

# SIM-UB NEWSLETTER

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## SIM-UB Celebrates its 20th Anniversary!



The first classes of the SIM-UB Undergraduate Program were held on May 31, 2004. The initial intake of approximately fifty students who joined the program that summer were all in one major: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. There were four instructors and one Resident Director, who also served as academic advisor and instructor of the freshman composition class. It was a modest beginning, but one that was filled with enthusiasm for future growth. It was, after all, the first program of its kind in Singapore: a program in which students could earn a degree from a reputable American research university—The University at Buffalo, The State University of New York—entirely in Singapore through its academic partnership with the Singapore Institute of Management.

In the summer of 2024, we celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the SIM-UB undergraduate program. Since 2004, there have been many significant milestones and developments along the way. Six additional majors (Communication, Psychology, Economics, Sociology, International Trade, and Geographic Information Science) have been launched, as well as double major and double degree combinations, and minors in each of the disciplines offered. Since 2005, with the election of the first SIM-UB Student Council, generations of students have contributed to the growth and continuation of a vibrant academic community, with a student body that is Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Enthusiastic (WISE!). The UB Bound program, first launched in 2005, has sent over 1000 students to the home campus for one or more semesters, offering them the opportunity for an enriching study abroad experience.



Over 200 visiting faculty members from the home campus have come to teach for a semester or more in Singapore, providing them with the opportunity to engage in an enriching cross-cultural teaching experience, and in many cases, contributing a global perspective to their research activities. In 2023, SIM achieved the highest level of accreditation within the private education sector in Singapore, the EduStar rating from the Committee for Private Education. Moreover, in the spring of 2024, SIM-UB underwent a rigorous site visit from our regional accrediting agency in the United States, The Middle States Commission on Higher Education, which described the SIM-UB program as “exemplary”. And, most importantly, over 6000 students have graduated with University at Buffalo degrees, enabling the establishment of a robust and active SIM-UB Alumni Association. For students who join SIM-UB, a lifetime of camaraderie and networking awaits after graduation, now that our program has reached the mature age of twenty! And, by the way, after these twenty years, SIM-UB is still the only program in Singapore in which students can earn a degree from a prestigious American research university entirely in Singapore!

To mark the auspicious and illustrious 20th anniversary of SIM-UB, a gala dinner was held at Sheraton Towers on July 12. The event was attended by President Satish Tripathi of University at Buffalo, Ms. Euleen Goh, Chairman of the SIM Board of Directors, and numerous other dignitaries from the UB and SIM campuses, as well as alumni, faculty, and staff of SIM-UB.

We are looking forward to the continued success of the SIM-UB partnership in the years to come.

**By Kevin F. McKelvey, Ed.D.**  
Resident Director  
SIM-UB Programs



# Global Impact, Local Connections: UB's First Worldwide Alumni Conference Triumphs in Singapore

By **Sherene Milizia**

Director for Overseas and Intercultural Programs,  
University at Buffalo

The University at Buffalo (UB) recently held its first-ever UB Global Reunion Conference, and what a tremendous success it was! The conference, which took place on July 13<sup>th</sup>, was hosted at the Sheraton Towers Singapore - a strategic decision that paid off tremendously. This decision to hold the conference in Singapore was due to it complementing the SIM-UB commencement ceremonies and the SIM-UB 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration taking place during the same weekend.

This dynamic, globally connected city served as the perfect backdrop for our alumni to reconnect, network, and immerse themselves in the collective UB experience. The one-day event was packed with engaging programs, including thought-provoking panels, industry-specific workshops, and a range of social events that fostered meaningful connections.

Perhaps most importantly, the conference provided an invaluable platform for our UB graduates - both newly minted and seasoned alumni - to come together, share ideas, and build lasting connections. Attendees repeatedly commented on the energy and inspiration they felt from being surrounded by such a diverse group of fellow Bulls, all united by their shared experiences and passion for our university.

One of the most exciting aspects of the conference was the active participation of our current senior SIM-UB and UB Bound students, as well as those about to embark on their UB journey as new graduates. These young leaders had the opportunity to network with established UB alumni, gaining invaluable insights and advice as they prepare to launch their careers. Many of them came away from the experience feeling energized and more confident about their future prospects. The UB Bound program students were especially impactful, as they were able to network and meet with UB main campus staff as they prepare to head over to Buffalo.

The UB Singapore Alumni Network, comprised of all UB alumni in Singapore but predominantly graduates of the SIM-UB program, created a warm and welcoming experience for our global guests at both the conference and gala. As one of the most vibrant and active chapters in UB's international alumni community, the Singapore chapter continues to showcase the strength and dedication of our global alumni network.

The conference was attended not just by UB President Satish K. Tripathi and Vice Provost Nojin Kwak, but also Deans from the School of Management, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. These university leaders were present to address and interact with all attendees, further underscoring the importance of this event.



As UB President Satish K. Tripathi remarked, "This conference was a testament to the incredible global impact of a UB education. Events like this Global Reunion Conference help to celebrate and strengthen those connections, which is so important for the continued success of our university."

With the inaugural conference now in the books, the UB community is already looking ahead to the next Global Reunion, eager to reunite once again and continue building those lifelong connections. I am honored to have played a role in this landmark event, and I look forward to the many more successes to come as we continue to strengthen our global presence and impact. Go Bulls!

# Faculty Accomplishments

## Dr. Blake Hendrickson and Students Conduct Research, Present Findings, and Publish Paper

After arriving in Singapore in 2016 to teach for the UB-SIM Communication Department Dr. Blake Hendrickson noticed that many students used their smartphones as a public speaking aid. This was a relatively recent phenomenon and led him to question if smartphone use was impacting audience perceptions of speaker credibility and persuasion, two commonly desired professional speaking outcomes. Four communication undergraduate students (pictured from left: Lucas Goh, Joshua Jun Kit Lee, Janice Prasetyo, and Ananyaa Kashyap) formed an Experiential Learning Network (ELN) mentored research project team and helped design an experiment, produce video vignettes, collect data with UB students and SIM-UB faculty/staff, analyze data, and present findings at UB Open Day 2022. Later Lucas Goh continued with the project and contributed to writing and publishing the 2024 article "Audience perceptions of a speaker who uses a smartphone as a public speaking aid: An experimental video vignette investigation" in the journal *Mobile Media and Communication*.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/20501579231204716>



## Dr. Jessica Covert Publishes Book Chapter

Visiting faculty member Dr. Jessica Covert has co-authored and published a chapter of a new book on social media. The article is co-authored by Dr. Michael Stefanone, coordinator of the SIM-UB Bachelor of Arts in Communication program, and the book was edited by Dr. Devan Rosen, who has frequently taught in the SIM-UB program.



**Stefanone, M. A. & Covert, J.M.** (2022). Contemporary social capital: Relationships versus awareness. In D. Rosen (Ed.), *The Social Media Debate* (pp. 20-37). Routledge.

## Dr. Kenton Bruce Anderson Publishes Two Articles & Creates a YouTube Series

Dr. Anderson has two recent articles published in top-rated scientific journals in 2023 and 2024, respectively. These are the result of data gathered from 2016 to the present in laboratory research conducted on the SIM campus, with student participation and laboratory assistance. Students have earned course credit and Badge Opportunities for Honors credits in the process.

Woelfel, J., Anderson, K. B. & Iacobucci, A. (2024). What are emotions and how many are there? *Quality & Quantity*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-024-01897-8>

Woelfel, J., Fink, E.L., Cai, D.A., Anderson, K.B. et al. Inertia in cognitive processes: the case of the COVID-19 vaccine. *Qual Quant* 58, 1147–1161 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-023-01684-x>

Dr. Anderson has created an ongoing series of inspirational YouTube videos which blend his research specialties of both Intrapersonal Communication (inner cognition) and Artistic Communication. These offer students opportunities to learn advanced online communication literacy, theory-building, video editing, and digital music production skills. They also have been conceived as a pathway to construct laboratory research artifacts and stimuli for our Rhythmic Communication research program.

- "["Alive" Batik Tiger Making](#)": A tribute to Significant Others and coming to life anew!
- "["The Making of Mama Koi"](#)": Special tributes to my mentor the late Gracie Schroeder and my Muse Mary Applegate



## SIM-UB Graduation 2024

**By Kevin F. McKelvey**

Resident Director,  
SIM-UB Programs

The University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, awarded a total of **447 bachelor's degrees** in the commencement ceremony at the Singapore Institute of Management on July 11, 2024. The degrees were conferred by UB President Satish K. Tripathi and Vice Provost for International Education, Dr. Nojin Kwak. This ceremony marked the 14th time President Tripathi has officiated the graduation in Singapore, underscoring UB's dedication to the SIM-UB academic partnership. This program enables students to earn a degree from a highly respected American research university while benefiting from Singapore's dynamic and diverse educational environment. With this class, the SIM-UB alumni community in Singapore has grown to over 6,000 graduates, adding to UB's global network of more than 293,000 alumni.

The degrees conferred included 83 Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Administration, 8 in Geographic Information Studies, 108 Bachelor of Arts degrees in Communication, 105 in Psychology, 67 in Sociology, 17 in Economics, and 14 in International Trade. In addition, 8 graduates earned double degrees, while 36 received double majors.

The academic performance of SIM-UB students continues to be exceptional. In the class of 2024, 325 graduates, or 72.7% of the class, finished with Latin honors, including 79 Summa Cum Laude (GPA of 3.75 or better), 134 Magna Cum Laude (GPA 3.50 – 3.74), and 112 Cum Laude (GPA 3.20 -3.49). This outstanding achievement is an indication of the excellent quality of the SIM-UB student body and the hard work that they devote to their studies. It also reflects the excellent quality of the highly interactive, student-centered, and experiential education that they receive in the SIM-UB program.

The graduation delegation included President Tripathi and Dr. Nojin Kwak, along with special guests celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> program anniversary: Dean Robin Schulze, Dean Ananth Iyer, and Dean Kemper Lewis. The delegation also included Dr. Kevin McKelvey, Ms. Sherene Milizia, Mr. Wei Loon Leong, Ms. Yuke Tjandra, Ms. Kandis Pogoda, Professor Jared Aldstadt, Professor Kristen Schultz Lee, Professor Mark Frank, and Professor Aisling Winston. Valedictorians representing their graduating classes were as follows: Ms. Kezia The Herlambang (BAC) and Mr. Darrel Ang Yue Jun (GIS).

On behalf of UB and SIM, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2024 and wish them continued success in their future endeavors.

# SIM-UB Scholarship Spring 2024

*The SIM-UB program offers two merit-based scholarships each academic year (fall and spring) to deserving students, who represent the program as our student ambassadors to the home campus in Buffalo. The scholarship provides for tuition and fees, as well as housing and transportation (up to \$57500).*

I fulfilled my decade-long dream in the final semester of my undergraduate life—to attend university in the U.S.. This past spring, it all turned into a reality. With a heart filled with anticipation, I took off to NY, UB Bound. Throughout that long-haul flight, I could only begin imagining the fun and challenge that awaited on the other side of the full day's journey.

In the span of five months, I experienced so many “firsts”:

First independent living. First apartment sharing. First time meeting new people and making new friends for consecutive days. First Super Bowl Finals (yes, with the pizzas and the American home experience). First Basketball game (Go Bulls!). First visits to DC and Baltimore. First Sabres game (First ice hockey game for that matter!). First total solar eclipse (absolutely phenomenal). First midnight visit to the Niagara Falls (it was completely empty). First driver's licence. First poem and class presentation in Spanish. First music festival (aka SpringFest). First undergraduate commencement (attended three ceremonies). First mission trip. First attempt at surfing. First visits to Vegas, the Grand Canyon, Lake Havasu City, Berkeley and Austin.

It is hard to believe how much living can be done within a few months!

Along with the many new opportunities, there were also many enriching experiences in Buffalo. Diversity was everywhere at the home campus. Academically, I was taking a wide range of courses, from Criminology to dance and weight training. Being my final semester before graduation, I had the liberty of taking on courses that deepened my interest in urban spaces and language. Overall, those courses represented six different departments and featured three different languages. I found myself constantly shifting gears and putting on different frames of mind with every class—a sweet challenge to the mind!

Culturally, I was constantly surrounded by students from all over the world. Whether they were international students like me or students who call the U.S. their home, each person carried a unique story and cultural upbringing which created an environment of endless worldviews. I found myself constantly expanding the way I think, to capture the larger picture and to scrutinize the details at the same time. Just as our Assistant Resident Director, Kandis Pogoda, describes international experiences, it is all about embracing to see the world through different “coloured” lenses and adding them onto our current view to create more nuanced shades.



UB Bound is not just a bucket-list item checked off for me. The list of “firsts” are not just accomplishments added to my life experiences. When I think back to each event, I recall the stories and people in those moments—friends who are now scattered across the world. UB Bound was a gateway for me to see outside of myself. I experienced the depth and breadth of the world, while feeling the connectedness and intimacy of humanity. So, if you ever have the privilege of stepping out into a new place, take it! Take the step boldly. Horns up!

**LIM Michaela**  
(Spring 2024, Bachelor of Arts (Sociology))

# SIM-UB Events 2024

Reflecting on our 2024 Lunar New Year celebration, the SIM-UB faculty and alumni came together to honor tradition and strengthen our bonds as a community. The festive atmosphere was filled with joy and positivity, setting the tone for a prosperous year ahead.



This year's celebration included a special visitor representing the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Dr. Jonathan Lincoln, Associate Provost for Curriculum & International Education at William Patterson University. As a part of SIM-UB's 10-year accreditation visit, we were able to introduce Dr. Lincoln to the vibrant SIM-UB community with a festive drumming performance by the Malaysian Community in SIM (McSIM), lohei tossing, and fun games.

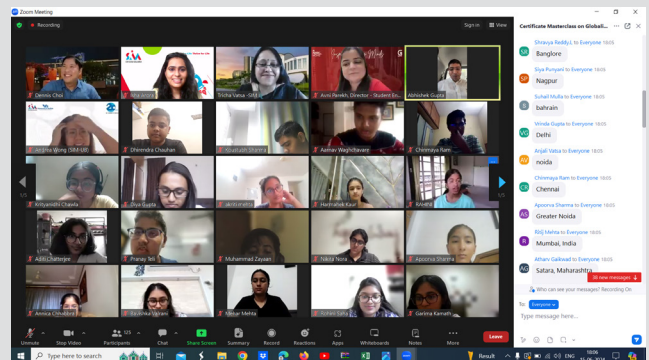
Thank you to everyone who made this celebration memorable!

## SIM-UB Faculty Engage in Public Outreach

Faculty from the SIM-UB Program frequently engage audiences both in person in Singapore and virtually throughout Asia to showcase the rich diversity of our research-oriented curriculum and experiential pedagogy. Here are some recent examples.



Dr. Thomas Saltsman of the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology program conducts a workshop on "Using the Heart to Measure the Mind: Stress and Coping in a Modern World" for a group of students from Pay Fong Middle School of Malacca, Malaysia, on February 26, 2024.



Dr. Dennis Choi of the Bachelor of Arts in International Trade program conducts a virtual masterclass via Zoom on "Globalization: The Dynamics of International Business" for an audience of 12th year high school students in India on June 15, 2024. Dr Choi appears in the upper left hand corner.



Mr. Jason Ho, who teaches marketing and entrepreneurship classes in the SIM-UB program, conducts a workshop on "Entrepreneurial Marketing" for a general audience at the SIM Education Fair at Suntec Convention Centre on July 13, 2024.



# Introducing the New SIM-UB Director for Overseas and Intercultural Programs

Welcome to SIM-UB Ms. Sherene Milizia!

Please join us in formally welcoming the new Director for Overseas and Intercultural Programs, University at Buffalo, Sherene Milizia.

Sherene's tenure at the University at Buffalo began as an undergraduate student, and following her graduation, she began her professional career in the Office of International Admissions at UB. With over 20 years of dedicated service, Sherene has held various positions within the institution, accruing extensive experience in higher education administration. Her areas of specialization include enrollment management, recruitment strategies, foreign credentials evaluation, SEVIS compliance, student services, degree audit processes, and fellowship program administration. We look forward to collaborating with Sherene and leveraging her robust experiences to advance the SIM-UB programs.



# Welcome Samantha to the SIM-UB Team

Hello everyone! My name is Samantha, and I'm happy to join the SIM-UB team as an Executive. Although I'm new to the education industry, I'm eager to learn and make a meaningful contribution. A little more about me: I enjoy cooking, baking, and brewing coffee in my free time. Looking forward to working with all of you and growing together! 😊

## SIM-UB STAFF DIRECTORY

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