



## Welcome to 2024!

We hope you had a restful and epic break because we are all geared up to rock the new year! In this March edition of the newsletter, we will take a trip down memory lane and pick up some tips on how to thrive in the upcoming academic year!

This issue will recap some memorable moments from our BA family, where they share their Overseas Winter School (OWS) experiences in Europe and Asia. Next, buckle up for an exciting overview and insights from the Analytics Innovation Forum 2024, in case you missed it.

If the new academic year is giving you jitters, no worries - we've got you covered! In this edition, we'll give you a survival guide filled with tips and methods to survive and thrive in school. We'll also share some wise words from our past and present BAIG presidents!

Let's gear up, spread positivity and support each other. Remember, the SUSS BA family is always here for you!

## A new beginning in 2024

**Overseas Winter School**

**Analytics Innovation Forum 2024**

**Tips and Methods in Thriving as a freshman in SUSS**

**Seniors' Tips to Surviving School**



Source: Flaticon

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## Overseas Winter School (OWS)

The commencement of a fresh school year is a time marked by new beginnings, renewed goals, along with the promise of growth and discovery. In this fresh chapter, ripe with endless possibilities and serving as a venue for personal development and the forging of lifelong connections, some of our students embarked on an exciting journey to seek an unforgettable adventure and to gain new experiences overseas. In this article, we delve into the significance of this pivotal moment, with a focus on two of our students who went on the overseas winter school experience last December and hear about their exhilarating experiences.

We spoke to two full-time Year 2 students majoring in Business Analytics - Randel (**R**), who went on an adventure in Berlin, Germany, under Humboldt University of Berlin for a month and took the course “Exploring Berlin Museums - Memory, Collecting and Display” and Zheng Kai (**ZK**), who attended Yonsei University's winter programme in the Republic of Korea.



*Day Trip to Dresden  
(Photo Credits: Randel)*

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## “ Q. What are your motivation and expectations from the overseas winter programme you attended?

**R:** Before this trip, one of my aspirations was to step out of my comfort zone and immerse myself in new cultures (especially because I have yet to explore beyond Asia). I strongly believe in personal growth, and I hold it in high regard. Berlin has long fascinated me as a city that seamlessly blends history, culture, and the arts. I have also always found museums to be fascinating spaces, each holding a treasure trove of stories waiting to be unveiled, thus my reason for choosing the course.

**ZK:** My motivation for this programme was to fulfil my OE requirement and dive deeper into a country I can't seem to get enough of — South Korea. This marks my third visit, but the first two were more for leisure, not learning. This time, I wanted to understand the various Korean traditions and how the country has evolved over time. That's why I signed up for “Korean Popular Culture and Korean Wave” and “Korea and the World.”

## Q. Could you share some of your programme highlights and impactful experiences?

**R:** Some of the most memorable moments were definitely trips to the historical sites alongside the planned tour by the school and also our class field trips! Visiting landmarks like the Berlin Wall, the Jewish Museum, and the site of Hitler's death brought history to life in a way that books and lectures never could. It is still surreal to me that I was at the same place as those who have shaped the course of history.

**ZK:** One of my most memorable experiences was visiting Nami Island. Even though there wasn't a lot to do there, the atmosphere was so chill and calm. Plus, I'll never forget taking the zipline to get there. The price was definitely unforgettable—pretty expensive—but it was my first time ziplining, so I guess it's fine! I might even watch Winter Sonata to reminisce.



**Zheng Kai at Yonsei University.**  
**(Photo Credits: Zheng Kai)**

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## **Q. How did the OWS experience contribute to your personal and academic growth?**

**R:** Attending the winter school in Berlin was an eye-opening experience that I will never forget. Stepping out of my comfort zone, I learnt to be independent and adapt to the new environment. Being in Berlin, surrounded by a new culture and language, forced me to navigate unfamiliar situations with confidence. From figuring out public transportation to understanding cultural norms, it was challenging but I grew more self-reliant and resilient. This experience also instilled in me a newfound sense of confidence in my ability to thrive in diverse environments.

Interestingly, I have also noticed a stark difference between Singapore's education style and the Western education style (from the interactions with my fellow American classmates in class). I feel like Singapore prioritises the distinction between what is right and wrong while the Western education



***Class Photo Time!***  
***(Photo Credits: Randel)***

embraces diverse perspectives (fostering critical thinking skills). During class discussions, everyone had to share their viewpoints about a certain topic, and there was a distinct difference between the conversations shared by Singaporeans versus students from other countries. This reminded me to express my viewpoints openly, as I learnt to articulate my thoughts more effectively with greater depth.

**ZK:** Being overseas for an extended period without my family definitely made me more independent. It was like a crash course in adulting, but with many fun adventures and new friends along the way. I learnt to rely on myself, navigate new environments, and embrace different cultures.

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## **Q. How did the OWS provide opportunities for networking or collaboration? Did you make any lasting connections?**

**R:** I was able to connect with several SUSS peers through the trip and also met other international students from the US, China and Korea! The school had many activities planned through the 3 weeks of classes there, including opportunities to socialise, tour around the city, and even visit a nearby city (Potsdam).

**ZK:** I did make lasting connections for sure. While we don't text regularly, we do comment on each other's IG stories and catch up once in a while. I've promised to give the other international students a tour if they ever visit Singapore, and I'm looking forward to visiting them in their country too!



**School Tour to Potsdam.**  
(Photo Credits: Randel)

## **Q. What advice would you give to someone who is considering attending the same OWS programme in the future?**

**R:** Meals there can get expensive so be ready to cook if you want to save some money! People mostly speak English there, but knowing a few phrases would be helpful. Germans are very friendly, although they may seem reserved at first. Don't let their initial frown scare you away—once you start speaking to them, they will warm up! Berlin is also a diverse city with many people of different cultures (Vietnamese and Turkish food is everywhere!). It's also relatively safe, just avoid certain parks at night. Lastly, you won't regret your choice if you love arts, fashion, pop, history and culture! Just go for it and enjoy it while you're there.

**ZK:** A tip to make your experience better is to create an itinerary. Sure, the programme is exciting, but don't forget to explore the beautiful country you're in. Classes often end slightly earlier, leaving you with plenty of time to wander around and discover hidden gems, especially the food. So, take down a few must-see spots, and make the most of your time both in and out of the classroom. Happy exploring!

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## **Q. What leisure activities did you engage in during the OWS? Are there any highly recommended places or activities to go?**

**R:** DRESDEN! It's a 10/10 place to visit if you want to be in awe of the architecture.

If you are visiting during the Christmas or New Year period, do not miss out on the Christmas markets and the New Year's Eve fireworks!

Tip: Be careful though, fireworks are set off in the streets throughout the day and EVERYWHERE!



***Randel's Memories with roommates at Dresden.***  
***(Photo Credits: Randel)***



***Winter in Nami Island.***  
***(Photo Credits: Zheng Kai)***

**ZK:** One of my memorable adventures during OWS was skiing for the first time. I mastered the art of falling headfirst into the snow. Despite the steep learning curve, skiing was pretty fun.

Tip: Skip the weekend crowds and hit the slopes on a weekday. I've heard great things about Vivaldi Ski Resort, and you can easily book your ski lesson through websites like Klook.

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## Q. Please share your overall OWS experience with us!

**R:** Berlin wasn't initially on my list of places to visit, but this trip completely changed my perspective. I had an amazing month and learnt so much about the city's history and culture. Sundays are rest days there, so most shops are closed, and we mostly stayed in. We only realised towards the end of the trip that there were many flea markets that only opened on Sundays! So, definitely check them out because flea markets that open on the weekdays are not as lively.

**ZK:** It's a shame that the heavy snow prevented me from visiting the buffer zone during my demilitarised zone (DMZ) tour. I was looking forward to learning more about the disputes between North and South Korea and how life differs between the two Koreas. On a brighter note, I highly recommend visiting Gyeongbokgung Palace. It's full of picturesque spots perfect for photos, and the history of the place is interesting. Plus, it's a great place to try wearing a hanbok for the first time! ”

*What an invaluable insight from both Randel and Zheng Kai! From the thrill of immersing themselves in new cultures to the challenges of navigating unfamiliar environments, both embarked on journeys of self-discovery and personal development. Through their experiences, we, as the audiences, gained invaluable insights and cultivated a deeper understanding of the world around us. By sharing their stories, we aim to inspire future students to seize the opportunity to embark on their own overseas exchange adventures. We encourage you to embrace the unknown, step out of your comfort zones, and experience the richness of cultural exchange. Ultimately, participating in an overseas exchange programme promises not only academic enrichment but also a lifetime of memories, friendships, and personal growth.*

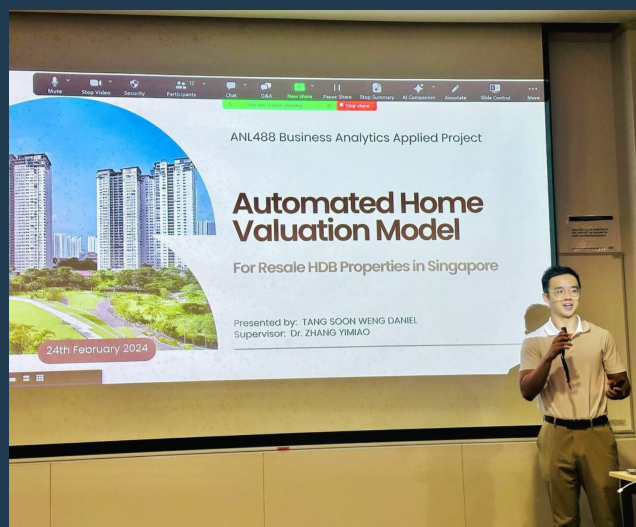


*Dinner Time with Local and Foreign Friends!  
(Photo Credits: Zheng Kai)*

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# Analytics Innovation Forum 2024

## Automated Valuation Model (AVM)



**AVM presentation by Daniel Tang**  
(Photo Credits: Suf)

The Analytics Innovation Forum is held annually to showcase innovative approaches in business analytics and provide the audience with real-life examples of how business problems can be solved using tools and concepts learnt in the programme.

We hoped you attended and enjoyed the insightful Analytics Innovation Forum held on the 24th of February. We were fortunate to have two outstanding students, Daniel Tang and Lu Hao Wei, showcasing their capstone projects and how they used concepts such as data mining (read on to find out more) to successfully tackle real estate and social media challenges respectively!

Daniel formulated an Automated Valuation Model (AVM) that aids in estimating resale prices of HDB properties in Singapore, while Hao Wei masterfully integrated predictive analytics to mine data in social media for food safety.



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Let's dive into the cool world of real estate, where getting the price just right is super important. Daniel has been up to something pretty awesome with his latest project. He's built this neat tool called an Automated Valuation Model, or AVM for short, that's all about figuring out what HDB flats in Singapore might sell for. It's kind of like those smart tech solutions that keep us healthy, but for home prices.

Daniel kicked things off by really getting into the nitty-gritty of his data. He pored over every detail, spotting and fixing anything that seemed off, like gaps in the information or just plain wrong entries. Clean data is a big deal for his AVM to work its magic.

Armed with insights from loads of research and his own know-how, Daniel picked out the bits of data that really matter for predicting those dollar signs. We're talking about stuff like how big the flat is, how long the lease is, and how close it is to the nearest mall or school. Plus, he tossed in something called the Resale Price Index to give the model a feel for the market vibe.

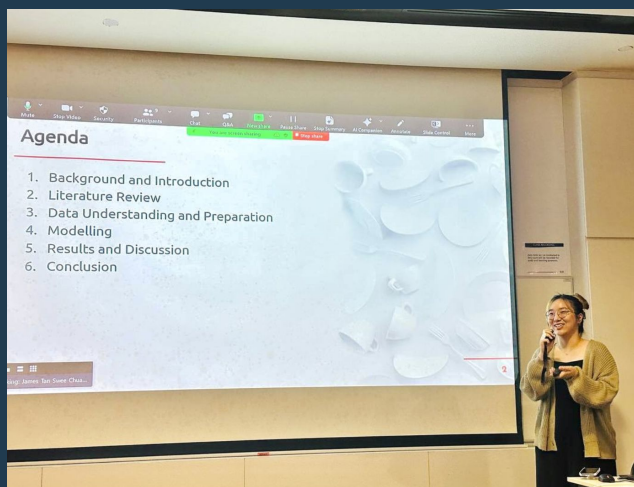
Then came the time to pick the best tools for the job. Daniel tried everything from simple linear regression to fancier stuff like lasso and ridge regressions — think of them as the special agents of math that don't get thrown off by tricky data. He also gave a shout out to random forest and neural networks because they're awesome at handling complex patterns.

He split his data into two piles — one to train his tools and one to test them. This way, he could see how well they learned to predict prices. He used some smart math to see which tool did the best job, and guess what? The random forest model took the crown. Then, Daniel played around with the settings — kind of like tuning a guitar — until everything sounded just right.

But Daniel didn't just stop at building a generic AVM. He took a deep dive to see which features were really pulling the strings on resale prices. This gave everyone some pretty cool insights into what's heating up the property market.

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# Predictive Analytics in Public Healthcare



***Predictive Analytics in Public Healthcare via Social Media presentation by Lu Hao Wei (Photo Credits: Suf)***

Hao Wei's capstone project delves into using social media data to enhance public food safety. She begins by underscoring the widespread occurrence and gravity of foodborne illnesses globally, stressing the imperative for heightened food safety measures that transcend mere regulatory changes.

Her research underscores the significant role that restaurants play in food poisoning cases, despite existing regulatory frameworks. She delves into the complexities of current inspection methods, citing challenges such as resource limitations and delayed data availability, which result in gaps in risk detection.

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To address these challenges, Hao Wei's project leveraged text analysis of user-generated content, particularly online reviews, to construct a predictive model for identifying high-risk restaurants. She meticulously conducted data collection, cleansing, oversampling, sentiment analysis, and keyword extraction to refine the dataset for modeling purposes.

Hao Wei discussed her rationale for selecting algorithms like gradient boosting, k-Nearest Neighbours, and random forest, highlighting the importance of recall as the primary evaluation metric due to its focus on food safety inspections.

The project's outcomes demonstrated the effectiveness of Hao Wei's model, particularly the Gradient Boosting component, in surpassing baseline models, showcasing its potential in early identification of high-risk restaurants. While acknowledging limitations such as subjective keyword definitions, Jo emphasises the need for comprehensive approaches and cross-regional validation for future endeavors.

In conclusion, Hao Wei's project laid a robust foundation for more effective predictive food safety risk, with potential implications for enhancing public food health practices and elevating restaurant hygiene standards.

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# Tips and Methods In Thriving As a Freshman in SUSS



Source: Flaticon

## 1st Semester School life

As the inaugural semester draws to a close, we'll be sitting down with Business Analytics freshmen to delve into their reflections on the journey thus far. From juggling coursework, hobbies, and commitments to acclimating to a new environment, these students have navigated through a myriad of challenges and successes during their first semester.

For numerous individuals, the shift from tertiary education marks a significant transition. For male students, having recently completed their National Service, a two-year hiatus from academic pursuits, this period evokes a blend of anticipation and uncertainty.

Time management emerged as a recurring theme among students. With multiple assignments, commitments and extra curricular activities, finding a balance became essential. "Since I am doing both full-time work and school, my schedule is naturally very packed, and I need to manage my time well," says Xavier Chong, who juggles both full-time work and school.

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A tip from how Xavier Chong and Hui Ting copes with the fast-paced environment: “One of the most effective ways I cope is by maintaining a detailed calendar. I include every single detail in my Google Calendar to ensure that I am aware of deadlines for assignments or topics involved in individual reports or team projects. This practice helps me maintain a clear overview of my schedule and commitments.”

## **Exam Tips**

As we approach our exams, let's glean some valuable insights from Jialin, a Year 1 student who achieved remarkable results despite starting with no prior knowledge in analytics.

### **Tip #1: Craft a Realistic Study Schedule**

Jialin emphasises the importance of crafting a realistic study schedule tailored to accommodate all subjects. Instead of marathon study sessions, she advocates breaking down study sessions into shorter, focused segments to enhance retention.

### **Tip #2: Use Supplementary Materials**

Many business analytics modules involving practical applications like Excel, IBM, and Tableau. Drawing from her limited experience, Jialin turned to online platforms such as YouTube for tutorials and additional resources. These supplementary materials proved instrumental in bolstering her understanding.

### **Tip #3: Practise Past Exam Papers**

Lastly, Jialin underscores the significance of practising past exam papers to familiarise oneself with the exam format and anticipate potential question types. This strategic approach not only aids in identifying weaknesses but also directs efforts towards improvement in targeted areas.

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# Seniors' Tips to Surviving School Life as a University Student



*Source: Flaticon*

Navigating university life can be both exhilarating and challenging, especially for those embarking on this new academic journey. With the freedom to explore diverse interest groups comes the responsibility to manage assignments, maintain a social life, and prioritise personal well-being. Therefore, it is essential that we approach school life with a strategic mindset. We have asked our seniors on their know-hows to surviving and making the most of their university life; we have compiled and summarised what they said into 5 points:

## **1. Start work early, do not procrastinate!**

Many seniors have pointed out that it is vital to start assignments early, so that you will have more time for exam revision. It is important that you know your deadlines, and prioritise the ones that may take a little longer to complete. Don't be afraid to ask for help when faced with a difficult assignment!

## **2. Step out of your Comfort zone and try new things!**

University is a place where you have newfound freedom to explore your different interests and passions. Make use of the school's Interest Groups and CCA's to step out of your comfort zone and try new things! On top of that, step out of your comfort zone to make new connections as well! Always keep an open mind and be willing to interact with new people, and who knows, that could land you an opportunity you've been looking for!

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### 3. **Keep yourself busy, learn the importance of time management!**

Time management is a very important skill, especially in university. Being able to juggle many commitments at once can be very daunting for many; however, one tip suggested is to plan out a schedule and stick to it! Setting goals for the semester, such as wanting to improve GPA, or get an internship can really help when it comes to planning your schedule. These little habits will add up, and over time, you will see that your time management skills will naturally flourish.

“It is important to understand that juggling life is very similar to juggling balls. Some balls are made of plastic (meeting a friend to sing Karaoke) and some of the balls are made of glass (TMA submission date). It is ok to drop the plastic balls, but not the glass balls. Prioritise and decide for yourself which balls you can afford to drop, and which you cannot.” ~Joshua, Y4

### 4. **Surround yourself with friends and family!**

Spending time with friends and family has been proven to improve your emotional and mental health. Finding that group of friends to do assignments, go through hardships, and go out for a nice time can really make your university life meaningful. While it is important to get assignments and work done, do remember to make some time out of your busy schedules and have a meal with your friends and families too!

“If you want to travel fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together.” ~ African Proverb



*Source: Flaticon*

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## 5. Enjoy what you do, maintain a positive mindset!

Simply telling yourself that everything will be alright can go a long way in improving your focus and motivation. Focus on the good things in every situation, and it will make mundane tasks more enjoyable. When in doubt, ask yourself, if you don't enjoy what you are doing, is it really worth doing it? Grades aren't everything; don't beat yourself up over a C+ on an assignment. If you stay focused and maintain a positive mindset, everything will work out for you!

"You don't have to conform to what your peers are doing; find good company and take it easy on yourself!" ~ Kylie, BAIG President 2022

"Knowing that grades are just numbers and the degree is a stepping stone." ~ Emmanuel, BAIG President 2024



Source: Flaticon



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## Mini Python Challenge

Write a function that separates odd and even integers from the given list of numbers:

```
numbers = [0, 14, 57, 29, 72, 43, 36, 8, 65, 91, 117]
```

There should be a list for even integers and a list for odd integers. Each list should be displayed with the numbers separated by a distinct space.

Under each list, include a statement that shows the number of integers in it.

**Example:**

```
[list of even numbers]
```

```
There are x even numbers.
```

```
[list of odd numbers]
```

```
There are x odd numbers.
```

Look out for the solutions in the next issue!

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# Solution to Mini Python Challenge (Dec 2023 Issue)

```
import pandas as pd

data = {'shows': ['Desperate Housewives',
                 'Superstore', 'The Eclipse', 'Digimon Adventure
                 (2020)', 'Sweet Home', 'The Good Place', 'Schitts
                 Creek'], 'Ratings_%': [72, 93, 83, 75, 83,
                 97,93], 'Stars_/10': [7.6, 7.9, 8.1, 6.8, 7.3,
                 8.2, 8.5]}
df = pd.DataFrame(data)

print(df['Stars_/10']>8.0)

print([df[df['Stars_/10']>8.0]])

mask = df['Stars_/10']>8.0
df[mask]
```