

Revamped curriculum to better prepare SUSS students for work

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Another university has revamped its curriculum to better prepare students for the evolving world of work and give them more flexibility in their studies.

The Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) announced on Tuesday a new set of 12 common modules that new full-time undergraduates will have to take from July 2023, as a result of a review of its curriculum in 2021.

The new curriculum will apply to students from all schools – humanities and behavioural sciences, business, human development, science and technology – with the exception of law.

The modules, which cover topics like interdisciplinary processes, learning skills, digital and data literacy, creativity and wellness, are similar to other common courses that educational institutions like the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University have introduced in recent years.

Professor Robbie Goh, provost of SUSS, said the university's students will also have more space to take a minor or second major to give them more options for their careers.

The revamped curriculum was launched by Education Minister Chan Chun Sing at SUSS' inaugural Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Symposium, which was held at Orchard Hotel.

Speaking at the event, Mr Chan challenged educational institutions to explore new ways of teaching and learning.

To help students learn for life, institutions must move beyond the emphasis on subject matter content to imparting real learning skills and helping them learn independently, he said.

This includes equipping them with the ability to discern and distil information, collaborate with others and find solutions often at the intersection of disciplines, he added.

Under the new common curriculum, full-time undergraduates will take 12 core modules. They will also take part in compulsory community engagement and overseas attachments, which were already in place previously. These requirements will apply to the 2023 intake of about 1,000 full-time students.

Part-time students not on the honours track will be required to take four core modules while those on the honours track will take six such modules. SUSS takes in 4,000 such students each year.

In addition, SUSS will be moving towards a 12-week semester, instead of its current two six-week terms in a semester.

Prof Goh said the university had received feedback that students and lecturers found it tough to engage in more in-depth learning in six weeks.

"A 12-week semester would make more sense... create more breathing space for students, especially those with family and work commitments," he said, adding that there would be more time for independent learning, group projects and even experiential learning like study trips.

SUSS will also be adjusting its curricula requirements so that more students can take up minors of their choice, as well as a double major, which was previously not available to them.

Prof Goh said the hope is that more students will take up these specialisations outside their first major, as it could broaden their knowledge and perspective and be beneficial to their careers.

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