



Yale-NUS College welcomes the Class of 2021

Text by Poon Yee Suan | Image by Weave for Yale-NUS College

The Class of 2021 received an official welcome to Yale-NUS at the annual First Year Assembly on 11 August 2017. The new cohort comprised 248 students, representing 45 nationalities from all over the globe. Singaporeans continued to make up the largest pool of students in this year's intake, hailing from 28 schools across Singapore.

About 600 guests graced the occasion, with Yale-NUS Governing Board members, faculty and staff, incoming students, as well as family and friends joining the students in the festivities. Yale-NUS Governing Board member and President of the National University of Singapore, Professor Tan Chorh Chuan presided over the event.

In her welcome address, Ms Laura Severin, Director of Admissions & Financial Aid, recognised the outstanding achievements of the students and the diversity in the Class of 2021. She emphasised how the students' exceptional potential to contribute and grow in Yale-NUS had shone through in their applications. "You bring rich experiences in the arts, community service, athletics and more. You have excelled in the classroom and have displayed excellence in leadership and initiative within your communities," she said.

Professor Tan Tai Yong, President, Yale-NUS College highlighted the skills and perspectives that the Class of 2021 will gain from this unique model of liberal arts and science education that integrates the best of the East and West.

President Tan shared, "You will be encouraged to question, to think for yourself, to see issues from different perspectives and to arrive at your own conclusions. Your views will take shape and they will be tested, as they should be, in the cut and thrust of seminar debates, over the course of reading and studying, during conversations with your lecturers, your peers and friends."

Capping off his speech, President Tan illustrated the transformative experience of a Yale-NUS education by sharing how the first graduating cohort of Yale-NUS, the Class of 2017, contemplated different paths ahead of their graduation. From careers in management consultancy, the arts or the public sector to postgraduate studies, President Tan noted that each Yale-NUS graduate will bring new perspectives to their chosen vocation.

Following President Tan's speech, guests were treated

to a rousing performance by the Yale-NUS Barbershop Chorus. The student a cappella group serenaded the crowd, drawing resounding applause from the audience for their talents and perfect harmony.

Ms Saza Faradilla, President of the Student Government, greeted the incoming students with words of support and encouragement, friendly advice and insights as an upperclassman. She emphasised the importance of maintaining one's well-being while being immersed in life at Yale-NUS.

Associate Professor Andrew M Bailey, who was the nominated faculty speaker, shared the joys and experiences that students can look forward to as part of living in a close community. He encouraged them to make the most of their experience and expressed the faculty's support for students. "We, your professors, are here for you. It is our duty, our delight, to coach you through the rough spots, to cheer as you find your 'aha!' moments, and when things start getting too easy again, to challenge you to climb higher still," he said.

The celebratory balloon drop marked the end of the ceremony. Adeline Loh (Class of 2021) commented,

"The First Year Assembly was both an ending and a beginning, marking the end of orientation, and the start of the school year. It felt great to be together as a community."

The theme for this year's orientation was "Take flight", which represented how the College is ready to soar to greater heights, having marked a key foundational milestone with the successful graduation of its first class. Organised by the Dean of Students Office, in collaboration with the Orientation Committee, and supported by the residential colleges, Dean's Fellows and the Residential College Advisors (RCAs), the students explored Singapore and learnt more about the College and the community during a two-week orientation programme.

This year marks the first time that upperclassmen will assume residential advising responsibilities as RCAs. The newly formed RCA role supports first-year students and promotes community building alongside the residential college staff. Another new feature in the orientation programme is the addition of RCA group meetings where RCAs and first year students can bond and get to know each other.



New heads for the Science and Social Sciences divisions

Text by Melissa Wang | Image by Yasunari Watanabe

This academic year, two professors will assume the roles of Divisional Directors for the Science and Social Science Divisions. Professor Stephen Pointing, an environmental scientist, took over the baton from Professor Mark Bussell to helm the Science Division. Meanwhile, Visiting Professor John Driffill will be the Divisional Director of Social Sciences, taking over from Professor Jane M Jacobs, who has stepped down and is currently away on sabbatical.

Moving forward, both professors have exciting plans for their divisions. For Professor Driffill, who has been with the College since 2016, he is looking forward to even greater stability now that the College has moved past the initial stages of being set up.

“The College has grown from just an idea over the last four or five years; there have been many changes on the way, as student and faculty numbers have grown, practices have developed, and so on,” Professor Driffill shared.

“It seems like a time for consolidation; gradual refinements of procedures and practices as experience accumulates.”

On that note, Professor Driffill hopes to drive some of these refinements, such as advanced planning of the teaching programmes, improving the majors’ web pages to make them more informative, as well as striking

a greater balance in terms of the multiple responsibilities of faculty members, such as their teaching commitments and research work.

Meanwhile, Professor Pointing shared that the subject areas that the Science Division offers are highly relevant to today’s technology-driven society.

“My priority is to see that we produce graduates who become scientific leaders and innovators of the future. As we are currently on a strong growth trajectory, another priority is to ensure that we recruit and support faculty who can enthusiastically grow our curriculum and further our reputation for providing a learning experience that is highly student-centred,” Professor Pointing explained.

In the long run, Professor Pointing has a wide scope of plans that he wants to put in motion here, including an expansion in the diversity of courses offered to students across all science disciplines. In addition, he intends to promote the growth of experiential learning opportunities, including capstone projects, field trips, study abroad and other non-classroom activities.

Professor Pointing also wants to encourage and enhance the focus on science communication so that the College’s Science community is able to effectively communicate their research ideas, while further

developing the College’s relationships with major innovators in the science and technology industry, and build closer ties that will benefit students, and the College’s research activity. To that end, Professor Pointing intends to further support growth in strategically important research themes and encourage greater research interaction with both Yale University and the National University of Singapore (NUS).

New to the College, Professor Pointing also shared that the most powerful motivator for him to join Yale-NUS College was the students. “Our students are exceptional young people and my interaction with them highlighted the dynamic, exciting and demanding learning environment that both they and the faculty have created at the College. I believe the liberal arts model offers really exciting opportunities for science learning that is relevant to today’s career opportunities for young people, and so bringing my research here was also something I felt extremely comfortable about.”

Professor Pointing said the strong heritage that the College enjoys from Yale and NUS, and the strong commitment that the Singapore government has made to science and technology, coupled with its vibrant multicultural society were compelling factors for

his move to Singapore and Yale-NUS.

Both Divisional Directors are looking forward to working with each other and Professor Rajeev Patke, Divisional Director of Humanities. Each noted the interdisciplinary nature of the Yale-NUS curriculum, which will provide multiple opportunities for the three divisions to work in synergy.

“The divisions are not separate; there are many intersections. The Divisional Directors meet frequently in several different meetings. I imagine we’ll all work together harmoniously and collaboratively,” Professor Driffill shared.

Professor Driffill is here with his wife, Naoko Shimazu, Professor of Humanities and Head of Studies of History. He hopes to explore the region further and to get more exercise into his lifestyle.

Meanwhile, Professor Pointing moved to Singapore from New Zealand together with his wife and their 12-year-old son.

On how they have been settling in thus far, Professor Pointing shared, “Singapore is very different from New Zealand in so many ways but my family and I are really enjoying our new home. My wife is from Hong Kong and she loves life here, a strong endorsement given the rivalry between these two Asian cities.”



Learning diverse languages through teleconference

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by Yasunari Watanabe

In an increasingly globalised world, the mastery of different languages is becoming essential to students who hope to embark on careers that span countries and continents.

At Yale-NUS College, students are offered the opportunity to learn diverse languages such as Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Sanskrit via the Yale Center for Language Study.

According to Senior Lecturer of Spanish and Associate Director of Language Studies Eduardo Lage-Otero, students have indicated significant interest in these languages. To enable the students to pursue these opportunities, the College worked with Yale to develop language programmes conducted via teleconference. These new classes augment the current range of language programmes that are already being offered at the College, in partnership with the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Centre for Language Studies.

"Although this programme is still in pilot mode, I consider it a great way to increase the opportunities available to our students to learn a new language while strengthening our links to Yale," Dr Lage-Otero shared.

Martin Vasev (Class of 2018) was one of four students who took a beginner class in Russian last semester. Besides Russian, Martin

speaks Bulgarian, which is his mother tongue with Spanish as his second language, as well as English and Chinese. Martin had made a promise to himself to take a language class every semester and he decided to take up Russian after completing Chinese up to the Upper Intermediate level.

"When looking through the classes, Russian immediately attracted my attention. It is widely spoken in Bulgaria, where Russian literature and culture have strong influences. While growing up, my mother would play me songs and movies in Russian. When making the choices for the semester, I thought that it was time to finally 'yield to the pressure' and begin learning Russian," he shared.

While Martin had reservations about taking a class conducted over teleconference, the experience was so fulfilling he decided to continue taking it in his senior year.

"Initially, I thought it would be very difficult to conduct the classes, with the professor on the other side of the world, many time zones away. Fortunately, my experience was excellent. The professor was always available for questions and discussions, and the advanced technology in the classroom made it feel as if we were in the same room," he noted.

"The class itself was extremely enjoyable and

rewarding. The atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly, and the pace was right. At the end of the semester, we covered so much material that we were able to write essays in Russian and listen to Russian news."

To help him grasp the language, Martin also received weekly peer tutoring from Anna Evtushenko (Class of 2017), who hails from Novosibirsk, Russia, which he found to have been tremendously helpful.

For the module's final project, Martin worked with his classmates to develop a brochure about Yale-NUS College in Russian. "We covered topics such as academics, residential living, professional experience, and daily life. It was really the culmination of a semester-long effort – from doing research on the topic in Russian, to writing the text and piecing the design together. Instead of spending hours and hours revising grammar points, we applied the same knowledge for a practical outcome," Martin explained.

According to Dr Lage-Otero, languages are a key component of a liberal arts education. "Learning another language is an integral part of a liberal arts education. Many students study a language as part of their majors in Anthropology, Global Affairs or Literature for instance. Some have learnt

a new language to conduct research for their capstone projects in History and Philosophy, while others study a language as part of their personal development and to complement their goals in their major," he noted.

Other languages offered at Yale-NUS College include Latin, Ancient Greek and Spanish. Students can also learn French, Japanese and Thai at the NUS Centre for Language Studies which offers 13 language programmes.

Carmen Denia (Class of 2017) studied Latin and Ancient Greek over the course of her college career and took a teleconference class in Italian in her senior year.

Carmen's interest in Italian developed when she spent a summer in Rome in her penultimate summer. "What really got me interested in Italian was living in Rome for part of the summer last year through a Yale Summer Study programme. When the opportunity presented itself to learn Italian formally here at Yale-NUS, I realised that I had fallen in love with the language so it only seemed right to take the course. I want to be able to go back to Rome and find my friends, bring them presents, and fully understand everything they're saying this time!"



Inaugural Writers' Centre Literary Awards

Text by Wen Kin Lim | Image by Melissa Wang

In April this year, the Yale-NUS Writers' Centre held its inaugural Literary Awards, recognising exceptional work of individual students and the accomplishments of the creative writing community at Yale-NUS College.

Professor Robin Hemley, Director of the Writing Programme at Yale-NUS explained the motivation behind setting up the Awards.

"The Writers' Centre Literary Awards honour and celebrate the achievements of student writers. Before our first class graduated, we wanted to start this tradition at Yale-NUS," he said.

The Literary Awards are presented in four categories, Fiction, Non-fiction, Poetry, and Playwriting. The first round of selection was done by internal Yale-NUS judges and the winners eventually chosen by external judges, who included bestselling authors like T Geronimo Johnson and Lisa Zeidner, and Director of Creative Writing at Yale University, Richard Deming.

Bryant Chan (Class of 2017) was awarded first place in Fiction for his story, *Deus Ex Olympia*. The story is a humorous piece about Greek gods living amongst normal humans in New York City and having to adjust to mortal life. It was inspired by his semester abroad in Columbia University, where he produced many of his other favourite writings.

Bryant majored in Arts and Humanities with a specialisation in creative writing. In his senior year, he served as a peer tutor in the Writers' Centre and found the experience to be very formative.

He shared, "Helping my peers with their writing assignments has really helped hone my

military family sitcom. In the play, Yan explores the themes of rebellion and resistance, pushing the rules of the conventional sitcom such as typical canned laughter and family melodrama.

Yan explained he drew his inspiration from a Kurt Cobain t-shirt he saw in clothing retailer Uniqlo,

The Yale-NUS Literary Awards will be held annually. Visit the Writers' Centre website at <https://writerscentre.yale-nus.edu.sg/> for more information on the submission guidelines for the Academic Year 2017-2018 Literary Awards Competition.

"Writing is a way for me to explore worlds that exist and those that don't. It's a form of escape, to imagine something else out there and to find meaning in action."

interpersonal skills – I feel like after a semester, I'm a lot better at understanding what people need help with, and how to better explain it to them."

For Myle Yan Tay (Class of 2019), who was awarded second place in both Fiction and Playwriting categories, "Writing is a way for me to explore worlds that exist and those that don't. It's a form of escape, to imagine something else out there and to find meaning in action."

Yan's writing, for which he was awarded second place in the Playwriting category, *Growing Up Green* is about a

"It was weird to see this iconic t-shirt in American pop-culture mass produced, made by a Japanese clothing company and then exported to Singapore. So from there, I wanted to look at rebellion and what it looks like when it isn't easy to resist."

On 17 April, students gathered in the Black Box Theatre to celebrate the achievements of the prize winners, and the accomplishments of the creative writing community at Yale-NUS. A reading by the group of the prize winners also accompanied the celebration.



Contributing to student-led pro bono initiatives

Text by Daryl Yang | Image provided by The Military Justice Project

Last semester, Daniel Ng (Class of 2018) and Amelia Chew (Class of 2017) received awards from the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Faculty of Law for their work in pro bono projects. To recognise their commitment and passion towards providing quality pro bono services, Daniel was given the Special Recognition Award while Amelia received the Pro Bono Leadership award.

Students in the Double Degree Programme (DDP) in Law and Liberal Arts programme read law at the Faculty of Law at NUS and liberal arts at Yale-NUS College at the same time. This programme provides an interdisciplinary legal education in a residential, liberal arts setting and students graduate with a Bachelor of Arts (with Honours) degree from Yale-NUS College and a Bachelor of Laws (with Honours) degree from the Faculty of Law, NUS.

Upon matriculation at university, Daniel joined The Military Justice Project, an initiative at the NUS Faculty of Law that aims to provide accessible legal assistance to servicemen in the Singapore Armed Forces. "I had an extremely enjoyable time in the military as a Scout Platoon Commander in an infantry battalion. After I completed National Service, I knew that I wanted to continue to contribute actively to the military. When I learnt about The Military Justice Project, I

immediately jumped on the opportunity to continue to serve the military with a more specialised and much-needed skillset," he shared.

During his term, Daniel and his team worked closely with the Ministry of Defence and the legal community to facilitate the effective administration of Military Discipline through projects like the Military Legal Aid Scheme and the Defending Officers' Training. He also started the Military Justice Project – National Police Cadet Corps (NPCC) Basic Criminal Law Programme to educate secondary school NPCC cadets on military law in an engaging manner.

According to Daniel, the interdisciplinary experience of reading both law and liberal arts proved useful in his endeavours. "The Yale-NUS experience has helped me to recognise larger systemic problems that have to be fixed before military justice can improve. At Yale-NUS, I met many like-minded peers who are active in advocacy and social change. One of the most important things I learnt was to recognise that advocacy or change in the military justice system cannot be adversarial but should be collaborative in nature. Hence, I focused on building connections and bridges so as to facilitate the easy flow of information between key stakeholders," he shared.

Daniel has since handed

over the baton to another Yale-NUS student, Chong Ren Jie (Class of 2019), to helm the leadership of the initiative. Ren Jie shared that his experience as a Military Police Investigation Officer motivated him to contribute to the Military Justice Project after starting college.

"During National Service, I worked on many cases. My task was straightforward. That is, to investigate the truth of the matter and to build a case against the accused servicemen. However, after the submission of my investigation papers, I often found myself concerned with the representation of these accused servicemen in the courts martial," he reflected.

"In my experience, the investigation process is also not only stressful to the servicemen, but to their families as well. Parents often do not know about the types of military offences, punishments and the processes of investigation to prosecution. I felt deeply that something could be done about this and the initiative uniquely positions me to take steps in order to improve this situation," he added. Ren Jie led his team in producing a Defending Officers' Guidebook to assist Defending Officers (DOs) in better representing accused servicemen in courts martial.

For Amelia, who served as Publicity Co-Head of the NUS Pro Bono Group, she worked

with the team to organise legal education workshops called 'Law & You' for foreign domestic workers. The aim was to empower them with an understanding their rights and of the law in Singapore.

Besides community service, some DDP students also looked into improving accessibility to law-related resources. Cephias Tan (Class of 2018), worked with Koh Wei Jie (Class of 2017) to develop Uppercase, an innovative platform which increased accessibility to parliamentary debates and speeches. This platform has since picked up by the Legal Education Cluster Committee (LECC) at the Singapore Academy of Law, with whom Cephias and Wei Jie were working closely with to further achieve end-user accessibility for other law-related sites.

Cephias shared that it was the chance to take both law and liberal arts classes and the culture of innovation and collaboration at Yale-NUS College that helped him to think of such an idea.

"The programming and computing courses here at Yale-NUS provided me with a basic understanding of string methods — the backbone technique for all functions in Uppercase. This allowed me to translate feedback in laymen terms to programming terms in working with Wei Jie to develop the programme," he explained.



Unexpected friendships sparked by Lunch Tag initiative

Text by Wen Kin Lim | Image by Weave for Yale-NUS College

Describing his experience during a Lunch Tag date, Christopher Tee (Class of 2017, *left in photo below*), a new Dean's Fellow at Yale-NUS College, shared, "I remember that someone had interrupted our date while we were in the middle of it. We actually did not mind! Our conversation over baked pasta and roast chicken eventually turned into a discussion about sociology and religion with Marx and Weber."

fixed period wins prizes.

The Lunch Tag initiative, which was established at Yale University, was started at the College in 2014 by four Dean's Fellows who had studied there.

Samson Berhane, who now works in Institutional Affairs, was one of the Lunch Tag pioneers when there were only two classes of students.

He recalled, "It was a bit strange initially for the Class

Some participants recounted how small talk on random topics turned to engaging debates about philosophy and food, while others shared how the date eventually became a group lunch with their peers.

One senior student found out that a lunch tag date with a College librarian turned out to be fortuitous as she managed to get help to find research resources from the library that proved useful for

friends," he said.

Lunch Tag is not limited to students. Staff and faculty are also invited to join the conversations in this tight-knit community at Yale-NUS.

As most of the staff and faculty do not usually stay on campus, it is easy to miss out on student activities and events. Thus, Lunch Tag is an excellent way to connect with the students during working hours.

Sarah Ruslan, a senior executive at the Library, said, "For a staff member who is not necessarily involved in teaching, Lunch Tag is a great way to be in the buzz during semester time. I work in the Library and we usually work behind the scenes. It is nice to get out of our offices, or bookshelves for that matter, and interact with students!"

Over 450 students took part in Lunch Tag last year. The initiative has also helped students, faculty and staff build meaningful connections that might not have been possible otherwise.



This scenario was part of the annual Lunch Tag initiative at Yale-NUS where participants are randomly paired to meet over a meal, make new friends and win points for each meeting over a fixed period of time.

Any member of the Yale-NUS community, be it students, staff or faculty, is welcome to participate in Lunch Tag. The Residential College with the most points at the end of the

of 2017 as they had spent a whole year being the only students at Yale-NUS. The Dean's Fellows from Yale thought Lunch Tag would be a nice way to encourage students to interact across class years and we were wonderfully surprised at how well it took off."

The initiative has yielded many surprising and entertaining outcomes.

her capstone project.

Christopher, like many other students, has had many meaningful conversations during his Lunch Tag dates.

"It has helped me better understand someone who came from a different background and appreciate different perspectives on various campus issues. Better yet, it had allowed me to discover other amazing

Playing their part to build the College community

Text by Daryl Yang | Images by Aleithia Low

A unique aspect of the Yale-NUS College education is the close-knit residential community. Students stay on campus for all four years of their college life in one of three residential colleges: Saga College, Elm College and Cendana College. This residential model creates nested communities in the Yale-NUS tradition of supporting lifelong learning by combining academic, intellectual, social, cultural, athletic and artistic life.

Students have opportunities to interact with professors and staff, as well as visiting speakers and international guests on campus. These living-and-learning experiences between classroom and community are hallmarks of the student residential experience at Yale-NUS College.

While the Rector and Vice Rector, whom both live on campus with their families, play significant roles in designing the student residential experience, residential staff share equally important responsibilities in supporting students. Part of the residential staff include the Dean's Fellows, who advise and mentor students as they navigate through various changes and challenges inherent to a growing and evolving community and the other comprises residential executives who ensure the smooth daily operations of the residential colleges.

Ms Ngu Hui Tze (*in main photo*), who works as a senior executive at Saga College, sees her role as a pillar of support for the residential community. "I see my role as providing crucial support for the Rector, Vice Rector and the Dean's Fellows. I also help to provide a meaningful experience for our residential community," she shared.

A typical day's schedule for Hui Tze involves many different tasks. This could range from scheduling meetings to publicising residential life events, as well as working with a team of about 12 Saga College student associates to organise and implement these events.

The residential executive at Cendana College, Ms Maggie Kang (*in photo below*), regards the students living in Cendana as her "little siblings". Maggie is particularly fond of the students she works with, whom she considers to be humble and compassionate.



"The students are very humble and down-to-earth", she shared. "Most importantly, they are passionate about helping the community or being active in residential college events. You can genuinely feel their passion."

Maggie shares that her favourite memory at Yale-NUS will always be the time spent working with the Cendana College Council on various events. "I remembered we once gathered to assemble a lot of fresh flowers that we had bought for our college's formal dinner decorations. All of us had no experience with flowers arrangement but we eventually figured it out together. It was such a fun experience," she shared.

Of the three, Ms Indrani Kaliyaperumal (*in photo on right*) is the longest-serving Residential Executive and is currently part of the Elm College residential team. "I'm proud to have witnessed our first batch's historic graduation. The move from Residential College 4 at Utown to Yale-NUS' permanent home on this bustling new campus is another fond memory etched in my heart," she reflected.

Indrani enjoys working with the residential team so much that she feels that her colleagues are like family. "I never feel that I am in an office environment," she said. "The informal interactions with students and colleagues

and the cheerful happenings around the office gives a very warm family vibe."



Indrani also enjoys being part of the diverse Yale-NUS community. "From having my favourite music composer A. R. Rahman on campus, to students and faculty who come from all walks of life with vast knowledge and many stories to share, being in the heart of Yale-NUS has been amazing," she quipped.

When asked to share some life advice for Yale-NUS students, Indrani readily offered some nuggets of wisdom: "Sometimes with our hectic schedules, we tend to be too caught up with everything. Remember that it is the memories you create that lasts forever. Love and live every moment you have!"



Students launch first multilingual magazine

Text by Wen Kin Lim | Images provided by Xie Yihao and Minsoo Bae

Inspired by the wide range of diversity and cultures on campus, some students at Yale-NUS College have published the College's first multilingual magazine called *Tones*.

The magazine, which is run entirely by students, provides an avenue for the student community to express

it recognised how food is a unifying experience for people of all races and cultures.

The second issue was published in April 2017. Themed 'Dual', the 13 articles in 11 different languages explored the experience of speaking a second language and the perspective it brings

co-founder of *Tones*, said, "We hope to promote multicultural understanding through the interchange of experiences and ideas from people of different backgrounds." By publishing such a magazine, Yihao's work on *Tones* helps to translate the statistical diversity of Yale-NUS' student body into

Laurel Fantauzzo, Writing Fellow at Yale-NUS and faculty advisor for *Tones* said, "There is such richness outside the English language and a magazine like *Tones* reminds us of the 'music' that the many languages available to us at Yale-NUS can create.

The platform that *Tones* provides is an important and valuable one; even seeing the art of a different language on the page opens a new window of possibilities into human expression."

The magazine draws inspiration from a similar multilingual publication, *Accents*, at Yale College in New Haven, USA.

Minsoo, who had visited Yale in March 2017 with other Yale-NUS students, said, "*Accent* seems like what *Tones* would be after a few years; an expansion from its initial role of being a magazine to a platform to host multicultural events."



themselves in different languages and celebrates the cultural diversity and talent of writers at Yale-NUS.

To date, there have been two issues published. Each issue of *Tones* adopts a different theme for writers to base their pieces around.

The first issue, which was published in January 2017, was themed 'Makan' ('to eat' in Malay). It featured 14 articles in 10 different languages centred on the theme of food. This theme was particularly apt because

while also introducing a different manner of interpretation.

Each article emphasises a different cultural aspect that is expressed uniquely in the writer's language.

The magazine also provides an accompanying English translation to enable greater accessibility to wider audiences. Readers are also able to better appreciate the meaning of each article and the writing style of each author.

Xie Yihao (Class of 2017),

tangible learning and cultural exchange.

"*Tones* can also showcase our peers' writing talents and cultures that might not have been revealed previously, and kindle interests in language learning and cultural appreciation," he said.

Minsoo Bae (Class of 2020), an editor of the magazine, said, "In a campus where the student body comprises over 60 different nationalities, of whom 97% of them speak more than one language, it is imperative to have a platform for diverse expressions."

The organising team hopes to have one issue every semester with quality content in a wide variety of languages. They also have plans to expand the magazine to other publication forms, such as comics.

Readers can view the articles online at <https://tonesofync.wordpress.com/> or follow the magazine's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TonesofYNC/>



Second Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professor

Text by Yip Jie Ying | Image by Jessica Sam

Renowned philosopher and public intellectual Bryan Van Norden has recently been named the Visiting Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professor at Yale-NUS College. The Professorship is supported by the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple, one of the College's Founding Benefactors.

"I am deeply honoured to take up the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professorship. The temple has long been known for its commitment to the community, which is very much in the spirit of its namesake, Guan Yin (Kwan Im), the Bodhisattva of compassion", says Professor Van Norden, who currently teaches in the Division of Humanities.

While in college, Professor Van Norden studied Chinese language while majoring in philosophy, with the intention of applying to law school after graduation. He did so well in his philosophy courses that his professors encouraged him to instead pursue a doctorate in philosophy, although it was alongside comments that there was no such thing as Chinese philosophy. To prove them wrong, Professor Van Norden entered graduate school with the specific purpose of specialising in Chinese philosophy and he has not looked back since.

Professor Van Norden's research interest is well in line with the College's curriculum model, combining the best of

the East and West.

"In my teaching and research, I try to bring Chinese and Western philosophy into dialogue. The benefits of this dialogue undeniably flow both ways. Greater familiarity with Western philosophy allows students of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism to appreciate more clearly the distinctiveness of the Chinese tradition.

latest book, *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto*, in which I argue that Western philosophy departments are indefensibly narrow for ignoring philosophy in the East Asian, South Asian, African, Islamic and Indigenous American traditions. As I argue in the book, the ethnocentrism that leads US philosophy departments to assume that

approach to education. I expect to learn a great deal from my colleagues, especially about Indian philosophy."

Having recently moved to Singapore, Professor Van Norden is grateful for the myriad experiences he has had throughout his life, particularly as he now settles into a new environment. "I was born in a town in Pennsylvania

"Greater familiarity with Western philosophy allows students of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism to appreciate more clearly the distinctiveness of the Chinese tradition... At the same time, Chinese philosophy offers challenging and original views [...], which can enrich Western philosophy."

At the same time, Chinese philosophy offers challenging and original views on topics such as personal identity, ethical cultivation and the nature of knowledge, all of which can enrich Western philosophy," shared Professor Van Norden.

An active public intellectual, Professor Van Norden has published a number of award-winning articles on American politics and international relations. "My interest in comparative philosophy and my engagement as a public intellectual intersect in my

all philosophy begins with the Greeks is intimately related to the unfortunate racism and nationalism that we increasingly see in politics around the world," he elaborated.

To date, Professor Van Norden has taught for more than 20 years at Vassar College in the United States. "It is a great school, but I am the only philosopher there who researches or teaches philosophy outside the Anglo-European mainstream," he said, adding that "Yale-NUS is distinctive for its multicultural

with a population of around 10,000 and am now a professor in a city of over five million on the other side of the world. I feel very blessed to have had so many wonderful opportunities and experiences," he reflected.

This semester, Professor Van Norden will be part of the teaching team for Philosophy and Political Thought, which forms part of the College's Common Curriculum. Next semester, he will be conducting a course on Neo-Confucianism and Chinese Buddhism.