

# STUDY AT THE SMU SCHOOL OF LAW



SMU

SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT  
UNIVERSITY



Undergraduate



# DEAN’S MESSAGE

We live in a constantly changing world. Every once in a while it undergoes some massive changes. The three earlier industrial revolutions marked important turning points in the history of human civilisation, from the introduction of powered mechanisation to electricity to computerisation. Each event redefined the role of human workers in the economy, introducing new roles and shedding obsolete ones.

However, it is only with the advent of the fourth industrial revolution that disruptions to the legal industry have begun to be felt. The latest industrial revolution is characterised by the exponential explosion of technologies that fundamentally change the ways we live, work and interact. Revolutionary technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain and autonomous vehicles bring to the fore legal issues that lawyers have never encountered in the past. The use of technology in the legal industry, whether to perform some of the more routine work or to assist in decision making, will eventually reshape the role of human lawyers.

In the midst of all this uncertainty, we at the SMU School of Law see only opportunities. Within the last couple of years, we have made significant inroads into developing expertise in the space of law and technology. In 2018, we won a competitive government grant of \$4.5 million which enabled the establishment of our Centre for AI and Data Governance. We have great expectations for the production of groundbreaking research in the area of law and technology. This also serves as a foundation for modernising our curriculum. We ensure that our traditional law courses remain relevant by studying how existing laws cope with new technological advancements. We have also increased our offerings of specialist courses dedicated to exploring specific instances where law and technology intersect.

We continue to be successful in winning large competitive grants, which allowed us to add the Singapore International Dispute Resolution Academy to the school in 2019 and establish the Computational Law Centre in 2020. These reflect recognition of our expertise and ability. More importantly, these grants will allow us to stay at the forefront of thought leadership and provide the crucial foundation for taking our next step.

With these initiatives in place, we are confident in preparing our students for the future of legal practice. Our graduates are highly sought after, well-placed, and competitively remunerated. Year after year they are significantly represented on the prestigious Justices’ Law Clerk programme. Within just twelve years and with only nine cohorts of working graduates, many alumni have gone on to make their mark in the profession, industry and academia. Quite a few have even struck out on



*“Our holistic approach to legal education prepares our students for the new world. Our small class seminars encourage independent thinking and knowledge creation. This is why our graduates are highly sought after, well placed and competitively remunerated.”*

their own to set up their own private practice and legal-tech start-ups. With an alumni network numbering more than a thousand people and growing steadily, students may expect to benefit from networking and career opportunities.

Our vision is that of a better world attained by the study and practice of law. We aspire to build bridges not only between theory and reality and across disciplines, but also between the past and the future. As a young law school, we are energetic and look forward to embracing and shaping the future. If you are resolutely determined to make a lawyer of yourself, and excited about what the future holds, we welcome you to join us.

**Professor Goh Yihan**  
**Dean, SMU School of Law**

# WHY SMU SCHOOL OF LAW?

## EXPERT FACULTY



Our faculty members are highly qualified and accomplished, having obtained postgraduate degrees from world-renowned universities and bringing with them a wealth of practical experience from past employments in various leadership roles.



## FORWARD-LOOKING EDUCATION



Through our carefully designed curriculum and unique seminar-style teaching, we prepare our students not just to be experts in the law but also to be highly adaptable individuals with the necessary practical and soft skills to meet the demands of the modern legal and business world.



## GLOBAL EXPOSURE



Our partnerships with law schools and various organisations worldwide allow our students to spend meaningful time abroad to gain comparative insights into how the law works across borders.



## VIBRANT STUDENT LIFE



Our strategic proximity to the courts, Parliament and the Central Business District allows our students many opportunities to experience first-hand how laws are created, how legal disputes are adjudicated, and how laws affect businesses, and to learn experientially through internships with top city law firms. More than just work, our state-of-the-art building and dynamic city campus make for a vibrant student life outside of studies as well.



## PROMISING CAREER PATHWAYS



Our students are competitive on the global stage, having achieved notable successes at prestigious mooting competitions and having gone on to pursue postgraduate degrees in world-renowned institutions. This means that our graduates are highly sought after, having close to full employment soon after graduation, with higher average starting salaries than their peers from other universities, and many recruited for top positions.



# THE FUTURE OF LEGAL PRACTICE



As Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon once observed, the realities of legal practice now require one to have a keen awareness of the impact of globalisation, commercialisation, and technological disruption. These powerful forces will change the face of the legal industry.

## GLOBALISATION

With enhanced global connectivity, legal issues that lawyers encounter today are increasingly cross-jurisdictional. A competent lawyer must be acquainted with legal standards across jurisdictions. This inevitably also requires sensitivity to cultural diversity.

## COMMERCIALISATION

The commercialisation of legal services may sometimes mislead one into thinking of success solely in monetary terms. A successful legal practice is much more than that. The practice of law is, and has always been, a noble calling centred around excellence, honour, and public service.

## TECHNOLOGICAL DISRUPTION

It is inevitable that machines, which become more sophisticated by the day, will eventually replace humans in the performance of certain tasks. For human lawyers to remain relevant, it is vital to identify areas where the human touch continues to be important.

As a pioneering law school established precisely to challenge the status quo, our goal at the SMU School of Law is to prepare you for success in this rapidly changing legal landscape.

# EXPERT FACULTY



## WORLD-CLASS QUALIFICATIONS

Our diverse faculty comprises global thought leaders who were educated in world-renowned universities such as the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge and Harvard University. All our 44 full-time faculty have postgraduate degrees, with one third holding PhD qualifications.

## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

In both research and teaching, we draw on our diverse backgrounds and experience to ensure the relevance of what we do. Some of our full-time faculty members continue to practise law, undertake consultancy work, and hold important leadership positions outside of the school. We also draw upon the practical experience of adjunct lecturers who are mostly practising lawyers.

## RECOGNISED EXPERTS

Our faculty conduct cutting edge research which shape the law. Our research work have been widely cited by the courts and in important treatises. A number of us have even been appointed by the highest court as amici curiae ('friends of the court') to share our views on difficult issues of law. As a student, you will learn from those who have helped shape the very law they teach.

## AUTHORS OF THE LAW

Our faculty have written many of Singapore's leading law textbooks. Not only do they help students navigate the complexities of the law, these books are also regarded by practising lawyers and the courts alike as leading authorities in their fields.

# LEADING TEXTBOOKS WHICH OUR FACULTY MEMBERS HAVE WRITTEN OR CONTRIBUTED TO INCLUDE





# FORWARD-LOOKING EDUCATION

Our holistic pedagogy ensures our students graduate as dynamic, articulate, and analytically agile individuals ready to thrive in the dynamic legal landscape.

## SOCRATIC METHOD

Legal reasoning goes beyond identifying what the law says to exploring its underlying rationales, tensions and alternative solutions. We firmly believe that learning through discussion is the best way of training your analytical skills. We keep our class sizes small with one instructor leading no more than 45 students to maximise learning experience.

## CULTIVATING MULTIPLE SKILLSETS

Apart from conventional examinations, assessment will be based on participation in vibrant class discussions, group presentations and written assignments. For a number of skills-based courses, the focus is on hands-on work and closely supervised assignments. In SMU-X courses, experiential learning is taken to the next level as students engage in supervised real life projects.

## MODERN CURRICULUM

In the face of rapidly emerging technological disruptions, we are committed to modernising our curriculum to meet future challenges. For example, we place increasing emphasis on the intersection between law and technology. Even for traditional subjects, we make it a point to explore how existing laws cope, and how they might need to evolve, to remain relevant. We have also introduced new courses dedicated to exploring specific instances where law and technology intersect.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERTISE

Law students may choose to supplement their legal expertise with knowledge of other relevant disciplines. This can be achieved by pursuing either a double degree or a second major. The close collaboration among all six schools within SMU allows students to tailor their courses to suit their needs.

## REAL WORLD EXPERIENCE

Internships are critical in exposing students to the practical workings of the legal system in a wide range of environments. Our students are required to complete at least 10 weeks of internships before graduation. They may choose to intern with law firms, legal departments, and government bodies we have partnered with. Our vast network even makes it possible for students to intern overseas.

## CULTIVATING A HEART TO SERVE

Ultimately, we believe that law is more than a practice, it is a calling. As a student, you will learn the importance of law as a noble calling through giving back to society. Our students are required to complete at least 80 hours of community service before graduation, of which a minimum of 20 hours take the form of pro bono work. Our students contribute to the ideal of equal access to justice through the campus legal clinics run by our own Pro Bono Centre and through collaborations with the Law Society of Singapore, the State Courts Community Justice Centre, and other institutions.



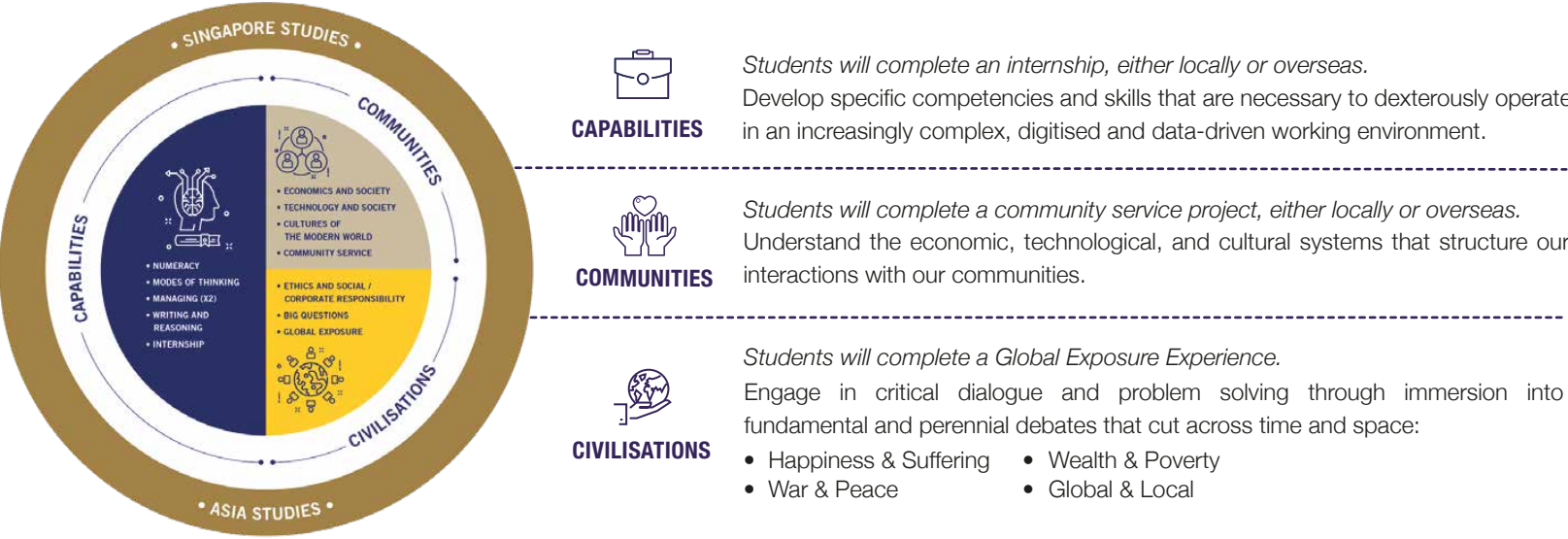
*“SMU’s pedagogy definitely stands out for me. The seminar-based classes provide an active learning platform where students can engage in intensive discussions with the professors, as well as with each other. Not only has this helped me internalise the materials better, it has also shaped me to be someone who is now more confident and more capable of thinking on his feet!”*



**Pesdy Tay**  
Year 4 LLB Student

CORE CURRICULUM

The SMU Core Curriculum is a menu of six carefully selected course units (CUs) to initiate undergraduates into their journey to become holistic SMU graduates. The Core Curriculum also serves as a means for students across all disciplines to bond through a common intellectual experience. It stands on three pillars of learning, or inter-related paths of development: Capabilities, Communities and Civilisations.



**School of Law students will fulfill the following requirements of the SMU Core Curriculum:**  
Capabilities: • Managing • Modes of Thinking • Internship (non-credit bearing); Communities: • Cultures of the Modern World • Technology and Society • Community Service (non-credit bearing); Civilisations: • Big Questions • Ethics and Social Responsibility • Global Exposure (non-credit bearing).

In addition, all SMU students will fulfill requirements in Singapore Studies and Asia Studies, through a range of pre-identified courses and activities that also count towards the Core Curriculum, disciplinary curriculum, or co-curricular activities.

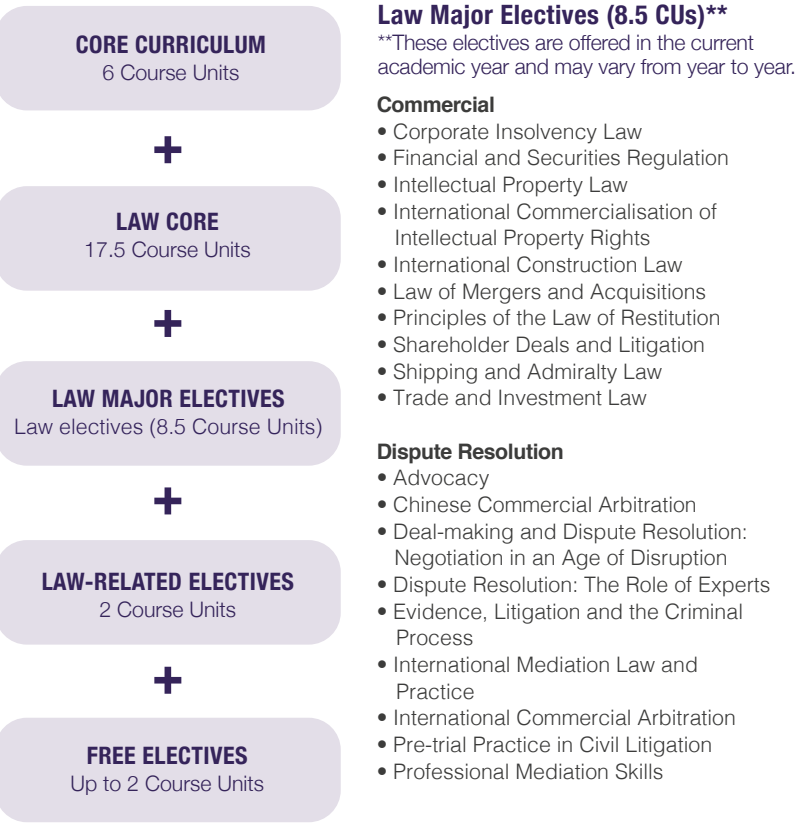
AN OVERVIEW OF A TYPICAL BACHELOR OF LAWS (LLB) STUDY PLAN

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
TERM 1	<div><div>• Contract Law 1</div><div>• Legal Research &amp; Writing 1</div></div> <div>• Criminal Law</div> <div>• The Singapore Legal System</div>	<div><div>• Law of Business Organisations</div><div>• Law of Property</div></div> <div>• Comparative Legal Systems</div>
	<div>• SMU Core Curriculum Course and/or Free Electives #</div>	<div>• Law-related Elective</div>
		<div>• SMU Core Curriculum Course and/or Free Electives #</div>
VACATION	<div>• Pro Bono / Community Service ^</div>	<div>• Pro Bono / Community Service / Law Internship ^</div>
TERM 2	<div><div>• Contract Law 2</div><div>• Legal Research &amp; Writing 2</div></div> <div>• Law of Torts</div>	<div><div>• Constitutional &amp; Administrative Law</div><div>• Corporate Law</div></div>
	<div>• SMU Core Curriculum Course and/or Free Electives #</div>	<div>• Law-related Elective</div>
		<div>• SMU Core Curriculum Course and/or Free Electives #</div>
VACATION	<div>• Pro Bono / Community Service ^</div>	<div>• Pro Bono / Community Service / Law Internship ^</div>

CORE COURSES (PRE-ASSIGNED) LAW ELECTIVES LAW-RELATED ELECTIVES SMU CORE CURRICULUM

Study plans may vary for individual students, depending on their choice of elective modules and/or secondary majors/degrees

BACHELOR OF LAWS CURRICULUM



Law Major Electives (8.5 CUs)\*\*

\*\*These electives are offered in the current academic year and may vary from year to year.

- Commercial**
- Corporate Insolvency Law
  - Financial and Securities Regulation
  - Intellectual Property Law
  - International Commercialisation of Intellectual Property Rights
  - International Construction Law
  - Law of Mergers and Acquisitions
  - Principles of the Law of Restitution
  - Shareholder Deals and Litigation
  - Shipping and Admiralty Law
  - Trade and Investment Law

- Dispute Resolution**
- Advocacy
  - Chinese Commercial Arbitration
  - Deal-making and Dispute Resolution: Negotiation in an Age of Disruption
  - Dispute Resolution: The Role of Experts
  - Evidence, Litigation and the Criminal Process
  - International Mediation Law and Practice
  - International Commercial Arbitration
  - Pre-trial Practice in Civil Litigation
  - Professional Mediation Skills

Experiential

- International Moots 1
- International Moots 2
- Law Study Mission to Asia
- Legal Commentaries for Practice (Advanced Legal Writing)
- State Courts Clerkship Programme

Interdisciplinary

- Introduction to Chinese History, Culture, Economy, Politics and Law
- Law and Psychology
- Transnational Business & Human Rights

International & Comparative

- Chinese Contract Law
- Intellectual Assets and the Law in Asian Economies
- International and Comparative Criminal Justice
- International and Comparative Insolvency Law
- International and Comparative Secured Transactions Law
- International Construction Law
- International Humanitarian Law
- WTO: Law and Policy

Law & Technology

- Digital Intelligence for Lawyers
- Information Technology and the Law
- Introduction to Law and Technology
- Law and Digital Commerce
- Legal Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in Law
- Privacy and Data Protection Law

Public/Regulatory

- Compliance and Risk Management for Lawyers
- Family Law
- Intellectual Property Law and Competition Law at Interplay
- Introduction to Civil Procedure
- Law & Regulation
- Medical Law and Health Policy
- Public International Law
- Topics in Financial Crime

Legal Theory

- Jurisprudence: Modern and Critical Theories of Law

Law-Related Electives (2 CUs)

- Finance for Law
- Financial Accounting for Law
- Economics and Society
- Introductory Statistics

YEAR 3
<div>• Legal Theory &amp; Philosophy</div> <div>• Law of Evidence</div>
<div>• 2 X Law Electives</div>
<div>• SMU Core Curriculum Course and/or Free Electives #</div>
<div>• Pro Bono / Community Service / Law Internship ^</div>
<div>• Commercial Conflict of Laws</div>
<div>• 2 X Law Electives</div>
<div>• SMU Core Curriculum Course and/or Free Electives #</div>
<div>• Pro Bono / Community Service / Law Internship ^</div>

# Students are required to complete 6 Course Units of SMU Core Curriculum Courses and 2 Units of Free Electives. These courses may be taken during any term throughout the programme, subject to an individual student's workload and time-table.

^ SMU students are required to complete 80 hours of community service, of which a minimum of 20 hours of SILE-approved pro bono work is compulsory for Law students.



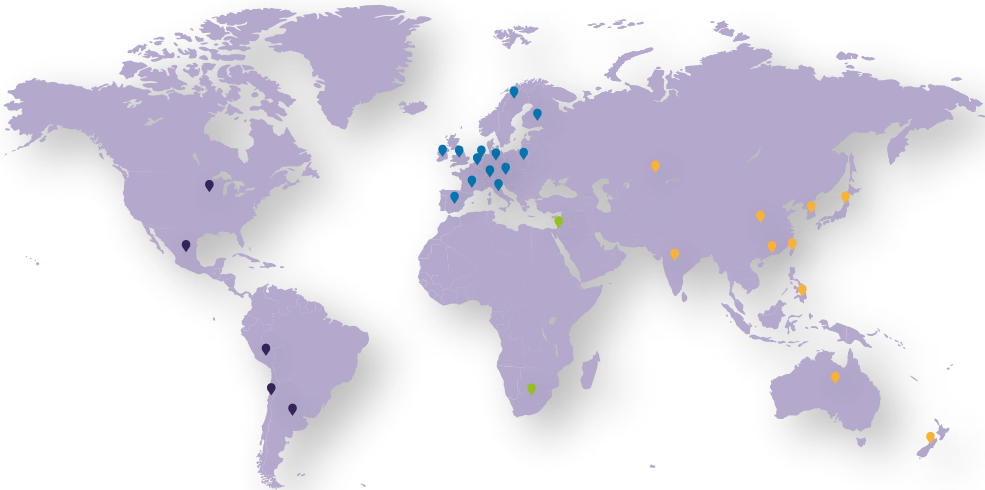
# GLOBAL EXPOSURE



As a student, you can expect to experience some form of global exposure by participating in an international exchange, an overseas internship, a law study mission, or even an overseas competition. This allows you to broaden your horizons in the face of internationalisation and globalisation.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE

We partner 80 universities across the globe in direct law-to-law and university-wide exchange programmes. We are the pioneering Asian law school together with several European law schools in running the prestigious THEMIS exchange programme, which allows outstanding undergraduates from our school to go on exchange and undertake master’s level courses in selected partner institutions.



**THE AMERICAS**  
Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Peru and the United States of America

**EUROPE**  
Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom

**MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA**  
Israel and South Africa

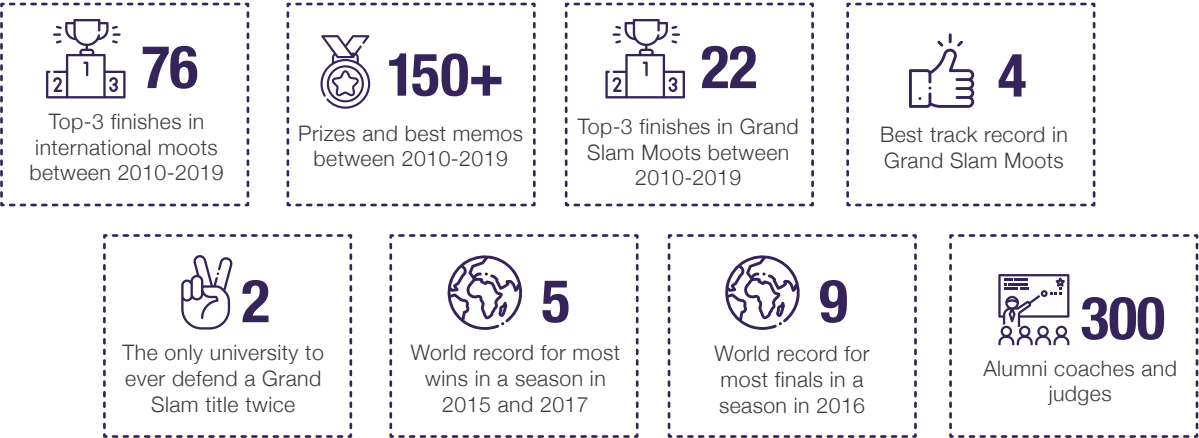
**ASIA-PACIFIC AND CENTRAL ASIA**  
Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan

## LAW STUDY MISSION

Our Law Study Mission course provides opportunities for our students to gain a deeper understanding of the legal system, business and culture of selected foreign countries. When visiting the selected country, students will participate in organised tours to law firms, legal institutions, governmental agencies and businesses.

# INTERNATIONAL MOOT AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMPETITIONS

As a student, you will also have the opportunity to participate in our leading International Moots Programme. Mooting is a simulation of the resolution of a dispute before a tribunal. Although our IM Programme was only launched in 2010/11, our students have regularly placed in the top 3 worldwide in the most prestigious international moot competitions (known as “grand slam moots”). In International Alternative Dispute Resolution competitions, our students are also beginning to leave their mark, having achieved podium finishes in the 2018 Consensual Dispute Resolution Competition Vienna and the 2018 and 2019 Advocate Maximus competitions.







# VIBRANT STUDENT LIFE

Beyond work, our location between Fort Canning Park, Orchard Road and the Central Business District provides our students ready access to plenty of good food, fun and opportunities for experiential learning.

## A NEW CHAPTER

New students begin their exciting journey by participating in an orientation camp which is all about fun and making new friends.

To help ease students in their transition to university life, all first-year students are assigned to members of the faculty, whom they may reach out to for academic advice. There is also a buddy system where first-year students are paired with second-year students. Throughout the term, students can expect to participate in a broad range of activities from formal talks to fun festive celebrations.

## LAW CLUBS

At the SMU School of Law, our students may choose to join a number of student-run law clubs. The SMU Law Society, fondly known as The Bar, is the representative body for students and organises a variety of events. There are also nine sub-clubs, each of which provides the opportunity to pursue more specific areas of interests.



Student Clubs (Left to Right)

Row 1: SMU Law Society 'The Bar' • Corporate & Commercial Law Club • SMU Law Athletics • SMU Law International Relations Club

Row 2: Legal Innovation & Technology (LIT) Club • Moot Court Club • SMU Lexicon • Constitutional Law & Criminal Justice Club

Row 3: SMU Law Outreach Club • SMU Mediation & Negotiation Club



“Outside classes, there are numerous events organised by The Bar (SMU School of Law’s Student Society), various law clubs or the school where industry practitioners, academics and regulators are invited to share from their personal experience with the students. These events really help shed valuable light on what practice is like in the real world and provide students with insights into the numerous areas of legal practice which are open to junior lawyers. They allow us to discern which firms or organisations to apply to for internships or a training contract; and give us an idea on what to expect.”



**Samuel Loh**  
Year 4 LLB Student





## ALUMNI RELATIONS

Even after our students graduate, we continue to regard them as part of our family and do our best to stay connected. The SMU School of Law is proud to have an extensive and supportive alumni network that spans across various industries.

With an alumni network numbering more than a thousand people and growing steadily, current students truly benefit from networking and job opportunities. Despite hectic schedules, many of our alumni readily return to volunteer in school events, such as our yearly Open House, sharing sessions, and admissions interviews. More than 200 alumni also regularly help out with our International Moots Programme through judging, coaching, and vetting written work. This way, knowledge is passed down the generations, giving our students an edge in competitions.



## A SECURE & PROMISING CAREER PATHWAY AWAITS

The achievement of our graduates is the best testament to the quality of the education we provide. We are proud to say that our young graduates have punched well above their weight.

A number of our graduates have gone on to pursue postgraduate studies in world-renowned institutions such as Harvard, Oxford and Cambridge. Many of them have gone on to make their mark in the profession, industry and academia. Some have even struck out on their own to establish their own private practices (such as BlackOak LLC and Breakpoint LLC) and legal tech start-ups (such as INTELLEX and Regall LT).

Our graduates are highly sought after, having close to full employment soon after graduation, with one of the highest starting salaries. Based on the 2019 Graduate Employment Survey published by the Ministry of Education in February 2020, our recent graduates enjoyed an overall employment rate of up to 99.1%, drawing a mean gross monthly salary of up to \$5,324. This is a testament to the quality of our graduates and shows that our education approach fits market demands.



Our fresh graduates enjoyed an overall employment rate of **99.1%**



Our graduates draw a mean gross monthly salary of **\$5,324**



## HEAR FROM OUR ALUMNI



**Sarah Ong Hui'en**

LLB (SMU, Class of 2011); LLM (Harvard)  
Deputy Public Prosecutor /  
Deputy Senior State Counsel,  
Attorney-General's Chambers

"My time at SMU was a valuable experience and start to my journey in the law. The seminar style teachings encouraged independent learning and preparation before lessons, and pushed me to step out of my comfort zone to ask questions and participate in discussions during classes. At the same time, it was never all work and no play. There was always a strong emphasis on student life, with law school events held throughout the year and the annual law school musical. Through these, I got to know my classmates better, and gained many fond memories that I still treasure today."



**Sui Yi Siong**

LLB (SMU, Class of 2014)  
Senior Associate,  
Eversheds Harry Elias LLP

"The practice of law is often said to be very different from the study of law, but SMU's unique pedagogy ensures that its graduates are able to hit the ground running. From unique seminar-style learning that encourages critical thinking, to early and frequent interaction with legal practitioners and industry leaders, the SMU curriculum equips students with the necessary skill-set to thrive in whichever career path they choose. For me, the 4 years I spent in SMU were invaluable in preparing me to enter practice, and I credit SMU Law for giving me this head-start in my career."



**Josephine Chee**

LLB (SMU, Class of 2012)  
Partner,  
Rajah & Tann Singapore LLP

"My 4 years at SMU Law were extremely enriching. An introvert by nature, SMU's unique pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes gave me the chance to learn how to be more vocal and confident at expressing my views. Being graded on group assignments and presentations (besides the final-term exams) made me more adept in critical thinking, presentation skills and impressed upon me the importance of being a good team player. These skill-sets placed me in good stead when I entered private practice as a litigation lawyer. My experiences representing SMU Law in two international moots have also greatly impacted how I am now as a lawyer – the ability to think on my feet; to work well with one's team; the importance of hard work and perseverance are all lessons I picked up as a mooter, all of which remain crucial in the practice of law."



**Olivia Wee**

LLB & BSc (Econ) (SMU, Class of 2015)  
Legal Counsel,  
Lazada Group

"As legal counsel for Lazada, I help the company navigate ever-evolving and often ambiguous e-commerce laws across 6 different countries. Hard legal skills aside, the job requires a keen curiosity, the ability to adapt, and a flair for communication. SMU gave me these. My professors taught me to ask the right questions, to think beyond the box, and to express my views clearly. The modules I took also prepared me to apply the law in a business-minded and innovative way. I believe that the school equips its students well to flourish in this technological era."





**School of Law**

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