



College of Integrative Studies

Academic Year 2024/2025, Term 2

COURSE CODE: COR2603 (SMU-X)

SECTION : G2

COURSE TITLE: SINGAPORE - IMAGINING THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS

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PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)

There are no prerequisites for this course. The course content was jointly developed by faculty members from the six local universities and will be delivered using the SMU-X approach.

ELIGIBILITY

1. This course will be delivered as an **SMU-X course**, and will be delivered in **partnership with the National Heritage Board**.
2. This course is open to **all** undergraduates from SMU.
3. For cohorts **<AY2019/2020**, this course is offered as a general education elective, in addition to the existing core and elective courses that SMU already has related to Singapore studies.
4. For cohorts **≥AY2019/2020**, this course is part of the 'Cultures of the Modern World' basket, and satisfies the Singapore Studies graduation requirement.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Singapore is both a city and a country contained in a small geographical space located in Southeast Asia. It houses a diverse population in terms of race, language, religion, class and nationality. It possesses no natural resources, but has a highly educated labour force. Its economy has experienced significant growth rates, particularly in the late 70s and early 80s, coupled with low unemployment.

Like most other more developed economies, Singapore now confronts a range of socioeconomic issues (e.g. rapidly ageing population, declining fertility rates, widening

income inequality, rising costs of living) amidst increasing global competition, technological advancements, and security threats. At the same time, Singaporeans have become more of a people with a stronger national identity, a greater propensity to participate in the decisions that affect the destiny of the country, and a wider range of views and voices on the future direction of Singapore, the challenges it confronts, and the strategies and means by which to achieve their preferred goal(s) for themselves, their children, and the country.

COURSE GOALS

Through the in-person lectures, project partnership with NHB, and face-to-face discussions, this course invites students to:

1. Critically reflect on Singapore's post-independence history, and its impact on Singapore's future development trajectories;
2. Contemplate the kind of Singapore they envision for the future.
3. Understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that can help or hinder Singapore achieving their vision(s) for the country.
4. Deliberate upon the range and nature of strategies and policies that will enable Singapore to achieve their vision(s) for the country.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students should be:

1. Well-informed individuals who are able to develop new frameworks and perspectives in understanding different facets of Singapore society and life in Singapore;
2. Critical and knowledgeable individuals with a good grasp of the issues and challenges confronting Singapore;
3. Thinking and active individuals who are able to harness the acquired knowledge and skills to develop strategies and policies that would be beneficial to all Singaporeans in the Singapore they envision for the future.

COURSE OUTLINE

This course aims to encourage undergraduates - as future leaders - to reflect on Singapore's post-independence history, imagine the kind of Singapore they would like to co-create for the future, and deliberate on what it takes to achieve the vision(s) they have for Singapore.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Part I: Singapore in the World

The topic will cover Singapore's exceptional and extraordinary place in the region and the world from a variety of perspectives. It will first look at Singapore's role in the region and the

world in the pre-British and colonial periods. It will analyze the city-state's ties in the region and with the wider world post-1965. It will look in particular at how Singapore's domestic priorities and foreign policy imperatives have influenced its relationships with trading partners and how these partners have played an important part in its economic and social transformation. It will address the place of Singapore in the world today and how that world has shaped through ideas, trade and cultural links Singapore's self-image and identity. The third part will examine Singapore's relations with particular regions and countries including Singapore's role in international organizations.

Part II: Security and Threats

Part II focuses on the security of Singapore and risks that threaten the Singaporean way of life. The lectures explain the meaning of security in the Singapore context and highlights traditional and non-traditional threats faced by Singapore in the past 50 years. It outlines how these threats have been managed and concludes with a projection of likely risks in the future, as well as how Singapore can cope with them. This part begins with understanding security, defining Singapore's security, confronting Regional dynamics and Singapore's security, Managing threats in Singapore, preparing for future risks and closing with conclusion on proactive and vigorous approach to safeguard Singapore's national interests and keeping defence mechanisms in pace with national interests shift with time.

Part III: Economy

Part III will provide an overview of Singapore's economic development from its early industry, growth record to the challenges of restructuring. An understanding of the labour market follows with highlights on tri-partism, changing labour force profile, and foreign manpower. Public finance with relation to taxation, workfare, wage support, and social transfers is also touched on to understand how increasing income inequality have influenced the government's budgetary approach over the years, and the extent to which government transfers has affected the Gini coefficient has increased. The Monetary policy and international trade of Singapore via the Monetary Authority of Singapore's Band-basket-Crawl (BBC) approach is contrasted with the monetary policy approaches of countries like the United States and South Korea. Several key FTAs have been concluded, but this has also led to increasing exposure to global economic cycles. Rising life expectancies, coupled with rapid economic growth, have left many older Singaporeans with inadequate retirement savings for their old age and healthcare needs. The fiscal properties of a provident fund system, such as CPF, will be compared to traditional pension systems; the trade-off between insurance coverage and overall healthcare costs will be discussed. The economics of transport will also be further discussed through the hidden costs of congestion and the alternatives to quota-pricing systems, as well as exploring the principles for regulating, pricing, and subsidizing public transport.

Part IV: Population

Part IV draws attention to the key patterns and consequences of population change in contemporary Singapore. Why is the recent population growth in Singapore at its slowest pace in a decade? Why are Singapore citizens choosing not to have more children? What happens when a quarter of the population is above the age of 60? What does population

ageing mean for other segments of society and their livelihoods? Are infectious diseases emerging as one of the major causes of mortality? Does an influx of migrants into Singapore translate into lesser job opportunities for citizens? Guided by these broad queries, this section therefore critically examines the structures of human population and the processes of change in relation to broad socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. Changes in fertility, morbidity, mortality and migration have significantly affected Singapore and other industrialised nations globally. Such changes have considerable implications for different aspects of social life as well as the allocation and provision of limited and scarce resources in Singapore. These include concerns that revolve around health care and the distribution of illness; household formation, marriage and divorce; human capital and the labour force; care for the elderly and vulnerable; and citizenship and migration issues. An appreciation and understanding of these dynamics in Singapore and the relationship to broader structural arrangements is especially pertinent as different social institutions, policy makers and individuals grapple with and manage the demands and challenges of a rapidly changing and diverse population.

Part V: Diversity, Social Integration and the Urban Environment

Social integration is a wide-ranging and all-encompassing subject in Singapore, and to try to address every issue of social integration within 2 weeks of online content would not do justice to the issues at hand. Hence, SIT has chosen two particular areas of focus; the first section being immigration, citizenship and community development. This section will consider Singapore's migratory past and the challenges of new citizenship post-1965. It will also encourage viewers to understand the process of integration from an immigrant's point of view, looking at the various grassroots initiatives in citizenship and racial harmony. The second section looks at everyday issues related to society, community and integration. Based on SIT's expertise in Sustainable Infrastructure Engineering (SIE), we will explain the challenges and opportunities related to the public transport system in Singapore, and the work that goes into moving masses of individuals around, and consider the future of rail transport in Singapore.

Part VI: Aspirations and Identity

Part VI explores narratives about the 'ideal' Singapore from the perspectives of policymakers and ordinary citizens. It will begin by appraising the SG50 initiative and the complementary Project 50/100 based on theories of utopia and nationalism. Attempts by policymakers to ensure that Singapore stays alluring are also highlighted through its efforts on four areas - *entrepreneurship*, and how the government is introducing schemes to help local businesses grow; *education*, especially the move to embrace liberal arts education; *heritage*, in the form preservation of sites and artefacts; and lastly, *inclusivism at work*, which is represented by the introduction of non-graduate scheme and paternity leave. This will be followed by how ordinary citizens in Singapore express their aspirations for a better Singapore. Centred on the thesis that Singapore is transitioning from a materialist society to an idealist one, it will feature results of an attitude survey on the future and life in Singapore, and also explore in greater detail two areas that have seen increased participation from ordinary Singaporeans. These are culture and the arts, as well as social activism in the spheres of civil society and the new media. Finally, evolving discourses on multiculturalism that have been complicated by mixed race individuals, interracial marriages and reactions to racialised policies are discussed.

As an area that have seen citizens and policymakers engage each other on how best to move forward, multiculturalism will be an apt way to end the course because it shows the transitional nature of this city-state.

COURSE FORMAT

1. Face to face lectures/discussions (approximately 3 hours) will take place **every week on Wednesday**, at TBC, at 3.30pm to 6.45pm (G2).
2. Your attendance and active participation at these lectures/discussions will contribute significantly towards your class participation marks. Mere attendance will not contribute towards class participation.
3. This course will be delivered in partnership with the National Heritage Board, and the group project will be on a topic related to raising awareness and appreciation of heritage in Singapore. Details will be released at the start of Term.

PARTNER ORGANISATION FOR THE GROUP PROJECT – Internal Security Department

Our mission is to keep Singapore safe and sovereign for all Singaporeans. To do so, we collect accurate intelligence, make impartial assessments and take timely action to counter security threats to Singapore’s internal stability and sovereignty. We do this, without fear or favour, because we passionately believe that Singapore belongs to all its citizens regardless of colour or creed and that for a small, multi-racial city state, our collective survival hinges on continued stability and security. **In pursuing** the critical role we play to safeguard Singapore’s survival, we constantly strive to attain professional excellence in our craft and shall not yield to contented mediocrity. We recognise the value of each individual but we value the Team above him for we know that our strength and resilience and therefore, our success, must ultimately stem from the unity and synergy of the Team. **Above all**, therefore, we cherish the character qualities of Integrity, Courage, Loyalty, and Self-Sacrifice, for ours must always be a cause greater than our self.

CLASS TIMETABLE

Week	Date	Activity	NOTES
1	TBC	PROJECT BRIEFING / CONTENT 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 1: SINGAPORE IN THE WORLD • GROUP FORMATION & PROJECT BRIEFING
2	TBC	PROJECT DISCUSSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 MIN. SLOTS FOR EACH GROUP WITH PARTNER
3	TBC	CONTENT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 2: SECURITY AND THREATS
4	TBC	GROUP CONSULTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 MIN. FOR EACH GROUP WITH DR. AIDAN
5	TBC	CONTENT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 3: ECONOMIC ISSUES IN SINGAPORE
6	TBC	CONTENT 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 4: POPULATION ISSUES IN SINGAPORE
7	TBC	GROUP CONSULTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GROUP PROJECT DISCUSSIONS WITH DR. AIDAN
8	TBC	RECESS WEEK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 PAGE PRELIMINARY SUBMISSION TO NHB FOR INPUT (GROUP PROJECT MID-TERM REVIEW)
9	TBC	PROJECT DISCUSSION WITH NHB (Grp. Proj.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 MIN. FOR EACH GROUP WITH PARTNER
10	TBC	CONTENT 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 5: DIVERSITY, SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT
11	TBC	CONTENT 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART 6: ASPIRATIONS AND IDENTITIES
12	TBC	GROUP CONSULTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GROUP PROJECT DISCUSSIONS WITH DR. AIDAN
13	TBC	FINAL PRESENTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GROUPS WILL PRESENT FOR 20 MINUTES EACH

ASSESSMENT MODE

1. The course is assessed on a **Pass/Fail** grading scheme.
 2. The 100% Continual Assessment is apportioned in the following manner:-
 - a. Class Participation – 10%
 - b. Brief Opinion Paper – 20%
 - c. Reflection Journal – 20%
 - d. Group Project – 50%
 3. **Class Participation (10%)** – You are encouraged to actively participate in the discussions and activities that take place in class.
 4. **Brief Opinion Paper (20%)** – Students will work independently to submit an opinion paper (of no more than 600 words) on a selected topic. The details of this assignment will be released at a later date, and is to be submitted by 28 February 2025, 1700 hrs (5pm).
 5. **Reflection Journal (20%)** – Students will write an end of course journal entry (of no more than 600 words) that will reflect on the learning journey through this SMU-X course. The submission date for this is 14 April 2025 (Monday) at 5pm.
 6. **Group Project (50%)** – Students will work in groups of **FIVE students** with students from at least **TWO different** schools to submit a group project. A 1-page mid-term review of the project is to be submitted by 03 March 2025 at 5pm. Group Project Presentation slides are to be uploaded into eLearn by 08 April 2025 (Tuesday), 12 noon. Group project presentations will take place on 09 April 2025 with our partner ISD. The details of this assignment will be released at the start of term, and will culminate in a Group Project Presentation and a 2-page Executive Summary, and the Powerpoint Presentation in PDF format that is to be submitted by 14 April 2025 (Monday) at 5pm.
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ASSIGNMENT FORMAT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All written assignments are to be submitted in double-spaced typing along with a total word count and a written anti-plagiarism declaration. There is a policy of zero tolerance for late submission (except in exceptional circumstances) and for non-submission of assignments.

All written assignments must have the following declaration attached:

“By submitting this paper, I declare that this paper is my original work and solely done by me. All information obtained from other sources has been quoted or paraphrased. These sources have been cited and referenced accordingly. I understand that the violations of academic integrity will be dealt with severely. I declare that I have abided by SMU’s Code of Academic Integrity.”

SMU LIBRARIES - WHERE CAN I GET HELP FOR THIS COURSE (READINGS / ASSIGNMENTS)?

a) Know your Librarians

- Speak with your [Librarians](#) as they offer guidance and research consultations on how to find credible resources, do proper citations and many other helpful topics.

URL: <https://library.smu.edu.sg/services/services-undergraduate-students>

b) Self-Learn (elearn courses)

- Learn how to create in-text citations, bibliographies or reference list in the [Avoiding Plagiarism through the APA Citation](#) course.
- Learn how to undertake academic research systematically and effectively, scope and create a research question in [The Research Process](#) course.

c) General Enquiries

- Email: library@smu.edu.sg
- Chat: [Ask Library](#)
- Digital Library: library.smu.edu.sg

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS:

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's disability support team if you have questions or concerns about academic accommodations: included@smu.edu.sg. Accessible tables in our seminar room are available for students who require them.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (EPTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, Instructors may conduct lessons online via the WebEx platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the WebEx platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.

COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

Please note that only copyright holders are entitled to reproduce their work, publish their work, perform their work in public, communicate their work to the public and make an adaption of their work. Hence, making course materials (owned by the faculty) available for sale or posting such works on websites for gain, is strictly prohibited. Disciplinary action will be taken against those found infringing copyright.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Below are some readings that students might find useful for this class. A more comprehensive list will be made available in closer to the start of semester. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather an indication of the breadth of topics that this course touches on.

1. Chan, David, ed., (2015) *50 Years of Social Issues in Singapore*. Singapore: World Scientific.
2. Chan, David, ed. (2017) *Social futures of Singapore society*. Singapore: World Scientific.
3. Chua, Mui Hoong, ed., (2015) *SG100? : leading thinkers envision Singapore in 2065*. Singapore: Straits Times Press.
4. Fedo, David (2012). *Singapore: Insights from the Inside*. Singapore: Ethos Books.

5. Heng, Chye Kiang, ed., (2016) *50 Years of Urban Planning in Singapore*. Singapore: World Scientific.
6. Ibrahim, Zuraidah, Han, Fook Kwang, Lin, Rachel, Chan, Robin, Chua, Mui Hoong, Lim, Lydia, and Low, Ignatius (2011). *Lee Kuan Yew: Hard truths to keep Singapore going*. Singapore : Straits Times Press.
7. Kausikan, Bilahari, (2017) *Singapore is not an island : views on Singapore foreign policy*. Singapore: Straits Times Press.
8. Krishnadas, Devadas (2014). *Sensing Singapore: Reflections in a Time of Change*. Singapore: Ethos Books.
9. Lee, Kuan Yew (2015). *The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions.
10. Pakir, Sheila and Singh, Malminderjit, eds. (2017) *The birthday book 2017 : what should we never forget?* Singapore: Ethos Books.
11. Paul, Anju Mary, ed., (2017) *Local encounters in a global city : Singapore stories*. Singapore: Ethos Books.
12. Quah, Euston, ed., (2015) *Singapore 2065 : leading insights on economy and environment from 50 Singapore icons and beyond*. Singapore: World Scientific.
13. Yap, Mui Teng and Gee, Christopher, eds. (2014) *Population Outcomes: Singapore 2050*. Singapore: Institute of Policy Studies.