

THE UCSI GAZETTE

THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

UCSI SCHOLARS

PRESENT AWARD TO
TUNKU ZAIN AL-'ABIDIN
TUANKU MUHRIZ
FOUNDER OF IDEAS

UCSI FASHION DESIGN STUDENT WINS

AIRASIA DESIGNER
SEARCH

MEMORIES OF UNITY

BY PROFESSOR DR MOHAMAD
TAJUDDIN MOHAMAD RASDI

YEOH SHENSHEN

COVER STORY

"State athlete continues
her ascent in judo and
aquatic science"

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VOLUME 02

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



As the year comes to a close, many would take time to look back at what has been achieved. All of us at UCSI are no different and rightfully so. UCSI stands tall as one of the top 300 universities in Asia. We are firmly established in Tier 5 (Excellent) - the best rating achieved by universities in Malaysia - in the 2013 Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education Institutions. We partner with the world's best universities like Harvard and Imperial College London. Even our research and postgraduate engagements, areas which are rather novel to us, are very much on an upward swing.

The year ends with much success and greater achievements and we have much to be proud of. We took all the challenges in our stride and we accomplished these, with determined improvement here and there, and sometimes with quite a bit of soul-searching and self-reflection. The world is changing at breakneck speed and how are we to stay tuned with conviction if we remain aloof, uninvolved and disengaged? If top universities around the world keep on rejuvenating themselves, pushing themselves higher and further, what more with us!

Let us be mindful of what we have done and what we need to do. As a student, surely you are conscious of your academic standing - your grades, your projects, your assignments and your campus experiences. As staff members, we must be all too familiar with what our respective faculties and departments had been engaged in and geared up for during the year. This synergy creates that symbiosis that creates the energy, the drive, the dynamism and the discipline to achieve what others may consider a far-fetched dream. For us, it was just self-actualisation asserted with purpose and ambition.

Much more is expected in 2016.

2016 will be our 30th Anniversary. There are a number of exciting events and game-changing initiatives which are being planned as UCSI's jubilee is gearing up. Let's synergise with the future.

Through the New Colombo Plan by the Australian government, we are working with RMIT University to host five engineering students from Australia. Under the same programme, we are working with the University of Melbourne to bring their students here for a stint in tropical medicine. Under the Degree-to-Masters Pathway, we are working with universities in Australia, France and Ireland in a number of disciplines.

At the same time, we are fortifying our link-up with Harvard University to enhance our initiative of sending UCSI students to spend a research year with Harvard Medical School in Boston. The same applies to our collaboration with Imperial College London. In the fashion capital that is Paris, we are developing a strong partnership with L'Institut Supérieur des Arts Appliqués, better known as LISAA to benefit our students in UCSI's De Institute of Creative Arts and Design.

We are embarking on new postgraduate programmes such as the eMBA and industrial PhD as well as the PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences. We are working closely with a number of institutions of higher learning in Mauritius, Sri Lanka, India and Nepal through dual degree partnerships whilst new ways are being pursued with China and Indonesia.

Our Postgraduate Diploma in Tertiary Teaching will be rolled out as the new year emerges - all our academic staff will further enhance their face-to-face and IT-based learning / teaching. We expect an upswing in our postgraduate and research engagements.

Education never stops. Our quest for excellence is unceasing. The zest for betterment is never-ending and the pieces are in place to make 2016 an even more successful year for all of us at UCSI. Let's prove how each one of us - students, academic and non-academic staff - can work together to create a wonderful world.

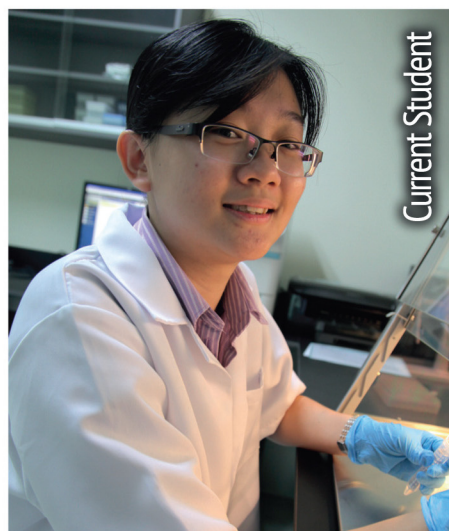
Go beyond; Be profound: Make a difference.

SENIOR PROFESSOR DATO' DR KHALID YUSOFF, FASc.

VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT
UCSI UNIVERSITY

DPSK, PSK, MBBS (Melb.), DMedSc (*honoris causa*) (Melb.),
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Cherish Chong
is changing medical
research at Harvard.



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UCSI UNIVERSITY ENHANCES ITS ROSTER OF WORLD-CLASS FACULTY

NEW APPOINTMENTS PROMISE TO RAISE UCSI'S INTERNATIONAL PROFILE IN RESEARCH, INNOVATION, INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION.



Prof Williams engages the audience during a recent public lecture he gave at UCSI University.

UCSI University has appointed Professor Dr Gordon Williams and Professor Dr N. Sreeharan as visiting professors. Professor Williams hails from Harvard Medical School while Professor Sreeharan is a former senior Vice President at GlaxoSmithKline.

As visiting professors, the duo will engage the UCSI community through formal lectures and collaboration with postgraduate students and staff. Their input will also be invaluable in UCSI's drive to ramp up research and international collaboration.

Professor Williams' appointment comes on the back of a number of previous engagements with UCSI. He recently delivered a lecture titled Mentoring your Students: The Dos and the Don'ts to UCSI staff and students. He also mentored UCSI medical student Cherish Chong Chiu Wern who pursued

cutting-edge research under Harvard Medical School's Global Clinical Scholars Research Training Programme.

A well-respected clinician-scientist, Professor Williams leads the Hormonal Mechanisms of Cardiometabolic Injury Programme at Harvard's Brigham and Women's Hospital. He has published over 500 papers in top journals. He was instrumental in setting up UCSI's links with Harvard Medical School – a link that will open doors for more UCSI medical students in the future. More collaboration will be done with Harvard in the foreseeable future and Professor Williams will play an integral role in the joint initiatives.

"Based on my terrific experience with Cherish, I'm delighted to have other UCSI students as part of our research group," said Professor Williams after his appointment, adding that the fruitful experience opened doors for further collaboration. Two more UCSI medical students will soon spend an intercalated research year at Harvard under the same arrangement.

A visiting professor at King's College London, Professor Sreeharan is an authority in pharmaceutical medicine. He stands out as a drug development expert and he is involved in several governance and education initiatives. He was also the chairman of an integrated European medical department with responsibilities in research and development, as well as medical affairs.

The duo will now serve two-year tenures and their appointments spur UCSI's drive to engage and recruit world-class academicians who will contribute greatly to research, innovation and industry engagement.

**“BASED ON MY TERRIFIC EXPERIENCE WITH
CHERISH, I'M DELIGHTED TO HAVE OTHER UCSI
STUDENTS AS PART OF OUR RESEARCH GROUP”**
PROFESSOR DR GORDON WILLIAMS



THE FUTURE, DRIVEN BY YOU

Genting Malaysia Berhad is one of the world's leading brands in hospitality that manages integrated casino resorts in Malaysia, U.K. and the U.S. It is listed in the Malaysian Stock Exchange.

With 50 years of history, the company is currently expanding and transforming itself into a new era of entertainment through the Genting Integrated Resort Transformation Plan. The highlights of this development include the world's first Twentieth Century Fox World Theme Park featuring unique and creative concepts of entertainment where soon, visitors can enjoy more than 25 rides and attractions of a cinematic nature with leisure facilities based on blockbuster movies. Adjacent to this site is also the brand new shopping experience, the Sky Avenue & Sky Plaza, that will also house a brand new state of the art cable system and station which can take over 3600 people per way per hour connecting Sky Avenue to the mid hill Genting Premium Outlet. All these are expected to begin opening in 2016.

It is little wonder that Resorts World Genting is also known as the 'City of Entertainment' - with over 13,000 dedicated employees keeping the resort beaming. We are looking for people to join our team! There are a variety of job roles available for diverse groups with opportunities in management, operations, support and administrative roles in a variety of departments including hotel, food and beverage, casino, theme park, maintenance, and transportation.

Visit our website at www.rwgenting.com/career to join Resorts World Genting and become part of future!



UCSI BASKETBALL TEAM

WINS ITS FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP



UCSI's basketball team with the Head of UCSI's Sports and Fitness Department, Vitalii Goncharenko in a group photo.

Kuala Lumpur: UCSI University's (UCSI) basketball team slam dunked just in time to secure its first win in the recent 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament organised by the Malaysian Association of Private Colleges and Universities (MAPCU).

Held at the University of Nottingham, Malaysia Campus, the tournament saw 12 teams competing against each other to bring home the coveted trophy.

After defeating the team from Taylor's University in the semi-final, UCSI's high-spirited players went ahead to beat the team from HELP University. They bagged the Champion title for the first time ever through the last 10 seconds of the game.

"It was an incredible game. We went through struggles early on but the team responded well after the semi-final, knowing that in order to win the tournament, we had to maintain our strong defence in the final round," said Mohammad Al Mouakeh, the captain of the team.

According to Vitalii Goncharenko, the Head of UCSI's Sports and Fitness Department, after enduring a draught in the previous tournaments, the victory has a special significance to it.

"Playing that well has its own significance for the team. After all that they have gone through in the previous tournaments, considering they had to go one-on-one with much stronger teams, I saw a lot of improvement" said the coach.

Commenting further on the team's improvement, he added that the team had practiced long and hard, more than three times a week. They also often organised friendly games among themselves to make sure that they are well prepared for the tournament.

"I believe that it's the friendly games that helped the team a lot in recognising their strengths and weaknesses as well as in honing their skills and techniques. As their coach, I definitely saw improvement and I am proud of them."

PITCH PERFECT

UCSI'S CHAMBER CHOIR
WINS GOLD AND SILVER
MEDAL AT THE 4TH BALI
INTERNATIONAL CHOIR FESTIVAL



Music is known as 'the universal language of mankind', according to 19th century poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. This is certainly true, as UCSI University's (UCSI) Chamber Choir's mastery of Latin, Mandarin and Tagalog songs won them the gold and silver medals in the 4th Bali International Choir Festival.

Held in Denpasar City, the capital of Bali, Indonesia from 29 July to 2 August 2015, the prestigious competition is participated by more than 100 choir groups from Asia, annually.

The UCSI Chamber Choir gave impressive renditions of John Wilbye's 'Sweet Honey Sucking Bee', Mandarin song Ba Juu Zan also known as 'Ode to Eight Horses' and the ancient tribal war song Bal-laygi.

The songs were performed in the Mixed Youth Choir category and the UCSI team bagged the gold medal.

For the Musica Sacra (Sacred Music) category the group's repertoire consisted of 'Exsultate Deo', 'Ave Maria' and 'All That Hath Life'.

The Chamber Choir is trained by Choir Director, Professor Ian Lim, who is widely acknowledged as the doyen of Malaysian chorus masters and voice teachers.

To prepare for the competition, Jacquelyn Koh, President of the Chamber Choir said that for two semesters, they practised at least five hours every week to get their keys and harmony right.

She also mentioned that with the element of drama that they added to their singing for 'Bal-Laygi', extra hard work was put in.

"There are 37 of us in the group and we went all out. Especially for something emotive like 'Bal-Laygi', it took us more time to perfect the singing and our gestures," she said.

Timothy Lim, who is also part of the choir, said that pulling off specifically choreographed movements and facial expressions was not an easy feat.

"'Bal-Laygi' was tricky because you don't know whether you will be able to rise to the level of what you had produced without the choreography," he said.

With the effort put in, the team was elated at their win.

As said by Nyoman Giovanni Anggasta who is the secretary of the Chamber Choir, the group was surprised and elated at their win.

"The other participants were really very good performers. They have different energy and vibes but I think we did our best on stage and we really enjoyed ourselves," said Nyoman Giovanni Anggasta, a soprano singer and secretary of the Chamber Choir.



CHAMBER SINGERS: (from left) Nyoman Giovanni Anggasta, Secretary; Jacquelyn Koh, President; Timothy Lim, Treasurer; and Shaun Chow, Vice-President of the UCSI Chamber Choir.

CAN'T HOLD HER DOWN

STATE ATHLETE YEOH SHENSHEN CONTINUES HER ASCENT IN JUDO AND AQUATIC SCIENCE

There has never been a time when Yeoh Shenshen was not involved in judo.

"Even as a toddler, my dad would play with me using judo moves," she said with a grin.

This comes as no surprise since her father, Oon Yeoh, was the national champion for the under 60kg weight category. The senior Yeoh also represented the country in the same category for the 1993 World Judo Championships in Hamilton, Canada, the 1995 World Judo Championships in Tokyo, Japan and the 1996 Asian Judo Championship in New Delhi, India.

He was also selected to represent the country in the 1994 Hiroshima Asian Games but had to withdraw due to a knee injury.

His standing in the sport is such that he was selected to be the official judo press officer for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics held in the US.

Shenshen's athleticism also comes from her mother, Chong Shiuk Hwai, a multiple gold medalist for the Malaysian National Championships. She too represented Malaysia in international tournaments including the prestigious 1991 Fukuoka Cup in Japan and three SEA Games, one of which she won a bronze.

With such sporting pedigree, it is no surprise that Shenshen is making a name for herself as a judoka – a judo practitioner.

Her unimposing size belies her strength. She is perfectly capable of hurling people over her shoulders for an ippon, a throw that places the opponent on his or her back with impetus and control. In competitive judo, this move wins the game.

Her repertoire of techniques consists of nage-waza - throwing techniques and katame-waza - grappling techniques.

Despite growing up being exposed to the sport, she only started training competitively three years ago. And the results have been impressive so far. She clinched the gold medal in the recent Sabah Invitational Championship for both the individual and team category. This is a steady improvement from the silver and gold for the individual and team events she received in the same competition last year.

Her training routine is intense and combines both aerobic and anaerobic exercise. The former is of low intensity and is performed for

extended periods of time. This includes long distance running.

Even during off-peak periods, when there is no upcoming competition, she runs 5-7km a day. Once a week, she ups it to 10km.

She varies this with anaerobic exercises which consist of high intensity interval training and randori or free sparring in judo which involves bursts of attacks. The drills ingrain movements into muscle memory, making the moves instinctive and instant.

During training, Shenshen can be seen practising grips and breaking the balance of the opponent to lead to a throw.

Being one of the few female judokas in the country, she usually practices with boys. In fact, she has once thrown an 81kg man to the mat during practice.

Not only does Shenshen excel in using her brawn, her brains are stellar too.

The state athlete for judo is also a straight A student who received 9As for her SPM exam.

Now, she is channelling the same drive that gave her success in the sporting ring and in the classroom to a worthy cause - aquatic conservation. And she chose UCSI's Diploma in Aquaculture with Entrepreneurship to achieve her aim.

FROM THE DOJO TO THE LAB

Just as how judo has always been part of her life, animal welfare has always been important to Shenshen. This led to her interest in bioscience and she initially wanted to be a veterinary surgeon. But she did not want to limit herself to caring for only animals.

"I want to be involved in the conservation of living things and with 70% of the earth's surface covered by water, there is nothing more urgent and important than the conservation of aquatic life," she explained.

UCSI was the only private university to provide such a programme that is carefully designed to

place equal emphasis on aquatic conservation and entrepreneurship. This will come in handy when Shenshen has to navigate the commercial aspect of conservation, including getting corporations to financially back her future projects.

It doesn't hurt that the programme is very hands-on with field trips to collect samples that will be analysed in the lab. This was another attraction for an outgoing person like Shenshen who enjoys the classroom, lab and outdoor aspects of her studies.

A particular favourite of hers is the fieldwork expeditions with her lecturer and head of UCSI's aquatic science programme, Assistant Professor Dr Teo Swee Sen. Assistant Professor Dr Teo is a leading research authority on the *Gracilaria changii*, a type of red seaweed found in Malaysia.



Her interest in conserving the delicate aquatic ecosystem has made an impression on Shenshen.

"Dr Teo has shared her experiences in the field with me and provided useful tips regarding samples and data collection. Her knowledge is current and this will give me an edge once I enter the workforce," she said.

In fact, Assistant Professor Dr Teo played a key part in setting up UCSI's first Aquatic Science Student Association (AQSA). As the founding committee member - she is the Vice-Secretary - Shenshen believes that the club is an important platform for anyone who cares about the environment to share ideas and take action.

One year into her diploma, has she found it difficult to juggle the demands of judo and her studies?

Looking thoughtful, she replies that the two actually complement each other. She illustrates this by sharing one of the lowest moments in her life - when she broke her leg and had to miss a major tournament.

"I was so frustrated, not only could I not train, I couldn't even do things such as climb the stairs like my university mates," she said.

But the incident made her more appreciative of the daily things that she took for granted.

"I use to complain when I couldn't run outdoors due to the weather, but now I am just happy that I can run even if it is on the treadmill!"

She believes that the setbacks she has experienced through sports make her a more resilient and positive person.

"I always tell myself, I can fall down seven times but I must get up eight times," she said philosophically.

After all, she said, things like winning a tournament and scoring an 'A' are supposed to be difficult. If not everyone would be doing it.

So what's in store for the future?

The ambitious student hopes to lead aquatic conservation in Malaysia.

"Many people have said to me, that aquatic conservation and awareness is not really established in Malaysia. They tell me I should work overseas in countries that have better prospects in this field."

Shaking her head, Shenshen is determined to stay.

"Malaysia has a rich bio-system and it deserves to be protected. I want to play my part in Malaysia's environmental conservation, starting with the aquatic component and eventually the whole ecosystem," she said.

Shenshen is clearly a double threat – a future judo victor who also champions aquatic conservation.

“ I ALWAYS
TELL MYSELF,
I CAN FALL
DOWN SEVEN
TIMES BUT I
MUST GET UP
EIGHT TIMES. ”

YEOH SHENSHEN



STRENGTH: Shenshen performing an ippon seoi nage, a judo throw.

IN FACT, SHE HAS ONCE THROWN AN 81KG MAN
TO THE MAT DURING PRACTICE.

STUDENT CONTRIBUTION

AN AQUATIC CLUB OF OUR OWN

BY YEOH SHENSHEN

Diploma in Aquaculture with Entrepreneurship

Most people probably do not realise this, but UCSI is the only local private university that offers aquatic science and aquaculture courses. As such, it is only fitting that the university also has a student club that relates to aquatics.

Thus, the Aquatic Science Student Association (AQSA) was formed. A completely new initiative, it has no predecessor to follow, no tradition to guide it. But what we lack in reference points, we make up with boundless ideas and optimism.

We are pushing this Association through because very simply, we love aquatic life. And we want to do what we can to conserve it for the next generation.





MARINE PROTECTORS

Aquatic science is a very vast field of study. Some of the areas include marine biology, oceanography and aquatic ecology. So what exactly is this club all about? It's not meant to be academically inclined although many of the activities will naturally relate in some way or another to the aquatic science and aquaculture courses covered at UCSI.

In very broad terms, the club will promote an understanding and an appreciation of all things aquatic. It is hard to be more specific about the exact nature of the club because it is so new and is literally a work in progress. But as we are the founding members of the club, we have the unique opportunity to shape it in our collective vision. And this is incredibly exciting for all those involved.

Our current focus relates to human interactions with aquatic systems and the impact we make. This ranges from contaminants at the molecular level to the stresses faced by entire ecosystems.

The formation of this club is a chance to bring together people who appreciate the various aspects of aquatics and to use that passion to spread awareness on issues that need to be addressed.

Some 70% of the earth's surface is covered with water but knowledge about this vast ecosystem is still very limited. A big portion is still unknown and unexplored, and the aquatic systems that are not foreign to man are being neglected and over-exploited.

We hope that through our club, we will be able to provide information and insights on how to conserve and manage current aquatic ecosystems. Ultimately, we hope to promote an appreciation of the importance of preserving and sustaining the aquatic environment. It is not an exaggeration to say that our future depends on us treating our environment well. With the previously mentioned 70% of earth's surface being covered by water, it is imperative that we take steps to save our aquatic ecosystems.



STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

There is a saying by Aristotle that goes, 'Those that know, do. Those that understand, teach.' The club would not be possible without the vision and wisdom of its academic advisor Assistant Professor Dr Teo Swee Sen.

As the head of UCSI's aquatic science programme, Assistant Professor Dr Teo is in good stead to advise us on the current issues in the field. Her background in genetic engineering and molecular biology and her position as a leading research authority on the *Gracilaria changii*, a type of red seaweed found in Malaysia, is invaluable. Her knowledge will surely give us insights into the main challenges faced by the aquatic ecosystems and guide us in the right direction to come up with scientific solutions that matter.

She has big visions for the AQSA and has high hopes that it will soon be a platform not only for students at UCSI but also for the public to learn about and be involved in aquatic issues.

Although this club is student-led, we will definitely be opening up many of our activities and programmes to the public.

Backing from the university is, of course, essential to the success of this club. We are very fortunate to have the support of the Dean of the Faculty of Applied Sciences, Associate Professor Dr Chan Hor Kuan and the club's co-advisor Jason Lim Lai Huat, the Senior Lab Technologist, who is an expert on marine systems.

The facilities play a pivotal role in the Club's activities and plans. UCSI has invested heavily in its new dry and wet lab equipped with aquarium tanks ranging from one to eight feet in length.

This new facility will be home to the jellyfish kreisel tank. The kreisel tank is a carefully designed circular aquarium made specifically for jellyfish and seahorses that are sensitive to water pumps or even to the corners of a tank itself.

The formation of this club was made possible by the tireless efforts of its founding committee who were hand-picked by Assistant Professor Dr Teo. It comprises students of various disciplines

ranging from applied sciences to actuarial science. This club is not just for those studying aquaculture or bio-sciences or even sciences. It's for anyone who has an interest in some aspects of aquatics and wants to learn more and be involved in activities relating to aquatics.

The Aquatic Science Student Association Facebook page (facebook.com/AQSA.UCSI) was set up to disseminate information and plans to everyone - those from UCSI and also members of the public. We will post regular updates and information there, and we hope that the page will be 'Liked' by all those passionate about the aquatic world.

“The club will promote an understanding and an appreciation of all things aquatic.”

YEOH SHENSHEN



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES BY THE AQUATIC SCIENCE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (AQSA)

SCUBA-DIVING LESSONS

The scuba diving lessons will be conducted at the North Wing of the UCSI KL Campus for the convenience of fellow UCSI students. Scuba diving skills will be useful for future marine sample-collection visits – one of the activities organised by AQSA in the coming future. We are hoping to roll these lessons out by the end of this year.

AQUASCAPING (UNDERWATER GARDENING) WORKSHOP

Aquascaping is essentially gardening, but underwater. An important aspect of aquascaping is also the upkeep of the aquatic plants. All these will be explored in detail in the workshop that will take place sometime in the early 2016.

UCSI SCHOLARS PRESENT AWARD TO THINK TANK, IDEAS, FOUNDER



LEADERS ALL: (left-right) Lai Hao Cherng, Vice President of U-Schos' and Bernard Chin - President of U-Schos', Dato' Ng, Tunku 'Abidin, Senior Prof Dato' Dr Khalid and Mohd Faiz Mohamad, the Organising Chairperson during the award presentation ceremony.



Tunku 'Abidin (centre) sharing his views. With him are student moderators Fadzilah Najumudeen and Andrew Chong.

Kuala Lumpur: UCSI University Trust's (UCSI) scholarship recipients recently presented the Institute of Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) Founding President, Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Tuanku Muhriz, with Malaysia's Top 10 Most Impactful Young Leaders Award 2015.

The Award honours young Malaysians who have made an impact to the community, region and nation through their profession or contributions. Organised by the UCSI Scholars' Circle (U-Schos), the winners were voted by more than 10,500 Malaysian students - between 16 and 25 years old - from government and private institutions of higher learning (IHL) in Malaysia.

Apart from receiving his Award Tunku 'Abidin Muhriz also spoke on the topic 'An Empowered Youth in Uncertain Times'.

In his talk, Tunku 'Abidin encouraged students to "play an active part in the life of the nation". He also impressed to them that leadership is about inspiring people to follow, not compelling them to.

"The role of leaders is to share their beliefs and to explain why they hold those beliefs. If they inspire others in doing so then I think that is the best form of leadership."

A good sport, he good naturedly went along with the students' teasing during the question and answer session. He even shared insights on his journey growing up.

This included going along with his friends into the consulting line when he was in his early twenties. By doing what he was not passionate about, he found his true calling.

"The more interviews I went to, the more I realised that consulting was not what I wanted to do. I wanted to be in public policy and that was how IDEAS, then called Malaysia Think Tank, came about," he said.

UCSI's Vice-Chancellor and President, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff, applauded the students initiative in organising the event and encouraged them to excel beyond the shores of Malaysia.

He shared several initiatives undertaken by UCSI to foster an international student experience on campus. In addition to sending students to Harvard University and Imperial College London for research, UCSI will also host students from top foreign universities.

UCSI Group Founder and Chairman, Dato' Peter Ng was also present at the award ceremony.

The other winners of this year's award include Cheryl Yeoh, CEO, Malaysian Global Innovation & Creativity Centre (MaGIC); Joel Neoh, founder and former CEO, Groupon Malaysia; Keeran Sivarajah, co-founder & former CEO, Teach for Malaysia; Michael Teoh Su Lim, founder, Thriving Talents Sdn Bhd; Ruth Yeoh, director, YTL-SV Carbon Pte Ltd, and Timothy Tiah, co-founder, Netccentric Pte Ltd.

Held for the second year in a row, previous year's winners include Aireen Omar - CEO and executive director of AirAsia Berhad and notable sports personalities such as Dato' Lee Chong Wei and Datuk Nicol David, who clinched the 'Malaysia's Top 10 Most Inspiring Young Leader and Personalities Award' last year.

MEMORIES OF UNITY

Turning back the clock. Professor Tajuddin recalls how being the only Malay in a class of Chinese students was never daunting. In fact, it turned out to be pretty fun.

BY PROFESSOR DR MOHAMAD TAJUDDIN MOHAMAD RASDI

School of Architecture and Built Environment, UCSI University



In conjunction with today's incessant calls for unity, I pay tribute to my old school, SMJK Hua Lian in Perak - the very place where I understood what unity meant.

Why was my school experience so special? Despite being the only Malay boy in a sea of Chinese students, I felt no racial or religious pressure. I sailed through four years of education making friends, having fun and learning lots of things from my mostly non-Malay teachers.

While I take a few moments to recollect some incidents, why don't we also take the time to ask just what is wrong with our country - to the point where racial and religious mistrust still prevails after 58 years of independence.

My childhood days from Standard One to Six were spent at the police barracks in Butterworth, Penang, where I would walk about half a kilometre every day to St Mark's Primary School. My childhood friends at the barracks were mostly Malays, but there were several Chinese boys and the two sons of a burly Sikh sergeant major.

My father was only a police constable with the rank of "private" despite his 30 years of service. Mother tells of his reluctance to move too far away from his family in Pantai Besar and Batu Kurau (both in Perak), which resulted in career stagnation. Though my father was educated only up to Standard Three, he could scold me effortlessly in the Queen's English!

Looking back, it was funny to hear some of his ear bashing sessions - unless I happened to be on the receiving end, of

course. While things could get loud, it is interesting to note that my father NEVER uttered a single harsh word against any Chinese or Indian, unlike the fathers of my friends. He had many Chinese friends whom he visited occasionally, with me tagging along on his Vespa.

friends at the barracks and I was hoping that things would look up at the new school. Little did I realise that my life was about to take a sharp turn.

There was no school that offered Industrial Arts in the English medium of



HAPPY TIMES: (Third row from front, fourth from right)
Despite being the only Malay boy in his class Prof Dr Tajuddin always felt accepted by his Chinese classmates in SMJK Hua Lian.

At St Mark's, I had many friends who were Indians, Sikhs and Chinese. I remember one particular boy, the "soft" kind who was always jeered at for being feminine. We got along well because of our one common interest - Enid Blyton story books! We would exchange comics and books all the time.

At the police barracks, I flew kites and played gasing and football. Hide-and-seek was another favourite past time, thanks to the wreckage of armoured police vehicles.

I was greatly saddened to learn that my father was retiring from the police force and that we had to move to the barracks in Taiping. The family moved in June 1976. I was 14. It was difficult to make

instruction. St George's Institution was agriculture-based and SMK King Edward VII was commerce-based. We finally found a school next to the oldest prison in Malaysia - SMJK Hua Lian at Jalan Lumba Kuda. The Chinese-type national school had two sessions and 99.7% of its 2,000 students were Chinese!

I had been in Form 2A in St Mark's, so when I transferred to Hua Lian, the headmaster asked which class I wanted to be in. I asked if there were any other Malay boys and if so, in which class? He said yes, but the two other boys were in Form 2D1 - the last class with the naughtiest students! I said okay and stepped into the most interesting period of my school life.



OF SHEIKHS AND STUDENTS: (first from left) Prof Tajuddin enjoying himself as he acted as a rich sheikh during a Teacher's Day play.



POLICE CADETS: Practising their marches and arm drills while withstanding the shouts from their drill masters was great fun for Prof Tajuddin (second row, first from left) and his 'tall Chinese friends' who were in the Police Cadet Force.

Imagine me at 14: A scrawny, bespectacled four-foot-something guy amidst burly Chinese five-footers who were all a year older than me as they had been to remove class. I was an "A" student among those who got Cs and Ds. Every time the teacher stepped out to go to the toilet during the monthly exams, the whole class would crowd around me for answers for all subjects, except my weakest subject, Mathematics.

I excelled in English and Bahasa Malaysia (BM) and it was wonderful to see pandemonium breaking out among my classmates whenever it was announced at assembly that I had obtained the highest marks for English in the whole form, beating those nerds from 2A1 (all boys) and 2A2 (all girls). My old form teacher was all smiles when he told the class that he was pleased to have at least one student who passed all his subjects.

Two recollections are worth highlighting here. Once, a Malay teacher who taught BM was so incensed with some students for being rude to him that he threw everyone out of the classroom and we had to stand in the hot sun for the whole period. That included me. It wasn't fair because I was always a "teacher's pet". So there we were, all 42 of us, being stared at by the girls in 2B2, 2C2 and 2A2.

The other thing that has stayed with me is how my Chinese friends loved to gamble. They would bet almost every single day on Malaysian football, sports and even the weather! Once, I saw a boy win RM1,000 in a football pool! I rarely saw a RM50 and had never even seen a RM100 note. My mother gave me RM10 a month as allowance but she cooked and packed food for me every day.

I was moved up to 3B1 after that year and left my colourful friends at 3D1. After the LCE exams (the equivalent of PMR today), I was placed in the top science class, which was co-ed. I had never had any puppy love problems because I was not interested in girls at that age. Besides, I was not much to look at anyway.

For me, the most memorable thing about being in 4Sc1 was that we put up a play during Teacher's Day and was asked to restage it in front of the whole school.

Another fun thing was that I joined the Police Cadet Force with my tall Chinese friends, about 40 of us. We learnt to march and practise arms drills and withstand the verbal abuses of our drill masters. With our smart uniforms and knowledge of security details during special occasions in school, we impressed the girls - one of the perks of being in that hot and sweaty, brown get-up.

In 5Sc1, we had a lot of class parties. I had never been to a party before, especially one with a mix of boys and girls. My Chinese friends were very tolerant of my faith and endeavoured to make sure all the food was "halal", or so they told me. I had absolute faith in their sincerity. We played games at these parties and joked around. It was great fun and I had never felt accepted as much before.

The other great thing was the formation of the first ever multi-racial sepak takraw team. I loved the game and played the "killer" position. There were only three other Malay boys in school and we had to find five Chinese boys because of the compulsory three-team

rule. We sought good football players and basketball players as takraw requires agile footwork, springing and ball-handling.

We formed the team and went on the inter-school competition league. We went up against three schools and lost every game. Despite results going south, we were the talk of the town as no one had ever seen a Chinese-Malay takraw team.

I was one of the top 10 students in the MCE examination (the equivalent of SPM), scoring 6As. I was the only Malay candidate in the science stream and all my Chinese and Indian teachers were most proud of me. I was the only one who had scored a distinction (A2) in the Overseas English Exam, finally beating the head prefect - that lanky nerd of nerds.

After a short stint in Lower Six, I left to study in the United States for six years on a government scholarship. By then, most of my friends had gone to Canada, Britain or Australia, sponsored by their parents. Some who did not make it to Lower Six or the local universities started working early.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my Hua Lian teachers from 1976-80 for their dedication and commitment. I used to joke that I was the best and worst Malay MCE student because I was the only one.

My Chinese friends and I studied, played (I never gambled although almost all my friends did), partied, took part in sports, marched in the cadet corps, went girl-watching at the Taiping Lake Gardens, had ice kacang at the Larut Matang Supermarket and talked about our future.

I sincerely believe that Malaysia can be more harmonious than it is now. Harmony was the norm then. It can be the norm now. It can be - if we look beyond the things that divide us and focus on the ties that unite us. All of us have a capacity to be change agents regardless of our environments. I know it's possible; I thrived at SMJK Hua Lian.



TOP 300 IN ASIA

THE QS ANNUAL RANKINGS CONFIRM UCSI'S STRIDES IN RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION.

UCSI University made a meteoric rise to break into the top 300 universities in Asia in the 2015 QS Asian University Rankings.

Despite being a young university under 30 years old, UCSI punched above its weight to record a commendable climb from the 2014 rankings. Official data showed UCSI positioned comfortably in the 251-300 bracket as compared to the tail end 301-350 in 2014.

The acknowledgment comes on the back of UCSI's concerted effort to increase research output and publications, improve the quality of its faculty, promote internationalisation and foster collaboration with the world's best universities.

While all four areas showed marked improvement, UCSI performed commendably as far as collaboration was concerned. The University has enhanced its network of partnership with universities in the Ivy League, Britain's Russell Group, Australia's Group of Eight and Universitas 21, opening doors for students and staff. In the past year alone, UCSI's top medical and engineering students were selected to pursue cutting-edge research at Harvard University and Imperial College London.

Cherish Chong Chiu Wern was chosen for Harvard Medical School's Global Clinical Scholars Research Training Programme and she spent a year working under the tutelage of Professor Dr

Gordon H. Williams who leads the Hormonal Mechanisms of Cardiometabolic Injury Programme at Harvard's Brigham and Women's Hospital. Soon after, Leon Tan Kuan Leong and Soh Wei Ming left for Imperial for a summer research programme that saw them working with Dr Jerry Heng - a leading Malaysian academic who co-runs Imperial's Surfaces and Particle Engineering Lab.

The QS ranking is another shot in the arm for UCSI after the University achieved Tier 5 (Excellent) status in the biennial Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education Institutions 2013 (SETARA). Then, UCSI far surpassed the Tier 5 cut-off point of 75.5 to stand tall alongside Malaysia's elite research universities and branch campuses. Tier 5 is the highest classification conferred to the best public and private universities in SETARA 2013 as no varsity made it to Tier 6.

Conducted by British education intelligence company Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) in partnership with The Chosun Ilbo newspaper in South Korea, the QS Asian University Rankings evaluate Asia's best universities on an annual basis.

Universities are evaluated extensively on criteria like academic peer review, faculty-student ratio, citations per faculty, employer reputation, international student ratio, international staff ratio, as well as incoming and outgoing exchange students.

PUSH BOUNDARIES TO SUCCEED

UCSI SCHOLAR'S CIRCLE'S PAST STUDENT PRESIDENT ON LEADERSHIP AND ENJOYING HER UNIVERSITY DAYS.

by Suzanne Ling Sook Shian, third year student of BA (Hons) Psychology, President of UCSI Scholar's Circle 2014/2015



"How do you expect your university life to be like?"

This question was presented to me by Ms Shannen Choi, the Head of UCSI Trust, during my scholarship interview a few weeks before the start of my degree. I answered that I wanted to be active in student organisations, organise events, expand my network, learn soft skills and at the same time, do well in my studies.

"What position do you want to hold if you are in an event organising team?"

That was the next question thrown to me, to which I replied, "Any position except for the chairman position because I have never led before, and I don't think I am good at leading."

"How do you know that you can't be a leader if you haven't even tried?"

Ms Shannen's reply surprised me, and it was that very moment when I realised that the upcoming three years in UCSI University would be my one and only university experience, and I must explore and live it to the fullest.

A month after the interview, I joined the UCSI Scholars' Circle (U-Schos) as the Sponsorship and Marketing Director for year 2013 / 2014.

Having no idea at all about sponsorship or marketing - or how to even draft a simple proposal - taking up this position was the first step out of my comfort zone. It turned out to be a great journey of learning and a life-changing experience.

A year later, I became the President of U-Schos for year 2014 / 2015 and the Co-Founder of Hands of Hope - a community programme that provides opportunities for scholars and university students to give back to the society - two positions that I could not imagine myself holding a year ago.

This article is not about U-Schos, nor is it about me.

It is about the limitless potential that we can all discover in ourselves when we choose to go beyond our boundaries. Do not get me wrong; going beyond boundaries does not mean setting unrealistic goals that are out of reach, but stepping out of our comfort zone and challenging ourselves to try new things, explore and maximise our learning experience in everything that we do.



ALL SMILES: Suzanne (right) in a group photo with Datuk Nicol David and Dato' Peter Ng, Founder and Chairman of UCSI Group, after the 'Rise Up and Smash with Datuk Nicol David' session.

WE REAP WHAT WE SOW

The initial steps out of the comfort zone are always difficult.

Before becoming the President of U-Schos, I struggled and rejected the idea of it for two months. I wasn't sure if I could handle the role of a President well and wasn't sure if I could actually lead the team properly.

Honestly, I had a lot of doubts in my head at that time as being a leader of a student body was a new thing to me.

But in the end, I decide to be courageous and take up the challenge, stepping onto a journey of going beyond my comfort zone. From the outside, some might perceive the role of a president as luxurious.

But leading and managing a team of people with different personalities, overseeing close to 15 events and projects in a year, while maintaining the required CGPA and juggling my own personal life, is not even close to being easy.

I had to attend late night club meetings, draft proposals, proofread letters, handle internal

conflicts when needed and face high levels of stress. Not to mention constantly doubting my own capabilities, doing assignments in the middle of the night only to fall asleep on the floor at 5am and waking up at 6am to continue.

I am always missing out on the latest movies, sacrificing mamak sessions and other forms of entertainment; being labelled as having "no life" - all of this has become the norm.

But all these hard work and sacrifices are worth it when events are successful.

Even more so when we see the smiles on the faces of the team members who earn a sense of accomplishment, meet inspiring leaders and talk to them personally, witness strong bonds and friendships formed after months of working together and see the impacts made on different lives. Most importantly, when we learn and develop through the precious experiences.

We reap what we sow. If we want to see something that we have never seen before, we have to do something that we have never done before.

POSITIVE ATTITUDES:

Despite having to pull all-nighters for events, Suzanne (front) and her U-Schos members always find a way to have fun.



When an idea that sounds impossible pops out, there are usually two reactions that follow.

The first reaction says "forget about it", and the second reaction says "let's do it".

In U-Schos, we often say the latter and turn our ideas into actions. The same goes to many other events we have organised, such as the 'Rise Up with Leaders' series. When the idea of inviting Datuk Nicol David to UCSI was suggested, we thought it was impossible. However, the team decided to give

TRANSFORMING IDEAS INTO ACTIONS

it a try and transformed this idea into action by sending out the invitation email.

In January 2015, we managed to organise 'Rise and Smash with Datuk Nicol David', where she came to UCSI and shared with a group of students her experiences and inspirations as the World's Best Squash Player. In February 2015, we organised 'Rise and Fly with Aileen Omar', where we visited the AirAsia HQ and met the CEO of AirAsia Malaysia.

All these events sounded hard to achieve when initially suggested, but it was all made possible simply by just taking action.

Behind the scenes of these events are teams of committed organisers who put in a lot of effort and hard work to make the events possible. This includes sleepless nights, paper work, meetings, nervousness, stress and sacrifices that need to be made.

But at the end of the events, the greatest reward received is always the growth and development experienced by the organising committees through the hard work that they have put in, and also the impact made on the participants.

Such growth and development can only occur when one is willing to give the commitment to learn, and I am glad to say that I truly see great commitment from the organising teams and the committees in U-Schos.

BEYOND JUST ACADEMICS

Many of us from U-Schos agree that we wouldn't be who we are today if it's not for U-Schos, and our journey in the university would have been really different. Yes, as students, we must be responsible for our studies and ensure that we do our best academically. But at the same time, we should not neglect opportunities that can help us grow and develop.

University life can be more than just studying and having fun. I believe that a lot of students from the other clubs, organisations and projects such as the Make a Difference project, Christian Fellowship, Peer Counselling and so on would agree that their experiences in different activities and events have changed them as well.

Our experiences shape us, and university life is the perfect time for us to explore, challenge ourselves and gain new experiences. University life is where we can discover our strengths and weaknesses, go through trials and errors, and learn more about our capabilities. All these happen when we dare to take that leap and go beyond our boundaries.

Approaching the end of my degree life, I am pleased to say that UCSI has given me a great platform to discover myself, realise my own potential and push myself beyond limits. At the same time, I am also thankful to contribute back to the university and the society. I have even started a project that is in line with my vision in life, which is Hands of Hope.

Throughout this journey, I have also learnt a lot from my mistakes along the way, especially in terms of communication, managing conflicts and setting priorities. Despite having some low moments with a defeated self-esteem during times of failure, I embrace all of these as life lessons and learn from such experiences.

In the end, I am glad to say that I have maximised my learning experience in the UCSI and I have lived my university life to the fullest.

“UNIVERSITY LIFE IS WHERE WE CAN START DISCOVERING THE POTENTIAL THAT WE HAVE IN US, WHEN WE DARE TO TAKE THAT LEAP AND GO BEYOND OUR BOUNDARIES.”
SUZANNE LING

GOOD WORK: Suzanne (right) and her teammates received recognition for their efforts of encouraging leadership among school students from Yang Berhormat Tuan P. Kamalanathan, Deputy Education Minister I.

GENERATION 3.0

A UCSI STUDENT ON TEACHING PHILOSOPHY IN JAPAN FOR A WEEK AND THE FIVE BRANCHES OF PHILOSOPHY.

By Lim Czi Xian, third year student of UCSI's BSc (Hons) Finance & Investment



Czi Xian in Japan for the HLAB 2015 where she taught philosophy to high school students.

It was a sweltering evening in Tokyo and the courtyard of Todai - the abbreviation for the University of Tokyo - was alive with the rasping cries of cicadas. Inside Chuo Dining Hall, of what is widely considered the most prestigious university in Japan, things were a notch quieter.

The walls were adorned with tiles yellowed with age and steel-topped tables sagged with platters of sushi, tempura and the obligatory pizzas. But scant attention was paid to the food, instead, the

their chestnut products and peach farms, played host to 52 high school students and 24 seminar leaders. Summer 2015 for all of us, was a cacophony of cultural clashes, intellectual debates and tremendous, fantastic fun.

At HLAB, I taught pop culture and philosophy, the theme I surmised would be an ode to the programme's objectives of providing students, even for the briefest of time, a respite from a highly pressured, formatted existence steered by the education system.

air hummed with the conversations of over 200 students.

Above everyone's heads hung a giant banner, proclaiming cheerfully in red block letters: "WELCOME TO HLAB 2015".

During the summer of 2015, I travelled to Japan under the HLAB, a teaching programme dedicated to bringing a residential-based liberal arts education to Japanese high school students. It is organised by the Harvard College Japan Initiative (HCJI) and Liberal Arts Beyond Borders (LAB) and has been featured in The Economist, Japan Times and Nikkei Business, among others.

My station, Obuse, a sleepy town in Nagano prefecture famed for

Philosophy has always been perceived as the dominion of the intelligentsia, isolated by complex ideas and abstruse jargon; a dry subject that is at best regarded as troublesomely distant from daily concerns, and at worst linked to the family of pseudo-philosophy (think astrology, palmistry).

Pop culture on the other hand has the love of the masses, and is easily accessible in its many iterations: music, fiction, films, YouTube videos and countless other social media phenomenon such as Snapchat, Instagram etc.

Given that philosophising is essentially the act of questioning, why not employ the numerous tools provided by the rich traditions of philosophical thought to understand the social jungle of Facebook 'like' currencies we trade in?

Why not, employing the tools of philosophy to decipher questions like, "Is it ethical to have biological children when there exists children who would benefit from fostering or adoption?"

"Is it ever right to hold mass protests against democratically elected leaders, given that the masses have voted and chosen to submit to that election-winner's rule?"

Pop culture, is arguably a reflection of the human zeitgeist, and philosophy is its veritable crutch or 'descrambler'.

Generally, philosophy is segregated into five (occasionally overlapping) branches: metaphysics, aesthetics, logic, ethics and politics.

AESTHETICS: ON BEAUTY & ART

The common denominator to the varied definitions of what constitutes an aesthetic experience is perhaps the presence of sublimity. Art is a recurrent form of human activity, tracing its roots from cave paintings in the Palaeolithic period, to Egyptian reliefs around 3rd century AD, from the writings of Shakespeare during the Elizabethan era, to the modern age's multitude of paintings, installations, photography, sculptures, plays, performance art etc.

Should we trace its evolution from antiquity, the definition of art seems to require larger and larger accommodation as its forms and representations develop.

My seminar covered works from Paul Seawright, whose war photographs focusing on space and desolate landscapes grant us a vastly different glimpse into areas of conflict, unlike blood-

splattered visages routinely offered by editorials; and that of Yayoi Kusama, the grand dame of pop art.

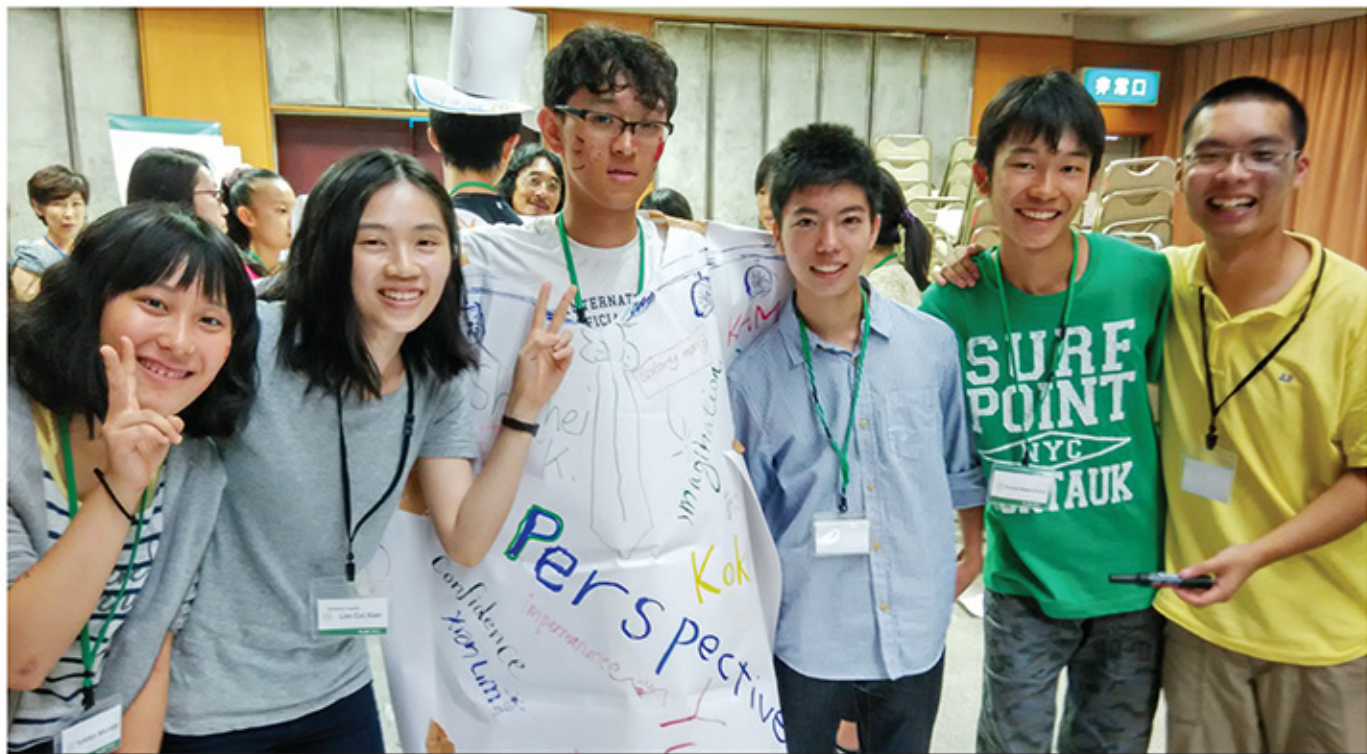
Kusama's polka dotted glory is not merely arbitrarily dotted, but represents her effort to self-obliterate, a reduction of one's identity via an infinite series of polka dots.

Given how art features prominently in our lives, it is disappointing that art and its creation does not engender more positive or stronger feelings. Malaysian society tends to view art through lenses distorted with religion and politics - persecuting and condemning any work that strays beyond its myopic interpretations. The education system does not help by introducing the overly simplistic syllabi of *pendidikan seni* that ends abruptly after two years in high school.

METAPHYSICS: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

The film and literature I've reference in my teaching syllabus in Japan were Larry and Lana Wachowski's *The Matrix* and Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation*. Both work on a fundamental level to address the nature of reality, and of simulations. The protagonist in *The Matrix*, Neo, is trapped in a simulated world, *The Matrix*, whereas Baudrillard in his treatise discusses simulations - copies derived from a thing or being that no longer has an original. *The Matrix* is a good microcosm of the media-influx we find ourselves in today.

The constant engagement with contemporary media - advertisements, film, print, product placements - is blurring the line between what we need and what we want. Baudrillard criticises the constant bombardment of images and recommendations of a simulated reality that erodes actual reality to that of a 'desert'. Take celebrity-heavy advertisements or mini-movies that have become de rigueur. They are photoshopped, air-brushed and shot with such fantastic premises that they bear scant relation to reality. We shouldn't, but we still buy into such simulations.



To help the students understand philosophy, Czi Xian used pop culture references like *The Matrix* and fun classroom activities.

LOGIC: IF IT CAN BE DESTROYED BY TRUTH, IT DESERVES TO BE DESTROYED BY TRUTH

In 2012, John Naughton of *The Observer* published an op-ed arguing for a comprehensive computer science education for school children, over the continuation of traditional but relatively irrelevant subjects such as Latin (Naughton, 2012). He called out laggards who are wilfully obstructing change, unwilling to face revolutionary technology that is changing lives by the day.

Logic is doubly powerful in this circumstance. We see logic in coding and programming languages that are responsible for the leaps and bounds in software progress, and we see its absence in the arguments formed by Naughton's detractors.

In fact, we see logic's absence in the rhetoric of many politicians, rabble-rousers, and faith leaders. The most common logical fallacies committed are fallacies of relevance: politicians making premises that are logically irrelevant, but psychologically relevant.

A cursory search online and of newspapers reveals usage of slurs or *ad hominem* abuses in debates, with the Malaysian statement nurturing a particular love for *tu quoque* as a weapon.

Tu quoque translates to 'you too' in Latin and focuses on discrediting the validity of an opponent's logical argument by focusing on the opponent's perceived hypocrisy rather than the merits of their argument.

It is heartening to see the younger generation's rise into the ranks of the politically aware, yet our generation has had no training in logical thinking, thus history may repeat itself, and we may be bound to make, as some of our forefathers did, the same mistakes.

ETHICS & POLITICS: MORALITY IS OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE - BUT FOR US, NOT FOR GOD

Albert Einstein gave us the quote above. He has no sympathy for believers of an anthropomorphic god, and instead advocated for an objective, unbiased introspection on religion.

You might be persuaded to argue religion belongs to the personal sphere - beliefs should be regarded as choices made by an individual and the practice and adherence of such choices should be tolerated. This premise will only hold if religion and one's practice of it have no externalities. Unfortunately, this is not true.

Religions and its dogma, as tenuous as they are, permeate into the deepest depths of our everyday actions. In ancient societies, life revolves around pleasing temperamental deities - the Aztecs had Huitzilopochtli, who demanded blood and human tributes; the Phoenicians offered infants to Moloch; for centuries civilisations moved and danced to the whim of the great unseen.

In modern society, the term 'faith offenders or detractors' often surface from confused heated moments, when the right and wrong could not be correctly determined but is hijacked by those with political intents, or those filled with the misguided sense of extreme prejudice and hate.

The Malaysian society has come a long way, but we still struggle with being labelled as liberal, often with crippling feelings of guilt, reducing legislation-making to the cycle of one step forward two steps back, to the point where open discussions on religion are now discouraged to maintain public order.

But if society can't hold a public debate on religion without a potential eruption of violence, what kind of society are we?

POP CULTURE, IS ARGUABLY A REFLECTION OF THE HUMAN ZEITGEIST, AND PHILOSOPHY IS ITS VERITABLE CRUTCH OR 'DESCRAMBLER'.

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HOW TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR?

TOP BUSINESSMEN INSPIRE STUDENTS AT UCSI'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE



GROUP PHOTO: Deputy Minister of Education II Chong Sin Woon (middle) joined by UCSI Group Founder and Chairman Dato' Peter Ng (right) and Vice-Chancellor and President Senior Prof Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff at the SEE Conference Malaysia 2015's opening ceremony.

Nine entrepreneurs shared their secrets to success with university students at UCSI's Student Entrepreneurial Experience (SEE) Conference Malaysia 2015. Organised by the UCSI University (UCSI) Student Affairs and Alumni division and supported by the Ministry of Education, the event took place on 2 October 2015.

Held over two days, the conference aimed to provide students with the knowledge needed to become job creators instead of job seekers through entrepreneurship. This supports the push to cultivate an entrepreneurial mind-set in tertiary education as outlined in the Malaysian Higher Education Blueprint 2015-2025.

Present at the opening ceremony was Deputy Minister of Education II, Chong Sin Woon, who stressed on the importance of entrepreneurship education.

"Entrepreneurship is vital for an entire nation to progress. Education institutions must be aware of the role they play in incorporating the traits that every successful entrepreneur needs, into their programme offerings," he said.

The conference featured nine sessions from CEOs and founders of successful businesses in Malaysia such as Dato' Peter Ng, Founder and Chairman of UCSI Group; Dato' Chevy Beh, CEO and Group Managing Director of Asian Healthcare Group Berhad; Dato' Bryan Tay, Founder and CEO of Miracle Hair Expert and Chan Kee Siak, CEO of Exabytes.MY.

In his keynote speech, Dato' Ng shared his own experience setting up UCSI 29 years ago.

"There are many ways to sum up the UCSI story. Its founding values of audacity, integrity, perseverance and excellence were synergised through one process - entrepreneurship."

However, he cautioned that the journey is not an easy one as it requires an inordinate amount of strategy, innovation and execution.

Nonetheless, the satisfaction far outweighs the difficulty.

"At the end of the day, entrepreneurship has an amazing propensity to bring people together on an unforgettable journey."

The Vice-Chancellor and President of UCSI, Senior Professor Dato' Dr Khalid Yusoff spoke of the role education institutions have to play in encouraging this.

Practical experience, close industry partnership and a push towards internationalisation through collaborations with leading universities like Harvard University and the University of Melbourne are some of the initiatives by UCSI to give its students an edge as entrepreneurs.

"UCSI ranks highly in terms of graduate employability and this is no surprise as we have over 2,500 corporate partners who accept our students as interns or as employees," he said.

More than 100 students from various public and private universities in Malaysia benefitted from the Conference.



ALL EARS: Students listening intently as the successful entrepreneurs dish out useful advice.

**CHAN KEE SIAK***Founder and CEO of Exabytes Group of Companies*

“To venture into online businesses, one of the conditions is to have creative ideas, be clear with your goal, set up a simple network domain, build a good team, and provide quality customer service and after-sales service.”

**CK LOW***Co-Founder & Managing Director, HerbaLine Facial Spa*

“Be open to receiving feedback from your friends. It was through my friends that I solved my customers' parking issues and it helped me expand my business!”

**DATO' BRYAN TAY***Founder of Miracle Hair Expert*

“No business is easy to manage. There will always be challenges, competitions and risks; all the entrepreneur needs to do is always consider the market needs and think of how to go further.”

**DATO' CHEVY BEH***CEO and Group Managing Director of Asian Healthcare Group Berhad*

“Do not lack enthusiasm and constantly push yourself forward. Learn from other's mistakes and make sure you do not repeat them.”

**DATO' PETER NG***Founder and Chairman of UCSI Group*

“Entrepreneurship is not an easy route; it requires thorough planning, innovation and implementation capacity. But age is just a number, it won't be the stumbling block for entrepreneurs to be successful.”

**DATO' WEI CHUAN BENG***Founder and Managing Director of REDtone International Berhad*

“Entrepreneurs should take into consideration whether the products they sell can help people solve problems and fulfil the society's needs.”

**FAIZAL AHAMED***CEO of Avante Sdn Bhd*

“Maintaining is harder than winning. The biggest challenge is that you don't know what is next. There are plenty of ways to reinvent existing entrepreneurship ideas; always be courageous to think out of the box.”

**STANLEY CHEE***CEO of Gapture Malaysia Sdn Bhd*

“Many thought that being an entrepreneur entitles you to having more personal time but that is not entirely true. Take me for example, I barely had any holiday for the first seven years I started out.”

**VICTOR PHANG***Managing Director of iTalent Management*

“Entrepreneurship means getting out of your own comfort zone and adapting to the challenging environment. Though some may say one's qualification is not so important, I think constant self-development is essential.”

CREATING FASHION OUT OF IMPERFECTION

UCSI FASHION DESIGN STUDENT WINS AIRASIA DESIGNER SEARCH

Lee Bao En uses ugliness as her inspiration. To be more accurate, she takes what is conventionally considered to be imperfect - ugly - and turns it into clothing designs that fascinate and are, beautiful.

Her designs impressed fashion heavyweights like Khoo Hooi and Jovian Mandagie. Together with the other judges, they selected her as the Grand Prize winner of the AirAsia Runway Ready Designer Search 2015.

A final-year student of UCSI University's (UCSI) BA (Hons) Fashion Design with Marketing, Bao En's collection focused on the architectural heritage of Southeast Asian countries. Cambodia's 12th century Angkor Wat played an important influence in the three designs she created for the competition.

Paying homage to the stone carvings on its walls Bao En's designs are heavily textured. Her ingenious use of a mix of materials such as the sack-like hessian, airy linen and crochet lace gave depth to her designs.

She even created her own fabric using the nuno-felting technique to mimic the old tree roots that are synonymous with the ancient temple. The technique was created in 1992 and bonds loose fibres such as wool, to a sheer fabric.

Bao En had to rub the loose fabric into the base. She then rolled the fabric several hundred times to ensure the fabric binds before throwing it on a surface repeatedly for the signature puckered look of nuno felting. Her efforts paid off - the nuno felting material on the shoulders of her first two designs and draped across the last one made her clothes stand out.



GRAND PRIZE: Lee edged out more than 350 participants to win the AirAsia Runway Ready Designer Search 2015. She is flanked by Andrew Tan, founder of KL Fashion Week RTW (left) and Aileen Omar, CEO of Air Asia Berhad (right).

Many notable designers produce collections embedded with social and political messages. Alexander McQueen did it in his 2011 VOSS show that is noted as one of his best. He placed an enormous glass box at the centre of an unlit stage. For an hour, the audience were forced to stare at their own reflections as they listened to the unnerving sound of a heartbeat as the background music.

He subverted the whole runway experience - instead of models being the object of the gaze, the audience stared at themselves.

A quiet girl, Bao En is nonetheless aware and passionate about social causes. When her last model walked down the runway, the audience fell silent. The model had her hands tied and face covered.

According to the budding designer, this is her statement against female oppression. The tied hands symbolises women who are prevented from doing many things and taking action for themselves. By covering her model's face - Bao En drew attention to the problem of oppressed women not having an identity of their own.

Her designs edged out more than 350 other budding designers and she walked away with return flights to Tokyo, 60,000 BIG Points, and one unit of Dell Inspiron 11 3000 Laptop.

She also won a guaranteed spot to showcase a full collection for KL Fashion Week RTW 2016 and a one-year apprenticeship with the established designer, Jovian Mandagie.

As a final year student at UCSI's De Institute of Creative Arts and Design, Bao En is appreciative of how far the university has helped her come.

"I am lucky - my lecturers are very experienced in the industry and helped me approach problems positively and solve them," she said with a smile. She expressed her thanks in particular to lecturers Lucas Lim, Abdul Rashid bin Hamid and Haniza Binti Johari.

Bao En also feels that the University's Praxis® approach and Co-Op Placement gave her an advantage in the industry. The former advocates closing the gap between academia and industry - this sees students receiving support to join competitions like the AirAsia Runway Ready Designer Search 2015.

The Co-Op Placement sees students interning for two months at the end of each semester. UCSI has the largest Co-Op network, with more than 2,500 industry partners. For her first Co-Op Placement, Bao En interned with Malaysian design veteran Beatrice Looi.

A far-sighted person, she chose to also spend an internship period with a supply company to learn the business aspect of the fashion world. This is in line with the marketing component of her programme that she feels is a critical factor to achieve her dream of owning her own label.

"The marketing aspect of my degree helps me plan the business aspect of my future brand," she said.

She added that having marketing knowledge also provides her a wider range of career choices, whether in the design industry or not. Fresh off her big win, does she have any advice for students who are interested to pursue fashion design at UCSI?

She smiled.

"It is not easy to be a designer, you need to invest a lot - your time, your energy and even money." But if a person is determined enough, she adds, there is always an avenue to showcase his or her designs.

After all, her own designs are not conventional. But she pointed out that her favourite labels - Japanese Comme des Garçons and Malaysian-based Moto Guo are highly successful. The former grosses about US\$180mil annually while the latter is fast gaining fame.

"You just need to chase your dream, no matter what stands in the way."

Clearly, Lee Bao En's dream of becoming a world-class fashion designer is not far from reality.



STATEMENT: Lee spoke out against female oppression through her last design. The covered face symbolises how oppressed women have no identity.



ANGKOR WAT INSPIRED: Lee used earthy colours, unique silhouettes and frayed hems to portray the ancient beauty of Angkor Wat - the inspiration behind her winning collection.

THE KING OF SPICES

UCSI TEAM HANDPICKED BY THE MALAYSIAN PEPPER BOARD TO PROMOTE LOCAL PEPPER



ALL SMILES: (from left) Tomy Wijaya; Joseph Martin Pudun (lecturer), Christopher Wan Sageng, Head of the Culinary Arts programme; and Edison Teo Kai Seng in a group photo at the Food & Hotel Malaysia 2015.

Back in the 16th century, pepper was held in more esteem than gold and was nicknamed the 'King of Spices'. Today, its popularity has not waned and it is found on every dining table, whether at home or in restaurants.

In Malaysia, the trade of pepper is under the purview of the Malaysian Pepper Board (MPB). The Board also implements various policies and programmes to ensure the growth of the plant, while promoting its research and usage.

In line with its role, the MPB has selected UCSI's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management to promote the usage of the spice and other pepper-based products and cuisine, locally and internationally.

UCSI has the distinction of being the first university to be given this honour by MPB.

One of the first platforms for UCSI to do so was through the Food & Hotel Malaysia 2015 (FHM 2015) Exhibition held on 29 September – 2 October at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC).

Representing the MPB, the UCSI team was led by Christopher Wan Sageng, Head of the Culinary Arts Department from UCSI's Kuching campus. The other team members were a lecturer, Joseph Martin Pudun and two culinary arts students Tomy Wijaya and Edison Teo Kai Seng.

The team showcased 12 pepper-based dishes including local speciality, umai, that was given a unique twist - Smoked Salmon Umai with Chopped Green Pepper Berries.

The menu included drinks such as Green Pepper Fizz and Sparkling Black Pepper Soda. Highly knowledgeable on the subject, Christopher said that in order to come up with a menu that

highlights pepper without being overwhelmed by it, one must first understand the taste, the nature and the quality of the king of spices itself.

"The biggest misconception about pepper is that it is spicy. It has a hot taste but pepper is peppery. To add that in your cooking, you must know the difference between spicy and peppery," he said.

Commenting further on the exhibition, Christopher said it was a perfect opportunity for UCSI to share with the gastronomists and culinary experts from around the globe the speciality of pepper and how it's been used in the 12 dishes.

"Through this exhibition, we get to promote Malaysian pepper to the whole world," said Christopher.

In addition to the exhibition, UCSI's FHTM has been working closely with the MPB and has represented the Board in other events such as the Penang International Halal Chef Challenge (PIHEC 2015) held on 30 January and 1 February 2015 at Spice Arena, Penang.

Besides creating awareness and promoting the pepper industry in Malaysia, the collaboration also establishes a strong relationship between the University, the government and major industry players.

This is advantageous to the students as it gives them an early introduction to the needs of the industry and helps them build their network. This emphasis on industry collaboration is in accordance to the University's Praxis® approach that emphasises the application of knowledge.



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STRICTLY PEPPERY: The menu showcased peppery creations such as Sparkling Black Pepper Soda, Green Pepper Fizz and Smoked Salmon Umai.

BUILDING THE FUTURE



An artist impression of UCSI's two new academic blocks in Kuala Lumpur.

To cater to the needs of its growing student population, UCSI is expanding its operational space by around 1mil square feet. This will be achieved through the construction of two new academic blocks at UCSI's main campus in Kuala Lumpur.

Designed to epitomise the zeitgeist of 21st century dynamism and interconnectivity, the new blocks will house state-of-the-art science labs, distinctive lecture theatres, classrooms, commercial areas and a multi-level parking facility, among others.

Connected by a flyover, the new buildings are meticulously designed to change how students perceive and experience UCSI. The interiors foster intellectual and cultural liberty and students will benefit from the creative use of teaching and learning spaces. The massive construction project is expected to be completed at the tail end of 2016.

UCSI is also building Malaysia's first private teaching hospital in Springhill, Negeri Sembilan. Built in phases, the hospital is designed to house 1,000 beds when it is fully expanded. The University is also constructing a new Kuching campus and it will establish a new campus in the education township of Bandar Seri Iskandar, Perak.



UCSI University Hospital is set to be Malaysia's first private teaching hospital when it is launched.



UCSI's new Kuching campus is certified as a Green Building for its many eco-friendly qualities.



THE UCSI GAZETTE

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