

iii. Asia Now!

2010 Global Summer Program Report

National University of Singapore	
Brief description	<p>Students will participate in one of two streams: Urban Asia or Cyber Asia</p> <p>Urban Asia is a critical survey of Asian urbanism, combining insights from history, sociology, anthropology, architectural theory & criticism, cultural studies, and other urban-related disciplines. Asia's cities are among the largest and most vibrant in the world. They also face problems and challenges which, in the process of resolution, will likely create new urban forms with global consequences. The class will consider the Asian City as a local, regional, and global phenomenon, and discuss such sites as Mumbai, Shanghai, Tokyo, Bangkok, and Jakarta, while paying attention to smaller cities and the process of urbanization itself. Core theories will be introduced and applied, while at the same time considering Asian cities "on their own ground".</p> <p>Cyber Asia specialization takes a close look at social media in Asia. Media such as blogs, social networking, audio-visual sharing, podcasts, gaming, etc. mark a major transformation in the way everyday life is organized. Multiple platforms, technologies and user group dynamics have helped shape such media into a complex domain of human interaction. This phenomenon is true around the world, and certainly nowhere more so than in Asia. Asian societies such as South Korea, Japan, Singapore, and increasingly China and India are among the most "wired" (or wireless) in the world. Moreover, the politics of social media have intersected with the politics of daily life more dramatically in Asia than in most other parts of the world. Theorists, critics, and intelligent users of media must come to terms with 'cyber-Asia' in order to engage in any contemporary discussion of global trends or processes.</p>
Course duration:	28 June – 16 July
Tuition fees:	Exempted (except USD50.20 or SGD\$69.13 for administrative fee)
Accommodation:	USD \$363 (SGD\$500)
Field trip:	N/A

2. Participant and teaching staff data

	University	Number of Students	Teaching Staff
IARU Partner Universities	Australian National University	2	
	ETH Zurich	2	
	National University of Singapore	7	
	Peking University	3	
	University of California, Berkeley	3	
	University of Cambridge	6	
	University of Copenhagen	1	
	University of Oxford	1	
	The University of Tokyo	2	
	Yale University	2	
	Total IARU partner involvement	29	
Non-IARU Partner Universities			
	TOTAL Non-IARU partner involvement	2	
	TOTAL	31	

3. Successful aspects of the course

Please outline the successful aspects of the GSP course, where possible, referring to feedback gained from students and/or staff involved in the course. Feel free to incorporate photos into this section of the report. (Est. 500 words)

- We are happy to report that we managed to attract students from all the IARU partners to this year’s edition of Asia Now.
- This year, we adopted a more focused approach to attracting students, highlighting focused themes and targeting students with specific interests. This proved to be successful. The general feeling is that the students this year were more interested and engaged, and the lecturers noted the high quality of written work and in-class discussions. Additionally, we note that the students integrated better and more easily as a group, possibly being drawn together organically by genuine, shared academic interests.
- We also moved from (last year’s) “lecture and discussion” format to a “reading and discussion” one. This modification was very successful: The lecturers noted a higher level of inter-class interaction, with little evidence of “passive listening”.

- The field trips and Asian Conversations (in which we invite eminent individuals to have fireside chats with the students) were also successful, as they created shared experiences and generated many additional talking points which were further discussed in the classroom. Some students even chose to further address these points in their written assignments.

4. Challenges and concerns for the future

Please outline aspects of the course and/or the wider GSP that presented difficulties for your University. (Est. 500 words)

- Both the students and the lecturers feel that the course may benefit from an increased duration. We will consider the implications of extending this course, by a week, to a 4-week one.
- The diversity of the students continues to present a challenge in the classroom, though not an overwhelming one. A couple of students had backgrounds in technical subjects and appeared not to have encountered social science or humanities courses prior to this, and, as such, had some difficulty following the flow of discussion. We will work together with IARU partners to better highlight expectations to applicants.
- This year, we chose to house the students in, possibly, the most comfortable student rooms we currently have. One downside, though, is that this dorm lacked convenient common areas, which may have influenced outside-class bonding somewhat. A possible solution would be for accommodation in future editions of Asia Now to be in the newly-developed University Town Residential Colleges or in the existing undergraduate halls. This would allow the students more opportunities to mix, not only with Asia Now course mates, but also with a wider body of NUS students.

5. Gallery



This is more like the Singapore I have heard about



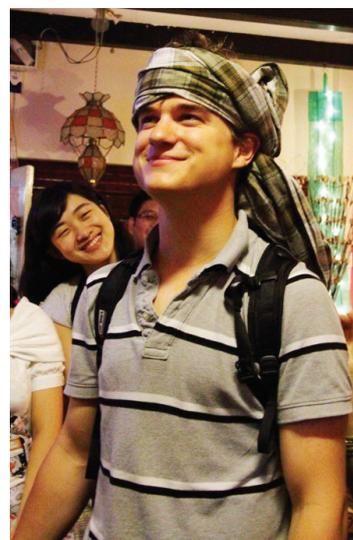
Food glorious food



Beautiful Henna tattoo



Malay for a day





Yes there are farms in modern Singapore



In conversation with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education



Time to say goodbye