned down, not getting permission to publicise its first event, sell its tickets or even party beyond 8pm in the room they had booked, the nine-month old club staged a fairly successful post-exam party.

Dubbed NP Hipwave, the event on 11 March started at 7pm and lasted for three hours at a dance studio on the top floor of the Sports Complex block. It featured hip-hop and R&B music in a party atmosphere, with walls plastered with torn fashion and teen magazines, for students to relax and unwind after two weeks of studying and sitting for their common tests.

According to organiser Ben Lin, 19, the team had unknowingly advertised the event using posters without the approval stamp from the school authorities. They also set up an

unauthorised booth in the atrium to sell tickets.

On the group's actions, the final-year Information Technology (IT) student explained that it was not out of rebellion but inexperience, because they "didn't know where to get permission".

He also told Tribune it was when the campus supervisors came to their booth and let them off with a warning that they realised they had flouted the rules.

The lack of experience was not something that bothered the 30 or so people who had bought the \$5 tickets for entry. Youth DNA provided free-flow of soft drinks and mineral water, and also planned break-dancing entertainment with audience participation,

a hip-hop fashion show where the best-dressed party-goer was selected and a graffiti art competition, judged by a student panel.

Break-dance enthusiast Alfred Law Han Kit, 19, took the chance to display his skills and entertain the crowd. The first-year Mechatronic Engineering (MTE) student felt the event was "not bad" but wished it was held "on a bigger scale [and included] more types of songs" such as R&B.



GET HIP: Hipwave, where it was cool to get your hands dirty (Picture: Mugilan R.)

## Award-winning World Films not Winning Students Over?

BY AMANDA TAY  
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Imagine watching award-winning films for free in the comfort of a large, air-conditioned theatre with high-tech projection equipment. If it sounds too good to be true, it isn't, although many Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students may not know about it.

World Films on Wednesdays hopes to expose students to some classic, award-winning films from all over the world. It is part of the Film Appreciation Programme organised by the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS).

Ms Jacqueline Tan, 38, an FMS lecturer and the organiser of the showcase said, "Hopefully when people watch [the films], they are open to... a different world of film watching. Instead of watching a typical Hollywood blockbuster, see how other countries make their films; all these are very good films."

The audience turnout for the screenings, however, was dismal. There were about 20 people in the Convention Centre LT68E when the second screening started on 18 February, but by the next screening on the following week, the number has dropped to just 11, the majority of whom were staff and lecturers, in a Theatre that has a seating capacity of 250.

Ms Tan said, "I actually emailed to all staff, NP-wide, to invite them to come for the screenings and to invite their students to come, but still I see only staff. Students-wise, I see mainly

my class, the film history class [from Film, Sound & Video (FSV)]."

A quick check with the students who missed the showcase showed that they would definitely consider attending if not for several practical obstacles.

"In general I like to go watch movies. But there were not enough posters put up [for the World Films], that's why I don't even know about it," said Kerry Goh, 19, a first-year Information Technology (IT) student.

Hatasia Emlyn Sahlan, 21, a second-year Accountancy (ACC) student said, "Now I'm too busy with [my] projects, so it's the timing that's putting me off."

While some may argue that it is easier to simply borrow the DVDs from the school library and view them at home, the experience, however, will be different. The year-old LT68E Theatre boasts a unique Rear Projection Projector with a special glass particle screen and stereo speakers sound system for optimum viewing pleasure.

To encourage an active audience, the screenings begin with a short presentation on the history and trivia about the film given by Ms Tan, who said, "I give a little bit more of what I thought [about the film], [plus] important information that [they] might want to know so that [they] can better enjoy the film... it makes for better appreciation."

The last screening of World Films on Wednesdays is on 21 April.

advertisement

## CHEEKY MONKEYS



Cheeky Monkeys is da bomb! The place is literally on fire with youthful exuberance. The club's only been around a year, but it's the only place on the famous stretch of Mohammed Sultan that gets 200 people queuing outside every weekend. It's no secret why. The place is just so fun. There's no club as fun as Cheeky. It's more than the hip-hop and R&B rhythms booming from twin subwoofers on the floor, more than the UK dj dishing it out, more than the fire-breathing, fire-breathing bartenders, who are, by the way, absolutely spectacular. It's more than the insanely generous price for drinks, and the bar-top dancers, red pool table or even the awesome imported lights that send patterns and colours spinning across the floor, the four walls and the ceiling. Cheeky Monkeys possesses the true spirit of unbridled adolescent fun. Once a month on Tuesday nights there are breakdancing competitions on the dancefloor. Also monthly are the talent competitions. Don't scorn at them, folks: the winner gets a bottle from the bar and cash! The hosts are hilarious people. Sometimes it gets too hot inside, they spray water on everyone! The place gets absolutely trashed in the end, but it's such great fun, it's all worth it. It's a great big smashing party, every single night. It'll leave you high, out-of-breath, soaked and exhausted. But all in the best way possible.

Wed & Thurs:  
Ladies Night. Freeflow of housepours and spirits for the girls. 9pm to 3am  
Guys. Freeflow of housepours and spirits. \$30. Freeflow of beer, \$40. 9pm to 12am

Fri & Sat  
Guys and Girls. \$10 cover charge gets you your first drink. After that housepours and spirits are \$3 per glass, \$15 per jug. Just 3 bucks a glass!!! 9pm to 3am, Friday, 9pm to 1am Saturday.



# Bowled Over by Women's Bowling Gold Medals

NP women bowlers do us proud by sweeping the medals at this year's IVP Bowling Championship, despite the men's team falling short. SREEDHARAN K.P. reveals more.

Despite fierce competition, an exceptional outing at the lanes snagged Building & Real Estate Management (BEM) student Geraldine Ng and Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) women's bowling team two gold medals at the Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVP) bowling Championship 2003/2004.

The first-year student was in prime form as she toppled 1,646 pins over the course of eight games to emerge victorious in the singles category of the competition held at the Singapore Armed Forces Reservist Association (SAFRA) Yishun on 7 and 8 February.

Geraldine, a National Youth Bowler, continued to have a field day at the tournament organised by the National University of Singapore (NUS), capturing the doubles title with her partner, Joanna Luo, 21.

The duo racked up a total of 1,501 pin falls in four games and Joanna, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student, was glad that "after all the hard work, it paid off".

Geraldine, however, was brimming with confidence even before the tournament began. "We expected to get first," said the 18-year-old.

She garnered a score of 248 as early as game two of the doubles category with eight strikes and three spares.



**BOWLING FOR NP:** The ladies bowling team do NP and themselves proud. From Left: Geraldine Ng, Jo Ann Bok, Merliza Lim and Joanna Luo. (Picture: Sreedharan KP)

Geraldine added to her medal haul by clinching third place in the women's quartet category with a score of 2,800 pin falls with the first place clinched by NUS with 2,952 pin falls.

Her other team mates included first-year student, Merliza Lim, 18, also from ACC, and Jo Ann Bok, 22, a final-year Business Studies (BS)

student.

The NP men's team did not fare as well, managing a third-place finish in the quartet category, their only medal for the day.

The men bowled over a total of 3,076 pins with the highest average pin fall in the four games coming from Gerald Ho, 21, a final-year

Electrical Engineering (EE) student, with a score of 208.5.

Coach Richard Koh said he was pleased with the NP bowlers' accomplishments overall, because he had set targets for top three finishes in each of the categories.

This is despite the men falling short in the singles and doubles categories with team captain Ivan Koh only managing 14<sup>th</sup> place in the singles with a total of 772 pin falls based on a total of four games.

The 19-year-old second-year Logistics Engineering & Management (LEM) student did not fare any better in the doubles category alongside his partner, Jonathan Goh, 18, a first-year Quality Management & Engineering (QME) student, falling short of the mark despite falling a total of 1,503 pins.

Mr Koh blamed the men's failure to emulate their female counterparts' success on fierce competition and bad fortune.

When asked about his opinions on NP's overall performance, Ivan said that the "whole NP team did their best ... [and] all know that they can do better".

For their efforts, the gold medal-winning ladies will be awarded Full Colours Awards by the school, the highest honours bestowed upon student athletes at the IVP level. ■

## Women's Soccer Win Silver

BY JACK SAI  
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It was an emphatic display of teamwork and unrelenting fighting spirit as Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) defeated Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) 3-1 on 12 February to clinch second place in the Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic Women's Soccer Tournament.

The girls could not have been more jubilant as this is the first time NP's women's soccer team has emerged second in the annual tournament. NP was ensured of at least a third-place finish before kick-off, but they showed no signs of settling for that as the game began on NP's main field.

"I told them this is our last game, so we don't have to conserve our energy anymore. It's either we lose and get third, or win and get second, so we had to go all out," said team-captain Siti Hashidawati, better known as Ash, 23, a final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student.

Both schools had fair shots on goal but in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute, midfielder Nithya Krishnan, 21, a second-year Building & Real Estate Management (BEM) student, unleashed a cheeky lob from just outside the penalty box. NYP's goalkeeper had to be at full stretch to stop the ball, but she could only watch helplessly as it bobbed out of her hands and into the goal.

NP seemed to grow stronger with each minute as they patiently strung passes together and took shots whenever there were openings but the opponents forced NP to hang on to the one goal lead into halftime.

All hopes of an early equaliser for NYP were wiped out when Ash's diving header, following a corner kick in the first minute of the second half, added to NP's lead.

The visitors restarted the game, looking determined to stage a comeback as time was still on their side.

However, as the evening wore on, the game seemed to slip out of NYP's hands. In the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute, a free kick from 25 metres out was parried away by NYP's goalkeeper, only to fall

at NP's Lee Joo Fee's feet. The first-year BEM student, 18, made no mistake in slotting it home.

3-0 down and with 18 minutes to go, NYP decided to use up all five of their substitutions and the tactical ploy paid off with a consolation goal five minutes from time.

Said NYP's team manager, Mr Idris Sayuti, 44, "We played well, attacking from the start. But in the end I guess NP won because they had a great striker in Melissa who created chances and their captain was very instrumental too."

NP coach Mr Tan Yong Quee proclaimed after the match, "From the beginning of the tournament until now they really gave their best to fight for every ball. Since the tournament started I told them [to] never ever give up, and I'm very happy for them."

In their very first game, NP got their revenge on Nanyang Technological University, who beat them 10-0 last year, winning the match through a solitary goal.

NP was trounced 6-1 in their second match by the eventual champions from the combined Institutes of Technical Education (ITE) team.

However, that defeat did not deter them from fighting for a top three finish.

A hat-trick by Melissa Ye Hui Ting, 19, final-year Early Childhood Education (ECH) student, in the match against National University of Singapore (NUS), lifted NP to a 3-2 victory.

The 19-year-old had suffered an injury on her right ankle even before the tournament started, but carried on playing because of the team's lack of out-and-out strikers.

Said Melissa, top scorer for NP with five goals in four matches, "That game against NUS was the most memorable, because after beating them, we knew we had a realistic chance of getting second."

According to Ash, a national player and recipient of Ngee Ann's Most Valuable Player Award for the tournament, she "wasn't too hopeful yet did not want to give up on the possibilities of getting into the top three", but the dedication and spirit of the players and the coach from the start gave her every reason to believe that the team could excel. ■

## 4 Cheers for Magnum Force

BY SREEDHARAN K.P.  
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) high-flying Magnum Force made it four out of four, once again winning the fourth annual national cheerleading competition, Cheerobics 2004.

Magnum Force came first in the Open category, trouncing competition from Temasek Polytechnic's TP Blazers, NTU Aces, National Junior College (NJC) and Azure Storm, comprising of students and working professionals.

The other categories involved contestants from primary and secondary school levels.

Competition in this year's event, held at Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza and attended by an eager crowd numbering hundreds on 7 March, was intense, with runners-up NTU Aces being almost faultless in the finals.

Organiser Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Cultural Activities Club (CAC) said they invited a panel of Japanese, Thai and local judges with a wealth of cheerleading and judging experience to judge the teams.

Other criteria, such as their technique, choreography and crowd appeal also mattered. Magnum Force President, Audrey Chen, 19, a second-year Business Studies (BS) student revealed that "[Magnum Force] were quite scared of the competition because the teams are all very competitive, the standards are going higher".

Magnum Force's coach Lenny Foo believes that their "doing stunts of greater difficulty and technique" pulled them through.

Those very stunts proved to be a double-edged sword, almost costing Magnum Force to slip up.

During the final in a stunt called split

mount, where a female team member performs a side split and bridges the shoulders of teammates facing each other about a metre apart, the girl who did the split fell off probably because one of the two supporting members was recovering from an elbow injury.

Sabrina Mustopo, 19, a third-year Biotechnology (BIO) student who was part of the triumphant Magnum Force team, responded with a resounding "it gets better each time", on the sweetness of successfully defending their title three consecutive times.

*[Magnum Force feels] very honoured and we are very proud to win the championship again [and]... we all put in so much effort.*

- Audrey Chen, 19,  
Magnum Force President

Audrey echoed Sabrina's sentiments saying "Magnum Force feels very honoured and we are very proud to win the championship again... [and we all put in so much effort.]"

Decked in oriental-inspired attire, Magnum Force managed to bring home

awards for 'The Best Dressed Team' (their second consecutive win) and new award 'The Best Spirit' in their category as well.

The voting for 'The Best Dressed Team' was done by 100 members of the public, who each pasted a sticker on the cardboard that was held by a representative of each team on stage.

Magnum Force took home \$1,000 in cash, as well as prizes from product sponsors like Converse and Meiji, and a year's contract with Qoo, which is a subsidiary of the Coca-Cola Company.

Magnum Force will represent Qoo as cheerleaders in their promotions.

At press time Lenny confirmed that Magnum Force was still discussing the contract offer to represent the popular beverage as cheerleaders.

He added that future plans for Magnum Force include giving them "more exposure... [through] overseas training" so as learn more about cheerleading in other countries. ■



# IVP 2004: The Final Round-up in NP

The second part of the Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic Games was held throughout this semester. Ngee Ann Polytechnic's sports teams unfortunately were unable to better their performances from last season with the exception of the men's hockey team. JACK SAI dives into the thick of the action to bring you the highs and lows of the Games.

## THE LINE-UP:

Institute of Technical Education	ITE
Nanyang Polytechnic	NYP
Nanyang Technological University	NTU
Ngee Ann Polytechnic	NP
Republic Polytechnic	RP
Singapore Polytechnic	SP
Singapore Management University	SMU
National University of Singapore	NUS
Temasek Polytechnic	TP



Men's Hockey  
5 Feb - 16 Feb

Last year : 6th of 6  
This year : 3rd of 6

After suffering crushing defeats to NUS and ITE by 4-0 and 4-1 scorelines respectively, the men showed tenacity and maturity, however, to overcome NTU 1-0 in a hard-fought match. In the last match, NP fought back from a goal down to beat NYP in a 4-2 thriller.

"Our result is not bad considering last year we lost every game because many in the team did not really know how to play hockey yet, but this year they're better trained."

Daren Ng Kok Chin, 22, Team Captain,  
final-year Chemical Engineering (CE)



Sepak Takraw  
16 Feb - 5 Mar

Last year : 4th of 6  
This year : 6th of 6

Things can only get better as NP lost all of their games. It was a case of bad luck and bad timing for the team.

"The tournament was brought forward by about half a month this year, so we had a very limited time to train for it."

Mohd. Fairuz Bin Mohdrafit, 22,  
Team Captain, final-year Mechanical  
Engineering (ME)



Tae Kwon do  
7 Feb - 8 Feb

Last year : 7th of 8  
This year : 7th of 8

A change in ruling allowed only senior belts - blue, red and black - to take part in sparring events, resulting in NP Tae Kwon do being limited to a few events due to a shortage of senior belts in the team. NP only bagged 6 medals: four bronzes, one silver and one gold.

"We are revamping our training programme and getting our members to be more aggressive when training for sparring. We have many members with junior belts, give us one or two more years and we should be able to do well."

Ng Yi Siang, Club President, 19, final-year  
Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE)



Touch Rugby  
4 Feb - 23 Feb

Last year : 6th of 7  
This year : 7th of 8

Inexperience saw the girls suffer six consecutive defeats, but they bounced back in the last game and beat ITE to avoid finishing in last place.

"85 percent of the team are totally new to the team but I'm optimistic about the future, because I can see raw talent in some of them and they are enthusiastic about the sport."

Bernard Tan Yong Seng, 26, Coach  
and Industrial Training Officer



Men's Basketball  
26 Jan - 10 Feb

Last year : 2nd of 7  
This year : 3rd of 8

NP beat SMU and RP in their first two matches but was beaten by NUS in the group match. This set them up to meet eventual champions NTU, to whom they lost narrowly. NP outclassed ITE and claimed third place in the playoffs for the third and fourth placings.

"Our performance this year [is] not very good, our target was to maintain second [place], but there were some injuries in our team, which weakened us."

Pang Jin Hang, Team Captain, 25,  
final-year Electrical Engineering (EE)

## Polytechnics Vs Universities: Uneven Playing Field?

BY JACK SAI  
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Though Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) athletes have done her proud on occasions in the Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVP) games, like Geraldine Ng's bowling medal haul and the women's soccer team finishing first runner-up for the very first time in their history, consistency has been a thorny issue.

Finishing as champions in the long-standing IVP games has been a difficult proposition for just about any of the polytechnics' athletes over the years, with Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and National University of Singapore (NUS) dominating in almost every IVP sport they have competed in. Tribune discovers the factors behind the tepid performances as issues facing polytechnics.

### Coaches

The unavailability of coaches plagues some teams in NP. As a result, Student Development Officers (SDO) from the Student Development and Alumni Relations Office (SDAR) have had to take on coaching roles on top of conducting Sports And Wellness classes and NAPFA tests. One example is the Touch Rugby team whose coach left due to personal reasons and had to be replaced by an Industrial Training Officer from the SDAR a month before the IVP.

"Having a coach allows staff to attend to

other matters and helps motivate and prepare the team to perform better. If engaged on a long-term basis, there would be a consistency in a team's performance," said Mr Yum Shoen Keng, 44, Senior Assistant Director for Sports in NTU and former Senior SDO in NP.

### Training

A common complaint among students and coaching staff is insufficient training time.

Mr Vincent Koh, 38, coach of both NUS women's and NP men's basketball team said that the team only starts training three months before the IVP having two sessions a week "adding up to only about 24 sessions in total".

Furthermore, NP second-year students who need to attend Industrial Training Programme (ITP) during the holidays tend to miss out on trainings, hence disrupting the progress of the team.

Mr Koh added that while the university students have about the same number of training sessions as their polytechnic counterparts, the rift between universities and polytechnics is due to another key factor: Experience.

### Experience is Paramount

University students have the advantage of going through the A Division sports tournaments for students aged 17 to 19 during their junior college, or Pre-University centre years before they progress to the IVP level.

On the other hand, many polytechnic students have to leapfrog to this from the B Division or secondary three and four level. This means less playing experience for the polytechnic students and that is where they stand to lose out.

Mr Koh added that in his 20 years of coaching, it was also proven that men who had completed their National Service were stronger mentally and physically.

### Mentality Counts Even More

"What I see is that polytechnics' lack of experience is often compensated with diligence and hard work. In sports, training harder than the rest will always bring positive results," said Ms Royce Yap, 33, Assistant Manager for Sports in NTU, highlighting the importance of sheer industry to win.

NP's Touch Rugby Coach Mr Bernard Tan Yong Seng, 26, felt that the polytechnic students' "mindsets are their biggest obstacle" and they have to overcome this psychological barrier when competing against teams from NTU and NUS.

He added, "If you go into the game with the mentality that the other teams are much stronger than you, it's as good as losing... Cannot give the universities too much respect, you have to go into the game and earn the opponents' respect as well."

### Measures to improve

To increase students' awareness on rewards for excelling in sports, Mr Tan said the SDAR is collaborating with the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) to produce a video that showcases the awards one can win by representing the school successfully. The video will be shown to the Freshmen Intake of July 2004 during their orientation.

On top of that, SDAR is also considering introducing Sports Psychology through the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) to teach

students how to cope with high-pressure situations during competitive sports.

Many athletes suggested a larger subsidy on the cost of jerseys. NP basketball team captain and final-year Electrical Engineering (EE) student Pang Jin Huang, 25, said, "The school subsidies only \$18 for the whole set of jerseys. But even a very cheap set of jerseys costs \$25, so we still have to pay for the rest. Many of us feel the pinch of having to pay even when playing for our school."

In response, Mr Tan said that due to SDAR budget constraints, full sponsorship of jerseys has to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### The Future Is Bright

Though the odds have always seemed stacked against polytechnics in the IVP, there is hope.

This season, Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) finally emerged champions in the men's table tennis and women's volleyball competitions. In Tae Kwon do, the tradition of NUS finishing second was upstaged as Singapore and Nanyang Polytechnics finished second and third this year, relegating NUS to fourth.

Becoming champions is not an impossible task as demonstrated by NP's women's bowling team who clinched first place in this year's IVP.

Geraldine Ng, 18, first-year Building & Real Estate Management student and women's singles bowling champion said: "It's not the quantity of knowledge that matters but the quality of your ability," suggesting that university students' added experience should not necessarily defeat the talent that polytechnic students might possess. ■