

blaze

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Thank you, Mun Mun!

Welcome aboard

Readers' trusted brand two years running

Award-winning research work

Breakthrough in research

Realising a childhood dream



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Chiah Mun Mun (left), Sunway University Student Council 2011 President receiving a memento from Lee Siok Ping, Director of Student's Services, Sunway Education Group

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Professor Robert Bignall (seated second from left) with the Sunway University Student Council 2012

Thank you, Mun Mun!

On 25 April 2011, Chiah Mun Mun became the first president of the Sunway University Student Council. Prior to this there was the Sunway University College Student Council in 2010.

It wasn't easy, as Mun Mun will quickly testify, but after handling the mantle to her successor, Jordan Cheo, the 22-year-old lass from Subang Jaya said it was a wholesome experience. "I have learnt so much from serving my one-year term as President of the Student Council" she said.

Mun Mun's biggest challenge was how to mobilise the entire student population to be involved in wholesome activities. Throughout the entire period, she and her team had worked hard to organise one event after another. Experience has taught her that both timing and nature of event played an important role in attracting the crowd.

"Concerts, including cultural nights, are a crowd pullers," she said. "We also have to look at the examination periods and the semester breaks, where the events are usually poorly attended. Talks and forums are the least attractive to young people".

Some of the best events were suggested by the students themselves. "For example, when someone suggested a Futsal tournament, we found that the response was excellent!" she said. "Hardly any student has suggested organising a seminar."

Working with a pool of student volunteers was the best way to go. "We communicate through emails and using Facebook with our fellow students," she said.

For the business management undergraduate, who is graduating in December 2012, she knew her decision to run for Student Council President came with the numerous challenges she had to face both in her studies and as a student. "I must say that I was prepared for the challenges," she said. "As a strong and cohesive Student Council of Sunway University, we managed to overcome all the challenges that we faced."

Since 2011, the Student Council was restructured by Immediate Past Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Bignall to reflect the current status of Sunway as a university. "The Student Council represents the interests and welfare of the students and helps to promote and organise extracurricular student activities," he explained. "They are office bearers who are elected into the position by fellow students."

Elections

When there was a call for nomination, Mun Mun, who had previously been active in Leo Club at school, said she had no hesitation nominating herself for President. Seconded by her friend, she submitted in her nomination form. "You can choose to run either as an individual or a party," she said, "but I decided to run as an individual candidate."

The outspoken lass, formerly from SMK Subang Jaya, said she had always been active in school. As early as Form Three, she had started getting interested in extra-curricular activities, including involving herself in international forums. "When I finished my SPM, I joined Sunway College and did my AUSMAT," she said. "I realised something was missing – the extracurricular activities at school!"

That was when she saw a poster placed by the Student Services calling for nominations. "I thought to myself, 'Why not?' So, I decided to go for the post of president," she said. She had to face four other stronger opponents, but it was quite a landslide victory for her. The results showed that she had the mandate from fellow students, who wanted a vocal representative to speak up on their behalf.

Because Mun Mun had campaigned as an individual, she had to work with an elected committee, whose nine other members also ran as individuals for various other posts. Besides the Student Council members, there are also extended members and volunteers. "We learnt what it was to work with people who were not from the same camp," she said. "Overall, it was fun, and the experience of being president, – after one entire year – is what I would describe as enriching!"

Major contribution

Mun Mun's major focus was on improving student welfare. "We had a lot of complaints from fellow students," she said. "I, too, faced problems with some of the facilities. For example, at the foyer, the power plugs did not work or the library sometimes too noisy," she said.

Based on a survey that was carried out with about 800 students, we realised that the major issues faced by students were either related to security around neighbouring areas, the hostel facilities, the food at the cafeteria or the lack of study places.

Those were some of the issues she found to be challenging. "We had meetings with various departments. For the first time, we took on the role as adults to solve our problems, instead of just whining away," she said. "We told the IT Department that the Internet speed was too slow, and we could not even go on YouTube." Thanks to Mun Mun and the Student Council, these issues have all been resolved.

The Student Council did not merely become a postman for the complaints to be delivered to the various departments. "Instead, we suggested ways to improve," she said. "The Heads of Department perceived us as solution providers, because we were open to discussions. Gradually, one issue after another was solved. For example, now we have upgraded our Internet connection, and the library has started opening their study rooms for students."

The security situation has also improved. "Previously, the canopy walk closed at 12 midnight," she said. "Now, at least announcements are made 15 minutes before the canopy walk is closed so that students are allowed time to pack their work to leave the place before midnight. In fact, we discourage students from hanging around on campus after 12 midnight. They should be home, either sleeping or doing their assignments."

While solving problems gave her a sense of satisfaction, there are still some unsolved issues such as parking and lack of variety of food at the cafeteria, which she has come to accept as "inevitable" concerns that all students will have to live with. "Perhaps, someday, another Student Council can come out with new ideas which are pragmatic and innovative," she said. "For example, whoever thought of building a canopy walk to Sunway Pyramid is definitely very brilliant. It creates a win-win situation for both the students and the shopping mall as a whole."



Chiah Mun Mun (right) outgoing President of the Sunway University Student Council 2011 with the new President, Jordan Cheo



Mun Mun receives a souvenir from Professor Bignall for serving as President

Major events

Looking back, Mun Mun thinks that the Cultural Night, which was attended by about 800 students including visiting students from Lancaster University, was among the most successful events that the Student Council was responsible for. "We collaborated with the International Student Ambassadors and organised a night full of performances, depicting a wide array of cultural dances," she said. "The Multi-Purpose Hall was so filled with colours on the night of September 23 last year. I will never forget this event," she said.

In June last year, the Student Council also celebrated World Environment Day. Instead of being a one-day event, they decided that, for something as important as the environment, public education takes time to settle into the grey matter. "So we decided to celebrate World Environment Day throughout the entire month of June, where we had a series of mini projects to raise awareness about climate change and the importance of protecting the environment."

One of the innovative, but somewhat "crazy" ideas which the Student Council implemented was the Flash Mob at Energy Hub. "Now, as I think back, although it was a bit silly, but we managed to get a lot of attention. When the music started playing, we suddenly went dancing away. During this one event, we managed to sell a lot of potted plants, and in just two days, the stock was gone."

Besides the usual fundraising projects, the Student Council also saw Road Survival Campaign as an important aspect of educating the young people. "We are on the road most of the time," quipped Mun Mun. "Therefore, we invited Captain K. Balasupramaniam, Malaysian Safety Activist Founder, Founder and President of Road Safety Marshall Club and Director of Training for Code Red Survival Academy to give talks about road survival. He showed gory pictures of real accidents and the victims. It was an effective way to remind us that we should not be driving dangerously on Malaysian roads. Captain Bala also gave advice on what to do in the event of an accident. A life hammer is what you need to carry in a car. It is useful during an accident," she said. "I now have one in my car."

Senate Meetings

Besides organising events, the president of the Student Council is also invited to attend the Academic Senate Meetings, which are conducted and chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, five times a year. She represents the student body, but only as an observer to understand how the academic curriculum is being developed to meet international standards.

The meetings mainly focused on the quality control of programmes. "It was a platform for individual faculties and academic departments to raise their concerns. There were discussions about academic development, licenses and even the SETARA ranking system which was introduced in 2010," said Mun Mun.

Mun Mun attended all five meetings throughout her term. "In every Senate meeting, there was always something interesting to learn, for example, how the academics decide on the academic matters of the University," she added.

In Retrospect

If given a chance to unwind the clock, how would she do things differently?

"Well," she smiled. "I would continue with what I started, but I would try to get more students involved in the Student Council activities. There is so much to it in your student life than just attending lectures."

It is good that she managed to raise quite a fair bit of awareness about Student Council over one year. A number of students have started asking her about her role as President of the Student Council. "I would say if I were still holding the position, I would need to keep pushing for greater awareness. Hopefully we would have an active Student Council like the one at Lancaster University."

During her term as President, Mun Mun had the opportunity to visit the Lancaster University Student Union (LUSU). "We may not be like them, but some day, I hope we will. They are powerful, they even own and operate nine eatery places," she said.

Two persons whom Mun Mun would never forget are the people who had helped her a lot as President of the Student Council. "First, it is the Immediate Past Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bignall. And the second person is Mrs Lim Tiew Ming who assisted Prof Bignall," said Mun Mun.



Thank you to the Sunway University Student Council 2011 for a job well done

The Sunway University Student Council explained

An interview with the second Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University, Professor Robert J. Bignall

Q: As the Vice-Chancellor who wrote the constitution of the university and put together the University Senate, how do you see the role of the Student Council within this larger framework?

A: The Constitution of the University establishes a Students' Association and an elected Student Council. Every full-time student is automatically a member of the Students' Association and has the right to stand for election and to vote for and elect the members of the Student Council. The Student Council represents the interests and welfare of the students and helps to promote and organise extracurricular student activities. The Student Council also nominates one of their member's to serve on the Senate. Traditionally it is the President of the Student Council who fulfils this role. There is also an elected postgraduate student on the Senate.

Q: What sort of empowerment have they been given? Can you elaborate on how far they can go when it comes to challenging the university's authority over the students? What are the do's and don'ts? How do you envisage the Student Council to behave when they are given so much power? Or are they restricted in many ways on what they can or cannot do?

A: The Students' Association has a Constitution that was developed in consultation with the Student Council and which has been formally adopted by them. This Constitution defines the authority and powers of the Students' Association and also sets out the powers and responsibilities of the Student Council. For example, the Student Council is responsible for managing, expending and investing the funds of the Students' Association and is empowered to acquire and dispose of property and employ staff. They also oversee and support the various student clubs and societies.

The students of the University are, of course, subject to various regulations, including our academic regulations, which are published in our student handbooks. We have made available avenues for the students to question or seek to change such regulations, should they so wish. For example, our student regulations are authorized and approved by the Senate, on which the students have representation. In addition, the Student Council consults from time to time with the Vice-Chancellor and we have recently established a Student Welfare committee, which provides a forum for students to meet with the Vice-Chancellor and other senior officers of the University, including the Director of University Services, the Director of Student Services, the Director of the International Office. Students also sit on a number of other official University committees, such as the Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

As one might expect, Sunway University students take their responsibilities seriously and appreciate the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the University. We regard Sunway University as a community that includes both staff and students as its members. Unlike most other private higher education institutions in Malaysia, Sunway University is non-profit and wishes to contribute back to society. Our students have the opportunity to participate in this mission as members of the Sunway University community.

Q: What does the university hope to achieve by having a strong Student Council? How can a strong Student Council help to develop the young people at Sunway?

A: We recognize that many of our students will become future leaders in their professions or in society, so it is entirely appropriate that they have the opportunity to take part in and contribute to University decision-making.

Of course, in doing so, they gain valuable experience, skills and confidence that will serve them well in their future careers. So I would strongly encourage all of our students to get involved in the life of the University, to join and contribute to some of our many different student clubs and societies, to stand for the Student Council and vote in its elections.

Q: Is this in line with the UCCA? Is this in line with other public and private universities such as Lancaster University?

A: The University is bound by Malaysian law and our Constitution and regulations respect the provisions of the UCCA and the Private Higher Education Institutions Act. Within the limits of such laws, our approach to student leadership and student freedom and responsibility is similar to that found in leading universities in developed economies around the world.

Q: How do you hope to see the Student Council contributing towards the development of the university and the welfare of its students in years to come?

A: I was very pleased with the strong contribution made by our very first Student Council in 2011. Their many activities included a safety awareness campaign, a campaign that tackled environmental issues and they also designed and conducted a comprehensive student satisfaction survey. They were very active and set a good example for future student leaders to follow and build upon. Confident and respected student leaders and a strong and effective Student Council have an essential role to play in our journey towards becoming a world class university.

Welcome aboard

Oxford-trained scientist Professor Graeme Wilkinson has been appointed as Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University after a worldwide search for a successor to Professor Robert Bignall.

Professor Wilkinson is responsible for providing strategic direction and leadership for the University, representing it both at home and abroad. With this appointment, Sunway University is the only Malaysian university with an international academic as its Vice-Chancellor.

His acceptance has brought cheers to the entire organisation, including the Chancellor, Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah, AO, himself. "I am extremely happy to have such an esteemed individual come on board as Vice-Chancellor here at Sunway University," He added, "On behalf of all the staff and students of Sunway University, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Professor Wilkinson as he joins the Sunway family. I look forward to working closely with him in bringing Sunway University to greater heights."

As he begins a new chapter in an already esteemed career, Professor Wilkinson is excited to play a part in shaping the growth of Sunway University. "I am both proud and honoured to be given the opportunity to play such a pivotal role, leading Sunway University and building upon the outstanding work that has been carried out by my predecessor as well as the highly dedicated staff here. I will be looking to grow this University to become a globally recognised academic institution known for grooming students who think to make a difference."

Professor Wilkinson brings with him a broad experience, most recently holding the position of Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Glyndŵr University, one of the newest universities in the UK. Born in England, he graduated with

Bachelor of Science First-Class Honours in physics from Imperial College, London in 1976. He then moved to Wolfson College at Oxford University, where he obtained his doctorate in Atmospheric Physics in 1977.

After periods of lecturing in UK universities, including University College London, Wilkinson moved to the Joint Research Centre of the European Union in Ispra, Italy in 1988, where he led a team of scientists to monitor environmental problems using space satellites.

Upon returning to England, he served as Head of the School of Computing and Information Systems at Kingston University (1997-2002) and Dean of the Faculty of Technology and Graduate School at the University of Lincoln (2002-2007).

"I am both proud and honoured to be given an appointment to lead Sunway University, an institution of higher learning owned and governed by the not-for-profit Jeffrey Cheah Foundation," Wilkinson said. "I will devote myself to taking Sunway University forward as a globally recognised vibrant institution."

For his outstanding work, he was awarded the Johnson Memorial Prize on remote sensing.





Elizabeth Lee (left) receiving the award from YB Dato' Sri Mustapa bin Mohamed

Readers' trusted brand two years running

There was a sudden surge of excitement in the air the moment the announcement was made at the awards dinner.

In accepting the Reader's Digest Trusted Brand 2012 Gold Award, Lee, who is Senior Executive Director, Sunway Education Group said the award was timely as this year the Sunway Education Group celebrates its 25th Anniversary. "It is indeed extremely meaningful," she said, "to receive this significant award which reaffirms our commitment to providing quality education to our students and to shaping the education landscape in Malaysia."

Receiving it for the second time in a row is also a reaffirmation of the readers' choice of Sunway being the best in the Malaysian Private University category.

Professor Robert Bignall, immediate past Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University, who also attended the ceremony said that over the years, Sunway University had grown from being just an educational institution to one that also brings life experiences to thousands of graduates. "At Sunway University, success is measured not just by the number of graduates that it has produced but also by the way its graduates think and go on to make a difference in our country and the world," he said.

The Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia, Y.B Dato' Sri Mustapa bin Mohamed presented the award to Sunway University, witnessed by Walter Beyleveldt, Managing Director, Asia Pacific Reader's Digest.

**2012 WINNERS OF THE READER'S DIGEST
TRUSTED BRAND AWARD IN ASIA**

THE ULTIMATE SEAL OF CONSUMER APPROVAL



New era in education and democracy

Young people are the future leaders of this country.

If the future belongs to them, they should be interested in the politics of the country and play a role in the development of the nation, instead of living in a sheltered environment.

However, there are two schools of thought. On one hand, students should focus on their studies instead of getting distracted with politics; on the other hand, they should not be muzzled to the point that they are not allowed to speak up their minds and develop opinions.

After speaking to the young people about their views on Malaysian politics, **blaze** discovered that while young people do want to play a role in the shaping the nation but need more democratic space to voice their concern for the country's policies which affect them.

Looking for the fine balance is not easy, but Sunway University persevered to look for an answer to the many questions on the minds on the young people. It hosted a dialogue session for students, titled 'Education and Democracy: Students' Voice, Power and Responsibility'. Two guest speakers were invited, and they offered their views. They were the Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Y.B. Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah and the Founding President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS), Y.M. Tunku Abidin Muhriz. IDEAS is an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting market-based solutions to public policy challenges. The objective of the non-partisan dialogue session was to encourage an open exchange of ideas on democracy among students, the future contributing citizens of Malaysia.



Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah meeting members of the Sunway University Student Council

Amendments to UCCA

According to Deputy Higher Education Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, since Section 15 (of the Universities and University Colleges Act) has been amended, students are now allowed to join political parties and hold positions.

"However," he stressed, "political party activities are not allowed on campus. This is to maintain neutrality of the universities while, but I must emphasize that at the same time, we cannot restrict students from voicing opinions and views."

Chairman of the Centre for Public Policy Studies (CPPS) and Pro-Chancellor of Sunway University Y.Bhg Tan Sri Dato' (Dr) Ramon Navaratnam was the moderator for the session. The event was attended by the Sunway University Student Council, which represents the student body and at least 200 students from Sunway and other private and public universities.

"Democracy today is influenced by what I call the second circle of democracy which is made up of thousands of groups and networks on the internet," added Dato' Saifuddin. "There is a new social consciousness in this circle. While universities must safeguard their neutrality, they should be tactful in allowing rather than restricting students to voice their thoughts and opinions."

Echoing the Deputy Minister's stance on the importance of education in promoting democracy, Tunku Abidin suggested that students should be encouraged to think beyond grades and securing a job after graduation.

"Promoting citizenship and encouraging students to be aware and concerned about what is going on around them, is important in nurturing independent sovereign individuals who are able to operate in a democratic society," he said. "Students should also be aware of their own rights and responsibilities. They have a patriotic duty to take an interest in their surroundings and improving the democratic nature of their country."

From the university's perspective, Senior Executive Director of Sunway Education Group, Elizabeth Lee said that the dialogue has helped the university to reacquaint with, and understand the true meaning of democracy. "This will develop students who will be more analytical, innovative and responsible in exercising their civil society rights in contemporary Malaysian society," she said.

The dialogue session was followed by a networking session for the students, hosted by Y.Bhg. Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO, Founder and Chancellor of Sunway University and Chairman of the Sunway Group. The event was held in conjunction with Sunway Education Group's 25th Anniversary, celebrating 25 years of trailblazing education.



The intellectually stimulating dialogue session.
Left to right, Tunku Abidin Muhriz, Tan Sri Dato' (Dr.) Ramon Navaratnam and Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah



Tunku Abidin speaking to students at the dialogue

Student Feedback

According to 22-year-old Kishenjeet Dhillon, who hails from Subang Jaya, although he has not registered himself yet as a voter, he believes it is important for young people to be interested in the politics of the day. "As young people, we have to take part in the democratic process in this country," he said. "This is our duty as citizens, to protect the civic rights of our fellow citizens."

The Bachelor of Accounting & Finance Final Year student is personally thinking of entering politics at some stage of his life. "I find politics is interesting," he quipped. "If I enter into politics, I will go for equal rights and opportunities for all people. It's also in my plan to look after the welfare of the underprivileged."

However, what is deterring him currently is the way how the local politics have been hyped up. "There are a lot of issues which are being politicised," he said. "It can only lead to a lot of politicking – in fact, dirty politics – which is not of any use to the future of this country." Instead, Kishenjeet argued that politicians should focus on the pertinent issues that affect the people.

Kishenjeet said that if given a situation where he has to manage the water issue in Selangor, his approach would be different. "I would try to engage all stakeholders and try to come to a consensus, across political divide, for the good of the people. We cannot mix politics with the essential issues in life. The first thing I would do is to engage an independent body from overseas to assess the situation of water in Selangor to find out the true story," he said.

It may be easier said than done, but Kishenjeet quipped: "It takes political will. It requires integrity on all parties. There are too many vested interests

involved. That's why I would place a lot of emphasis in the conclusion drawn by the independent consultant."

Meanwhile, his fellow student, Shahira Najia, 26, also from Subang Jaya said that if she became the prime minister of Malaysia, she would turn the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency (MACC) to an independent body, with full power to investigate. "It will be similar to the ICAC in Hong Kong," she promises. "This is because cronyism is a complicated situation. As much as political parties try to destroy cronyism, it is something that is not easy to curb, unless you have an effective anti-corruption agency. The MACC will have an important role in my government."

A lot of the country's resources have been misappropriated, which could have been used for better projects to benefit the people. "I believe if you trust the young people, we will be able to do a better job that what it is currently," she said. Therefore, her choice when it comes to the next General Election is: "I would vote for the candidate who includes his or her manifesto to drum up the anti-corruption campaign. In my own constituency, I would go to the extent of even helping the local candidate who believes in anti-corruption. Ultimately, it is the local leader that you vote for who will affect the well-being of the community."

The Bachelor of Business Management final year student bemoans that, what is currently lacking in the young people, is the political awareness. "Some are emotionally driven," she said. "What I would like to see is for politics to be more structured, with less 'drama' and the people concerned are more focused on the bigger issues such as the environment and how that is affecting our lifestyles. Some issues are in fact too small to be politicised."



Kishenjeet

"As young people, we have to take part in the democratic process in this country."

"The MACC has an important role to play"



Shahira



Sunway University Student Council members with the banner

A brand new structure that supports academic excellence

Immediate Past Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Bignall explains about the new university structure.

In December 2010 Dato' Seri Mohd Khaled Nordin, Minister of Higher Education, Malaysia, issued an invitation for Sunway University College to establish a University. Sunway University was officially registered on January 31, 2011. At the same time, Sunway University College was restructured into two institutions, namely Sunway College and Sunway University.

The College took charge of the existing franchised, twinning and Sunway-TES programmes, while Sunway University maintained responsibility for the "home grown" programmes; that is, the diplomas and degrees that Sunway University College had developed itself, including its dual degrees with Lancaster University. Since Sunway was phasing out the twinning arrangement that had been in place with Western Michigan University, the University also took academic responsibility for the American Degree Transfer Program (ADTP).

So the new Sunway University inherited most of the University level programmes from the former Sunway University College. Sunway University also inherited the School-based structure that was in place in the University College.

However, it was clear that the organisation into five schools plus the ADTP had several limitations and shortcomings, including the duplication of certain academic disciplines and teaching staff across the different schools and programmes. Moreover, some of the schools were too small, resulting in inefficiencies and some unnecessary duplication of administrative staff roles. After some discussion, it was agreed that the existing schools and the ADTP be consolidated into three Faculties.

It was also recognised that the University had to place more emphasis on building up its discipline area expertise, to better support future curriculum development and encourage the emergence of academic and research excellence. As a general principle, the awards offered by a University should be based around discipline areas. For this reason, all three of the Sunway University faculties include discipline-oriented academic departments.

Another very important consideration was the need to strengthen our academic governance. Universities are empowered to offer their own degrees and it is very important that there are appropriate procedures in place to ensure the academic integrity of the degrees that we award, and for ensuring that the curriculum is kept up to date.

Under the new structure, responsibility for overseeing the quality of the University's programmes are concentrated and standardised at the faculty level. All academic programmes are overseen by faculty programme committees and these are mostly chaired by senior academics. The programme committees report to a Faculty Board of Studies, which is responsible for ensuring the academic integrity of all of the degrees and diplomas that the Faculty teaches.



Professor Bignall

Making academic quality assurance a Faculty level responsibility ensures that all programmes will have the necessary senior academic leadership and oversight, and helps to ensure that the necessary academic quality assurance procedures are conducted in a consistent way across the whole Faculty. Another important consideration is that most degree programmes draw on subjects offered by more than one department or centre – and this will increasingly be the case as new programmes come on stream.

The academic governance structure that Sunway University has put in place will be outlined in the article "Sunway University Senate" in the next issue of **blaze**.

The New Faculties

The restructuring of the University has been achieved by consolidating the original five schools plus the ADTP into three faculties, namely the Faculty of Arts, the Sunway University Business School and the Faculty of Science and Technology. All three faculties are headed by Deans.

The Faculty of Arts

The Faculty of Arts under the Acting Dean Dr Lee Ei Leen, is currently made up of three academic departments, together with a Centre for English Language Studies. The three academic departments are:

Department of Communication and Liberal Arts
Department of Art and Design
Department of Performance and Media

Members of the Department of Communication and Liberal Arts include academic staff from the Department of Communication in the former School of Creative Arts and Communication, together with academic staff who have transferred from the American Degree Transfer Program, including staff who teach in areas such as Communication, Sociology and American Studies.

Other departments will be established from time to time to provide additional discipline areas and build towards the establishment of a more comprehensive Faculty of Arts. For example, the development of a new Music degree was recently approved by the Senate.

The Centre for English Language Studies (CELS) was created by transferring to the University the English language components of the Sunway College Language and Compulsory Subjects Centre. The Centre delivers the Intensive English Programme and also teaches compulsory subjects in communication and leadership through its English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) unit.

Sunway University Business School (SUBS)

The Sunway University Business School under the Assoc. Prof Dr Foo Yin Fah, Acting Dean is made up of our original School of Business, in combination with the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Management (SHTLM). The original SHTLM has been redesignated as the Centre for Tourism, Hospitality and Culinary Management (CTHCM).

The CTHCM continues to teach the same diplomas and degrees as the former SHTLM, but now maintains closer academic links with the Business School. In particular, the academic governance of the tourism, hospitality and culinary arts programmes and the academic governance of the business programmes have been merged. They all now come under the responsibility of a single Faculty Board and Teaching and Learning Committee.

Apart from the CTHCM, SUBS currently has five academic departments:

Department of Accounting and Finance
Department of Management and Economics
Department of Business and Marketing
Department of Financial Mathematics and Statistics
Department of Law

New departments will be created as staff and student numbers grow.

Faculty of Science and Technology (FST)

Professor Poh Chit Laa heads the Faculty of Science and Technology. The Faculty has been created by merging the School of Health and Natural Sciences and the School of Computer Technology. It is expected that the combination of discipline areas within this new faculty will encourage the creation of new cross-disciplinary academic programmes. The departments in FST are

Department of Psychology
Department of Nursing
Department of Biological Science
Department of Computer Science and Networked Systems
Department of Information Systems
Department of Physical and Engineering Sciences

The Department of Physical and Engineering Sciences is a newly established academic department that includes academic staff who currently teach into the science and engineering stream of the American Degree Transfer Programme. Other academic departments will be established over time as the Faculty develops and introduces programmes in new discipline areas.

The Faculty Science and Technology has recently set up a Centre for Innovation and Industry Linkages. The Centre's mission includes attracting funding and support from industry and commercialising research discoveries.



The Deans of the Sunway University Faculties, from left, Professor Poh, Assoc. Prof. Dr Foo and Dr. Lee



Spring in winter

The winners for this year's Psychology Students Merit Award was student, Ang Ying Fen (who received Gold), followed by her fellow classmates, Vigneshwari Manivannan, who bagged silver and Farah Sow who took home the Bronze medal.

The Merit Award was first initiated by the Department of Psychology in 2006 under the headship of Associate Professor Dr Teoh Hsien Jin. It was subsequently adopted by the Psychology Club to make this award an annual affair in the Annual Dinner they organise to reward outstanding graduating students, who not only excelled academically but actively participated in extracurricular activities organised by their clubs and other community service projects.

At the annual dinner recently, lecturer and coordinator of the Department of Psychology, Elaine Yong represented the Head of Department, Dr Lin Mei-Hua to give away the awards.

Psychology Club advisor, Woo Pei Jun said, the theme, "Spring in Winter" was picked for this year's annual dinner because it is a good metaphor which represents what psychologists do. "They bring out the 'spring' in their patients, during moments when they are facing emotional difficulties. Spring here represents a new hope and rebirth," she said.

Overall, the Annual Dinner was a successful event for the graduating students of year 2012. "The Psychology Club Committee put in a lot of effort in ensuring the success of this event," said Woo. "I would like to thank all of them for their hard work. Everyone including the lecturers had fun at the dinner."

Students were dressed according to the temperate climate featuring the two seasons, and two titles were given out --- the Spring King title which went to Frederic Lorenzen, while Wan Kai Lee was crowned the Spring Queen.



Spring King Frederic & Queen Kai Lee



Gold Merit Award winner Ang Ying Fen (right) with Elaine Yong



Silver Merit Award winner, Vigneshwari



Farah Sow, Bronze Merit Award recipient



Professor Bignall (left) shakes hands with Professor Chang in a milestone partnership witnessed by Dato' Dr Hou Kok Chung (centre)

Sunway University seals partnership with Feng Chia University

Soon, Sunway University students and staff will be able to study and work in Feng Chia University in Taiwan, thanks to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) inked between the two universities.

According to CEO of the Sunway Group for Education & Healthcare Division, Lee Weng Keng, this reaffirms the Sunway Education Group's commitment in providing world-class education to the students and to enriching the learning experience and shaping a global mindset in its students.

"This MoU is meaningful to the Sunway Education Group, because both universities will now be able to promote exchange of students and academic staff and to cooperate in education, particularly in the areas of research and social services as well as to foster relationships between the two universities," Lee said. "This is the first signing ceremony between Sunway University and a university in Taiwan."

The Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Malaysia, YB Dato' Dr Hou Kok Chung witnessed the signing ceremony between Immediate Past Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Bignall, who represented Sunway University and Professor Pao-Long Chang, President who signed on behalf of his university. Professor Chang was accompanied by the Malaysian alumni of the university.

Lee said he hopes that this agreement will help Malaysia develop human capital with qualifications that would attract Taiwan companies to invest in Malaysia. "In the past," he said, "Sunway University has traditionally been linked with western universities but new trends have emerged due to the emergence of Asian economies, particularly China. Through the years, Sunway University has grown from being just an educational institution to one that also brings a global brand of education to thousands of graduates."

Through its partnerships with Lancaster University and Le Cordon Bleu, Sunway University degrees are benchmarked against these prestigious institutions to world-class standards.

If the current brain drain were to continue, analysts say that Malaysia will be losing its most talented people to countries like Singapore and Australia.

Managing the talent pool

The topic was adequately addressed by CEO of Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad (TalentCorp), Johan Mahmood Merican, who was interviewed by Kishenjeet Dhillon, a Bachelor of Accounting and Finance student, in a talkshow styled interview.

“Addressing the growing need for world-class human capital across Malaysia’s economic landscape requires a strong domestic talent pipeline,” he said. “This is best achieved through closer engagement between our students and leading Malaysian employers, through platforms such as the on-campus career fairs.”



Kishenjeet (left) interviewing Johan Merican



Encik Johan Mahmood Merican

Johan, accompanied by Elizabeth Lee, Sunway Education Group’s Senior Executive Director, officiated the opening of Sunway University’s “Get Hired 2012” event recently. “By engaging leading organisations directly this would help provide young Malaysian talent with a better appreciation of what it takes to succeed in their future careers,” he said.

Get Hired 2012, backed by the Sunway Education Group under the auspices of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation helps to forge connections between top university graduates and employers, which lead to both hiring and employment opportunities. Pre-event activities leading up to the opening, focus on preparing students for working life, including seminars on job interviewing, resume writing, networking and body language.

The highlight of the event was the Career Network Tea at Sunway University. This was an opportunity for students’ resumes to be accepted and on-the-spot interviews held the exceptional hopefuls.

This year, there were 42 companies participating, compared to 38 last year, from the private sector, including BDO Malaysia, Citibank, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG, MAS, OSK, Petronas and PwC. Over 1000 students from 20 higher education institutions attended.

The students also attended CEO Forums, which featured guest speakers such as Mr. Izani Ghani (CFO, Khazanah Nasional), YM Dato’ Ahmad Burhanuddin (CEO, Theme Attractions and Resorts), and Joel Neoh (CEO, Groupon Malaysia). Other activities included the ‘Lunchtime Quickies’ and ‘Teh Tarik Sessions’ series of talks by local business leaders.

Get Hired 2012 was jointly hosted by Sunway University and TalentCorp, which was established under the purview of the Prime Minister’s Department to spearhead Malaysia’s talent development initiative in line with the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP). Sunway University was the only private higher institution in Malaysia which was working with Talentcorp at that time to educate students on career paths and to connect them with industry.

The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation is a special purpose, not-for-profit vehicle dedicated to giving to society through education. The Foundation, together with its predecessor, Sunway Education Trust Fund have awarded over RM80 million in scholarships and awards.



Inaugural cohort

Sunway University's first cohort of Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Communication is ready for challenges.

Mufuka Theresa Samukonga of Zambia had no qualms about being in the first cohort of students to join Sunway University's BA (Honours) in Communication.

The First Year international student said the course has helped her to improve herself so much, that she is now enjoying the course. "It challenges me to see the world in ways I never could have imagined, I like the way I can apply what I have learnt—by merely watching TV, reading a book or listening to the radio. The lecturers' broad knowledge makes the lectures interesting."

Mufuka's pursuit of the three-year programme will prepare her to be a savvy communication professional in media, advertising or the communication industry.

According to Dr Lee Eileen, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts, the graduates will be in greater demand, once they gain broad knowledge and skills of the arts and social sciences, and possess interdisciplinary knowledge of advertising and design. "This is because globalisation and the growing use of the Internet and other social media tools have necessitated the corporate communications graduate to carefully manage the brand and public image of companies," she said.

Subjects taught such as Political Communication, Psychology in Communication, Entrepreneurial Studies and Investor Relations, to name just a few, help to complement the core subjects offered in the communication field. A special module, "English for Academic and Professional Communication" is also included in the syllabus to help students to enhance their communication skills.

Students can also opt to spend the short semester at the end of Year Two to pursue a range of electives in the arts, media, film and cultural studies at Lancaster University. "The programme combines both the academic rigour and the practical industry experiences in their final year, in order to adequately prepare the students for the workforce when graduate," added Dr Lee.

As the programme is moderated by external examiners appointed by Lancaster University, its quality is benchmarked against the standards set by the British Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Upon graduation, the students will also receive both the Lancaster University certificate on top of the one conferred by Sunway University.

Intan speaking for her team

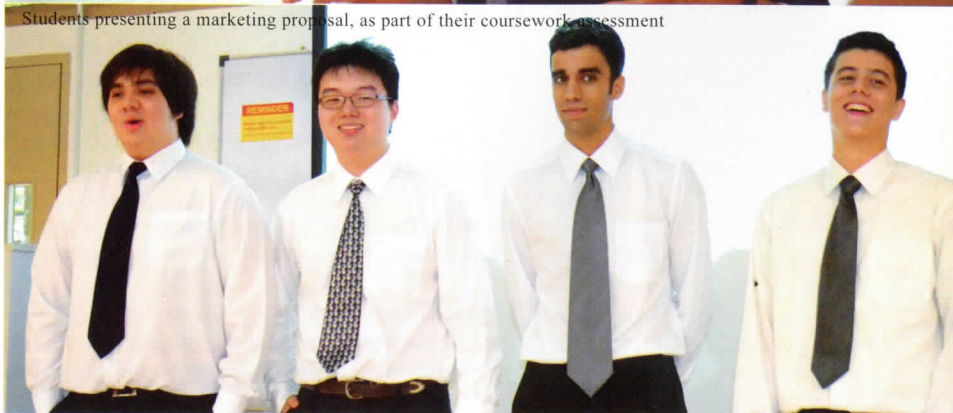


New Programmes

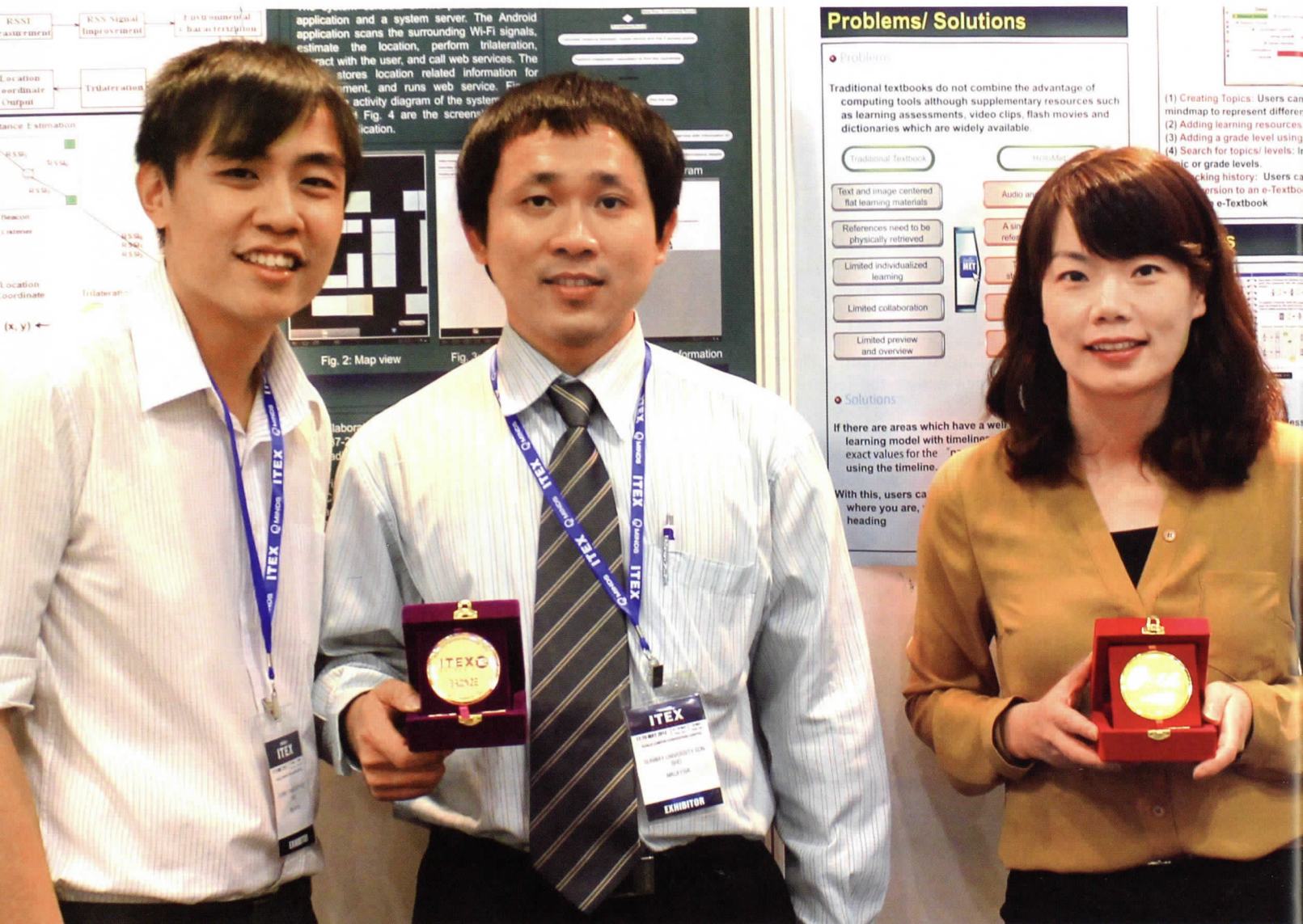
Mufuka Theresa making a presentation



Students presenting a marketing proposal, as part of their coursework assessment



Award-winning research work



From left: Law, Pu and Jasmine showing their medals at ITEX 2012

Jasmine Lee Hee Jeong's electronic textbook-based mind map became a big hit, when it made its debut at the 23rd International Invention, Innovation & Technology Exhibition (ITEX 2012) recently.

Her research project, HelloMeT – a tool for developing electronic textbooks on the internet – bagged her the much coveted Gold award.

The electronic textbook, which took three months from conception to development, will allow students to create their own textbook either online or a standalone which can be carried in a USB thumb drive. Now, a major hit among staff and students of Sunway University, the e-textbook can include multimedia contents like videos, and flash.

Hailing from Korea, Lee is married to a Malaysian, and she has been living in Malaysia for the past four years. Lee is a lecturer with the Department of Computer Science and Networked Systems at Sunway University.

Another team comprising lecturer Dr. Pu Chuan Chin and Master's student, Kelvyn Law Yeong Hui, both from Sunway University, received a Bronze award for their indoor-location based information system.

It utilizes wifi and receives signal strength (RSS) to estimate location of a smartphone. Using location finding and navigation, various convenient services can be developed for handheld gadgets. It can provide useful location-specific information and displays automatically on a screen or a smartphone. The information can include guidance, notices and advertisements previously stored on a web server.

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Nurturing the Seeds of Wisdom

A Sunway University lecturer, Dr Grace Lim Soo Yong has achieved a significant breakthrough in her research on how radio waves propagate in indoor stairwells in urban environments.

Breakthrough in research

Her research findings from this work will soon revolutionise the design and implementation of cellular and Personal Communication Services (PCS) systems. For this, she was awarded a bronze medal in the Malaysia Technology Expo (MTE 2012) held in conjunction with the 11th Invention and Innovation Awards in

Kuala Lumpur recently, for her research on path loss model for indoor stairwell.

According to Grace from the Department of Computer Science and Networked Systems, wireless mobile communications has been widely regarded as a rapid growing segment within the communications industry.

"There has never been a better time to understand the characteristics of radio waves in urban environments," she said. "Now that we understand how the radio waves propagate in indoor stairwells, we will be in a better position to advise the industry on how to design a better system."



Today, if you were to speak to Esther Lim, you will realise that one of her childhood dreams is becoming a reality.

Employed as a biochemical engineer at a pharmaceutical company in the United States of America, she is helping a team of researchers to develop different processes to produce vaccines at large-scale production. "We are

Realising a childhood dream

developing life changing vaccines that will impact the world," she said.

But that is as far as she was prepared to reveal. "I have always wanted to make a difference in the world. I am really proud to be making a contribution to help humanity in the vaccines industry," she said.

For the 23-year-old lass from Sungai Buloh, Selangor, who studied the American Degree Transfer Program (ADTP) at Sunway in 2007, the ability to continue half of the course in the United States was one of the main reasons why she chose the programme. "It allowed me to attend classes here, and subsequently transfer my credits over to Cornell University in the United States," she said. "It helped my family save me some money and time."

She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Engineering (Magna Cum Laude) from Cornell University last year. These days, whenever she is not at work, she would either pick up a book to read or play any one of the three musical instruments – the piano, guitar or harmonica.

Her latest book she has just finished reading is "Crazy Love" by author, Francis Chan who wrote about God's love. "It's an easy read and recommend it to everybody," she said.



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