SOSS welcomes its 11th batch of 210 freshmen for AY2014-15 at the Annual Academic Briefing held on 22 August 2014. The Dean, Professor James Tang, Associate Deans Tan Yoo Guan and Christie Scollon, faculty members, SMU Social Sciences Student Society members and seniors met the freshmen over a tea reception.

(Left) Professor James Tang welcoming all freshmen with his inspiring speech. (Centre) Assoc Dean Tan Yoo Guan briefed on SOSS curriculum. (Right) Auditorium fully packed with freshmen who came to learn more about SOSS.

(Left) Getting to know the Dean, Professor James Tang. (Centre) Asst Prof Hoon Chang Yau speaking to a student. (Right) Asst Prof Jacob Ricks answering questions from a student.
School Highlights

SMU Commencement 2014

Heartiest congratulations to the graduating Class of 2014!

The School of Social Sciences (SOSS) Commencement 2014 ceremony was held on 15 July 2014 at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre. One hundred and eighteen SOSS graduates came together with their parents and guests to celebrate their academic achievements and graduation on this memorable day.

Proud graduates with (Front row from left to right in all three photos above) Assoc Prof Margaret Chan, Asst Prof William Tov, Asst Prof Ivy Lau, Assoc Prof Tan Yoo Guan, Prof James Tang, Assoc Prof Kirpal Singh, Asst Prof Nicholas Harrigan and Asst Prof Chung Wai Keung
ExxonMobil-SMU Dialogue ~ Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter

Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter is the President and CEO of the New America Foundation and the Bert G. Kerstetter '66 University Professor Emerita of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. She visited the School of Social Sciences from 21 to 23 May 2014 under the Exxon-Mobil Dialogue. During her visit, she gave a public lecture, met up with SOSS Faculty, alums and academic partners.

ExxonMobil-SMU Dialogue, 21 May 2014
“The Next Phase of the Women’s Movement must be a Men’s Movement”

About the Topic:
In various waves over the past few decades, the feminist movement has achieved important successes. We have brought women into the workplace, and we have brought girls into schools and universities.

However, women in the workplace still face biological and cultural challenges to their success. Business leaders are still predominantly men, and single parents living in poverty are still predominantly women.

This discrepancy reflects our value system, in which we value the work of breadwinning, but not caregiving. Only when both men and women find caregiving to be as important as breadwinning will we achieve true equality.

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The Roundtable Meeting was attended by academic partners and SOSS Faculty. Participants of both sessions discussed the differences between traditional foreign policy and foreign policy in the digital age.

23 May 2014

Prof Slaughter engaged with SOSS alums in an evening session.
Freshmen Orientation Camp 2014
~ Secret Sosciety

By Tan Shafaye, BSocSc Yr 2

It’s been two weeks since Secret Sosciety officially ended, and it’s indeed good to see the eleventh batch of Social Sciences students settling in and adapting so well to school life!

Throughout the four days and three nights of camp, various teambonding activities were held, creating lasting friendships beyond camp. Games were held in collaboration with SOE so that the freshmen could expand their social circle and know more people outside of SOSS. Secret Sosciety also went against tradition and held 2 fright nights instead of the usual one, and it was really these 2 experiences that brought out the camaraderie and team spirit as everyone stayed together as a group and supported one another.

And of course not forgetting the highlight of the camp, the finale night, where everyone came dressed in their clan costumes and blew the roof of the Mochtar Riardy Auditorium with their meticulously planned and incredibly entertaining performances! From the viewpoint of the organizing committee, it was certainly heartwarming to see people who were complete strangers beforehand grow together throughout the short few days to become the close-knit family that they now are. It brought out a sense of achievement that Secret Sosciety has indeed fulfilled its main objective, which was to induct the new batch of students into our Social Sciences culture and make them feel that they truly belong here.

I think it would not be an understatement to say that Secret Sosciety has impacted everyone in one way or another, from the freshmen to the helpers, sub-committee, and organising committee. All of us forged new friendships, got pushed to our physical and mental limits, learnt more about ourselves in the process, and benefitted greatly from it. for the last time: Four gangs, one succession. Welcome to the School of Social Sciences, freshmen!

Day One
Student Activities

... Continued from previous page

Days two to four

Finale night
New York City - the city of dreams, as I would like to call it. Home to the largest agglomeration of arts groups in the world, it was a dream for the 15 of us who went on the Arts and Culture Study Mission led by Visiting Assistant Professor Tan Wee Lit spanning across two weeks from 28th April till 12th May 2014.

We had the opportunity to visit many of the visual and performing arts institutions in NYC, from museums such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the international renowned arts centre Lincoln Centre, one of the oldest Performing Arts institutions in the world - Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), a non-profit Off-Broadway theatre company - Signature Theatre, to studio visits at the Artist Residencies run by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) which provide studio spaces to artists to carry out their artistic practice. Through our various visits to these institutions, we learned valuable management practices as well as first-hand experiences provided by the management and artists respectively. Many of whom have generously offered their time to share with us were Singaporeans based there and it was heartening to see them establish their own standing and reveling in their roles.

Amongst them was Audrey Hoo, Production Supervisor at the renowned Brooklyn Academy of Music who shared about the differing practices over at BAM in comparison to how things are run in Singapore. Lay Hoon talked about the direction of the Signature Theatre while also sharing about the various modes of fund-raising and patron-profiling in the running of the theatre. Director Teo Mei Ann shared about her own practice and productions in the Performing arts scene in NYC while Playwright Marcus Yi invited us to the rehearsal for 29X/Y, a play he wrote that is to be staged and performed later this year for some major festivals. Ms Eileen Jeng, an archivist at the Sperone Westwater Gallery shared with us the workings behind the scene for the blue-chip gallery after which we then head to the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) where their team shared with us about their education and digital media outreach. Assistant Curator Francesca Wilmott then brought us on a gallery tour of the curatorial direction of the There will never be silence; Scoring John Cage’s 4’33 exhibition.

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While most of them mentioned how tough it is in New York simply because the arts scene is saturated with artists trying to make a mark, what struck me most was their unyielding passion in doing what they love and how the competitive environment had instead fuelled their appetites to want to do even better. It was truly a fulfilling experience for us all as we got a good sense of how sustaining a practice and a job in the Arts scene was like in NYC!

One of my favourite parts of the trip was to catch Matilda, a Broadway musical based on Roald Dahl’s famous book, held at the Broadway District near Times Square. All of us enjoyed the musical thoroughly with excellent choreography and music accompanied by a cast of talented individuals. We were glued to our seats from the start till the end! We also had the chance to visit both Columbia University and New York University (NYU).

To complete the trip, we also had the chance to visit some of NYC’s tourist attractions. These places include the Central Park, Manhattan Bridge and Staten Island, which lived up to their reputable expectations – super gorgeous!
Student Activities

... Continued from previous page

Group photo taken at Central Park (Hui Rong, in grey pullover)

A burger from Shake Shack

Urs Fischer’s version of the Last Supper at the Gagosian Gallery, cast in bronze but looking like raw unfired clay

Interesting ‘Shakespeare Monologues’ performed by a street artist along the Chelsea Highline

Last but not least, no experience overseas is ever complete without a taste of the local palate. We had our fair share of burgers and fries from the famous Shake Shack, to Asian food, which was surprisingly not shabby at all! (And a special mention of the super awesome ramen @ Hide Chan Ramen).

It was indeed an unforgettable study mission to the Big Apple. Dear NYC, I miss you already!
Overseas Internship @ SRF Foundation, India

By Beatrice Loo Rui Yi, BSocSc Yr 4

I had always craved living overseas in a culture that was vastly different from the one I have always known. Rather than apprehension, it was excitement I felt when I thought of the chance to stay in India for three months. I can’t say my parents felt the same about their daughter doing that with two other female companions, but they were eventually convinced and have no regrets either.

Culture and sights do make a great case for an overseas internship, but a personal goal was to have an internship that allowed me to clarify the path that comes after graduation. I interned together with two other SMU students at SRF Foundation (Gurgaon Headquarters), the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of SRF Limited. CSR was solely focused on providing education to a local nearby district of Mewat. I was with the Foundation as a Communications intern, yet my purpose was to expose myself to the education initiatives they carried out. That included persuading and inspiring participation from the villagers, collaborations engaged to create a future for the children and youth in Mewat. Being clear of what I wanted to learn from the company definitely helped me shape my internship experience, despite other responsibilities.

Living in India while there was a bout of recent reports that could provoke legitimate concerns about safety was a risk the three of us were willing to take. Staring was common, though we must have become so skilled at hailing autos, addressing auto drivers as “buh-ya” (means brother), and bargaining at markets that towards the latter half of our time there, I must say the staring had lessened. Locals were always so pleased, possibly amused, when we spoke in Hindi and ate their local food like we had been eating it since we could chew. Speaking broken Hindi and risking terrible toilet consequences after taking local food were worth the relationships built. That being said, we did nothing conscious to attract unwanted attention and looked out for each other vigilantly.

A pleasant surprise I had during my time in India was to meet a bunch of amazing people who were also foreign students interning in India. We were all staying in the same hostel at the time. They were great company when we needed some time to pamper ourselves with familiar food, while travelling and on shopping trips. We bungeed together, water rafted in the cold Ganges river, visited icons of India together. The group was multinational: from Kenya, Egypt, China, Poland, and of course Singapore. It was humbling and eye opening to find out how different we all could be in our outlooks in life, how mature and fun each of them were.

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Lastly make no mistake, India is beautiful. If ever you find yourself relegating her to a place that is just dirty, dangerous and unappealing, do think again.

In some ways, three months with the country, colleagues and culture was too short. We were beginning to grasp the language sufficiently for our colleagues to converse (alright, “converse”) with us in Hindi, the Indian sun was growing tamer and more bearable, our stomachs had grown increasingly resilient, even more places had been added to our list of travel destinations. Then it was time to leave. On hindsight, the experience was one that would have developed into deeper affection had we stayed on for a while longer. India is many things most of us would be wary of, but laying down all tainted lenses, India is so much more than that.
The Unknown of the International Exchange Programme
@ ESADE Business School, Barcelona, Spain

By Diya Rao Verghese, BSocSc Yr 4

“It is when one is faced with the unknown, that one learns the most about oneself. This is what I want for myself.”

I started my Statement of Purpose for the International Student Exchange Programme with these words and have been on an unforgettable journey since.

I spent my fall semester abroad at ESADE Business School, Barcelona, Spain. I chose ESADE because it was located in the exotic and exciting city of Barcelona, but I didn’t know much else about what my experience would be like. To get a basic idea of the ESADE experience, I got in touch with a mutual friend who had gone to ESADE the year before. He told me the basics about the university, transportation system, housing and traveling. Some of the important preparations I made before exchange were purchase of insurance, important cooking mixes and budgeting. I took with me towels and bed sheets that I didn’t need to bring back to Singapore with me and could throw in Barcelona before coming back home. Going to the thief capital of the world, I needed to be prepared for theft so I photocopied and scanned my important documents. I also purchased number locks for all my bags and bought a smaller bag for traveling.

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When I touched down in Barcelona, I felt like I had landed in a fairytale. I was so excited to explore every part of the city that I would call home for a few months.

I believe that I achieved my goal of learning more about myself by being so far away from all that is familiar. It’s hard to break away from your usual routine and being surrounded by people who have known you for a lifetime. Though I felt quite lost at the beginning of my semester, I quickly met people who made a lasting impression on me and experienced things that I will cherish for a lifetime. As a person who loves organization and structure, I learnt to go with the flow and be spontaneous every once in a while. It was the challenges I went through on exchange that made me a different person by the end of the journey.

At a travelers hostel, someone broke into my locker and stole my laptop. Though my first reaction was shock and sadness, I quickly sprung in to a practical mode and spent twelve hours trying to track down my laptop through a security camera, police report, talking to hostel mates and with the help of the security guards. Though my laptop could not be recovered, I didn’t feel total despair, as I knew I had done my best.

My advice to those planning to go on exchange is to choose a campus university for two reasons. First, it’s a different experience to stay on campus, as this is not something we are used to at SMU. Second, it is easier to meet exchange and local students while staying at a university hostel and this will improve your exchange experience. Join the exchange student Facebook page before leaving Singapore so that you can be updated on activities, travel plans and day trips that people are planning to take. Once you arrive at the host university, the first few weeks are crucial as everyone goes out of their way to meet new people. After this, people settle down and become comfortable with their group of friends and it is harder to meet people at this stage. While traveling, stay aware of the people around you and where your belongings are. It is devastating to lose something as important as your passport.

Through my travels to 19 European and African cities, spending time with people of 30 different nationalities, catching flights worth 14 euros, joining a local gym dance class and everything else that my exchange exposure brought with it, it is safe to say that exchange is a whirlwind that I am lucky to have experienced. No matter your personality type or background, exchange is an opportunity for everyone to flourish.
**Student Activities**

**Exchange experience at Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden**

*By Michelle Aw Jia Ling, Class of 2014*

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**The Beginning**

You might have heard of Uppsala from The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo or as the birthplace of Christine, the female lead character in The Phantom of the Opera but I for one, have never heard of the city. It was only after a second round of selection that I landed a spot in Uppsala University halfway across the globe in Uppsala, Sweden. Nonetheless, it was a welcomed option and I was extremely happy about having the opportunity to live in Scandinavia.

While preparations for exchange were a chore – settling the paperwork, buying insurance, and making trips down to the Swedish embassy – nothing did to dampen my excitement. August finally arrived and after tearful goodbyes to my family and friends, I took off to Sweden.

What was waiting for me there however, was my first setback.

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**Uppsala?**

No amount of prior research could have prepared me for the culture shock that I experienced. Despite being the fourth largest city in Sweden, there was practically nobody when I reached the city. There was nobody around when I reached my hostel too, a far cry from the noisy dorm life I had envisioned.

This drastic contrast with the over-populated Singapore had me feeling nervous and for the first time, wondering what I had signed myself up for.

*(Left) Uppsala Cathedral – the largest cathedral in Scandinavia and main attraction of Uppsala*

*(Right) Lilla Sunnersta - the place I called home for 5 months*
Thankfully the culture shock wore off quickly and I started learning to appreciate the peace that existed in Uppsala. More people arrived to the city as school semester begun (Uppsala is a university town – everything revolves around the university) and school life as an exchange student officially started. Coursework at the university was quite heavy and project work was abundant - which meant lots of meetings - but it was fun because I got to interact more with the Swedish students and also other exchange students. The best part of meetings was always when we strayed from topics outside the project scope – talking about the prevalence of neo-Nazism in Sweden, or just simply about how the weekend went. Grading was however a breeze comparatively, perhaps because the emphasis is always on learning and not the grades.

Life in the hostel also got better – with more people arriving, more friends were made. Potluck dinners were the best because of the wonderful unique dishes (think Egyptian cuisine) and the fun and laughter that accompanied.

Seasonal change was also a wonderful experience to behold – when I arrived in August, it was still summer and green was aplenty. By October they had turned into hues of red and amber and finally when I left in January, pure white beauty. I will never forget the experience of waking up to a different view outside my window after a night of snow – winter is magical in Uppsala.

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When they say exchange is a period of unbridled freedom, it is absolutely true. The best part of exchange, for me, was the traveling. The five months saw me backpacking across 16 countries and many more cities in Europe, which is a sum way more than all my previous travels added up. I almost got pick-pocketed in Barcelona, nearly missed my flight to Budapest, got lost in Venice (pretty fun actually), won a huge stuffed bear at Winter Wonderland in London, ate bear meat and drank elk soup in Tallinn, spent a day with a stranger tourist in Stockholm and got stuck in the rain past midnight at Amsterdam’s red light district.

The historical junkie in me also thrived learning about each country’s history and how they grew to the current status. Odd and unfitting as it sounds, it was a dream come true for me to be able to visit the Auschwitz concentration camp. I was also extremely touched when a tour guide talked (with tears in her eyes) about her own experience during the Velvet Revolution in Prague. I realized there are many things that can never be learnt by just plainly reading about them – you have to go there, to listen and to feel.

Living apart from family in a foreign land and traveling unsurprisingly taught me a lot of life lessons. There are many not-so-glamorous things about exchange that cannot be seen on Facebook pictures. I spent New Years Eve dragging my two bulky luggages through snow and onto trains, all the while being sick and weak from stomach flu. I hated cleaning dishes and doing the laundry. Cooking and baking, which I liked as a side hobby in Singapore, became tedious and I often succumbed to laziness and simply cooked instant noodles.

That said however, I would jump at the chance to go again in a heartbeat.

If you are still thinking about exchange, stop thinking and just go for it – it is a once in a lifetime opportunity for most of us. Keep an open mind about how your exchange will be and it will definitely be the best time of your life.
SOSS congratulates the above mentioned students from the ARTS007: Society & Culture in Film, AY2013-2014 Term One module. The group led by Lim Bing Li, beat teams from NUS, NTU and other Polytechnic teams and won the First prize in the Critics’ Choice Fiction category in the NUS Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences “Singapore on Screen” Student Short Film competition. Click HERE to view the winning entry titled “Jia(k)”. 

Warmest congratulations to Ang Rui Xia, BSocSc Yr 2 and Ong Jun Hao, BBM Yr 2 for winning the Third Place Award in the 2014 Noba Student Video Award. They outdid students from colleges and universities in eight countries on four continents to win this Award. Click HERE to view their winning submission titled “The Misinformation Effect”.

The School of Social Sciences would like to extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Tim Mou Hui (SOSS Class of 2012) for being one of the winners of the inaugural SMU Alumni Pride Award for outstanding contributions to the SMU community. Mou Hui has been tireless in his support for his alma mater, including the establishment of a textbook fund that aims to help needy students from SOSS. He also volunteered his time and energy towards the development of the SOSS Facebook Page, which helped to raise the school’s digital profile among the broader public. His past endeavours are truly inspirational and we do hope that more alumni will follow in his footsteps. Well done, Mou Hui!
Faculty Appointment/Achievements

**SOSS congratulates the following faculty on their achievements:**

(Left) **Professor David Chan** received the Outstanding Volunteer Award from the Ministry of Social and Family Development in February 2014. Recipients of this Award had made immense contributions to their respective areas of involvement and demonstrated extraordinary passion and dedication in serving the community.

(Right) **Associate Dean Tan Yoo Guan** received the Student Life Recognition Award (Staff and Faculty). This award recognises staff and faculty members who have significantly supported or contributed to co-curricular learning.

(Left) **Assistant Professor Hoon Chang Yau** was awarded Sing Lun Fellowship. This award was established in 2009 by Mr Patrick Lee, Chairman of Sing Lun Investment Pte Ltd. Nominees are evaluated based on the originality and multidisciplinary nature of projects, research significance, potential to attract the collaborative interest of internationally recognised researchers, and publication in prominent journals and books.

**SOSS extends warm welcome to the following new faculty:**

**Hirohisa SAITO**
Assistant Professor of Sociology

- **Course to teach:**
  - Global and Transnational Sociology
  - Science, Technology and Public Policy
  - Sociology of Education

- **Research Interests:**
  - Theory
  - Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism
  - Education and Globalization
  - Japan and East Asia
  - Cultural and Political Sociology
  - Collective Memory and International Relations
  - Science, Technology, and Public Policy

**Steven BURIK**
Assistant Professor of Philosophy (Education)

- **Course to teach:**
  - Analytical Skills

- **Research Interests:**
  - Continental Philosophy
  - Chinese Philosophy

**Colm FOX**
Assistant Professor of Political Science

- **Course to teach:**
  - Introduction to Political and Policy Studies

- **Research Interests:**
  - Democracy
  - Elections
  - Voting Behavior
  - Political Communications
  - Ethnic Politics
  - Ethnic Conflict
  - Southeast Asian Politics

**Michael GENKIN**
Assistant Professor of Sociology

- **Course to teach:**
  - Social Networks
  - Sociology of Political Violence and Terrorism

- **Research Interests:**
  - Political Sociology
  - Social Networks
  - Terrorism and Political Violence
  - Sociology of Peace and Conflict
Faculty in the News

Margaret CHAN - 26 Aug 2014, The Straits Times
Turning the tide with Emily

David CHAN - 23 Aug 2014, The Straits Times
A paradoxical approach to policymaking

Kirpal SINGH - 22 Aug 2014, The Straits Times
Maurice Baker, The Accidental Diplomat Forum

CLICK HERE FOR FULL LIST OF SOSS FACULTY IN THE NEWS

Faculty Research

Journal


“The Strength of Sibling Ties: Sibling Influence on Status Attainment in a Chinese Family” by Qian (Forrest) ZHANG, 2014, 48, 1, Sociology, 75-91

“Thinking bigger and better about “bad apples”: Evolutionary industrial/organizational psychology and the Dark Triad” by P. K. JONASON, Ghin Hee Serena WEE, Pin Cheng Norman LI, 2014, 7, Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice, 117-121

Chapters in Books

“Adapting to rapid changes at work: Definitions, measures, and research” by David CHAN, Individual adaptability to changes at work: New directions in research, D. Chan (Ed.), 2014, Routledge


Books & Monographs


“Individual adaptability to changes at work: New directions in research” by David CHAN, 2014, Routledge

Conference Papers


“Political and Civic Participation in Developing Country Cities: South Korea” by BAE Yooil, 27-31 Aug 2014, 110th American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting Short Course “Urbanization and Local Politics in the Developing World”, Washington DC, USA


CLICK HERE FOR FULL LIST OF SOSS RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS