



Congratulations! to the Class of 2020

By Dr. Kevin F. McKelvey, Resident Director, SIM-UB Programs

The year 2020 will always be remembered as a year of great disruption to almost every aspect of human activity throughout the entire world. As the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, people and institutions were compelled to find novel solutions in order to carry on with the events and traditions that were so dramatically interrupted by social distancing, travel restrictions, and varying degrees of shutdown across the globe. Of course, included within the scope of affected celebrations were the graduation ceremonies of schools and universities. Accordingly, the annual SIM-UB commencement was postponed from its typical July schedule, and was conducted in a virtual format on Friday, December 4, 2020. Although the online celebration could not possibly compare to the joyous atmosphere of an in-person gathering, it nonetheless served as an especially poignant recognition of all of the adversity that graduates had overcome in pursuit of their degrees—including the greatest collective challenge mankind has faced in the past century. This year's graduates will always be able to reflect with great pride on how they completed their University at Buffalo undergraduate degrees under the most trying of circumstances.

The virtual graduation ceremony was expertly emceed by Ms. Evelyn Kuek, who began the program by introducing a video welcome from Mr. Seah Chin Siong, President and Chief Executive Officer of SIM. This was followed by the

commencement address, delivered by President Satish Tripathi of the University at Buffalo. Congratulatory messages were also given by Dean Paul Tesluk of the UB School of Management and Dean Robin Schulze of the UB College of Arts and Sciences. The valedictorians from each of the seven majors delivered their messages of past achievements and future aspirations on behalf of their classmates, and the Excellence Award Winners for each program were recognized. The program concluded with a heart-warming video compilation of greetings and congratulations from a wide array of SIM and UB faculty and staff—a unique feature made possible by the online format of the event. The ceremony was made into an entertaining and engaging event by Ms. Kuek, who integrated the comments and well-wishes from the audience as they came in live via the online chat function. The entire ceremony was recorded and is viewable on YouTube at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtEXCvSMLjI>

As in past years, the virtual graduation ceremony of 2020 also illustrated the extraordinary level of academic achievement of the students of the SIM-UB undergraduate program. In this year's graduating cohort of 509 students, 74.16% achieved Latin Honors, a recognition of academic excellence, indicated by an overall Grade Point Average of 3.2 or better. Of these students, 98

graduated with summa cum laude (the highest honor, for a GPA of 3.75 or higher). The outstanding performance of these SIM-UB graduates testifies to the powerful combination of factors which comprise the SIM-UB program: diligent, highly motivated students; dedicated, talented faculty; and an interactive, experiential pedagogy. Our students have demonstrated that they can thrive and carry through with great success to graduation even amidst the challenges of a global pandemic—and will no doubt build on this success as they pursue their future studies and careers.

To the Class of 2020, Congratulations and Best Wishes for Future Success!

SIM-UB Virtual Graduation 2020

Academic Excellence Award Winners



BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Leong Ying Tao, Max



COMMUNICATION

Ms. Kerri Anne Chew Si Min



ECONOMICS AND
INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Michelle Francisca Winoto



PSYCHOLOGY

Ms. Junice Khng Kai En



SOIOLOGY

Ms. Goh Yen Ping, Amanda

What Our Valedictorians Say



BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Garialdi Salim
Bachelor of Science
(Business
Administration)



I would like to thank the entire University at Buffalo team for blessing us with a wonderful and holistic program, allowing us to be immersed in a New York based undergraduate system, even though we are thousands of miles away from America. Being directly affiliated with the curriculum in America gives us students the international lens that is rare to find in Singapore.



COMMUNICATION

Ms. Cherylene Tan
Bachelor of Arts
(Communication)



Life is uncertain... We'll never know what the future will look like. That doesn't mean it's a bad thing though. To me, I think it's an opportunity to explore our passions. Since we can't be sure of anything, why not try everything! Experiment, take risks, and always be on a look out for new opportunities.



ECONOMICS

Ms. Michelle
Francisca Winoto
Bachelor of Arts
(Economics)



Imperfection is one of the most exciting things about being human. It shows that there are endless opportunities for us to grow and improve. So let us not define ourselves by the results of what we do, but instead by the legacy of what we have become as people through the process.



INTERNATIONAL
TRADE

Ms. Racia Yoong
Yue Xin
Bachelor of Arts
(International Trade)



Instead of looking back with regret, let us look forward with hope. Because life is an unending journey. It will continue to surprise us with new opportunities and challenges that can either break us if we allow it, or help us to grow in resilience and strength for the rest of our lives.

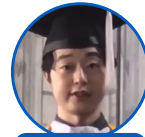


PSYCHOLOGY

Ms. Glenmarie Lim
Bachelor of Arts
(Psychology)



As each of us continue our journey in this harsh, unpredictable, and scary world, we must remember that we have impact. I believe that what we do matters, and that we have been trained to overcome new situations and shortcomings. Use your voice wisely, and together, we can make a difference.



SOIOLOGY

Mr. Nozomi
Cephas Seah
Bachelor of Arts
(Sociology)



There was more to university life than just grades: the friendships that I forged which I keep close to my heart till this day, the challenge of balancing time, between the social and the academic and the pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's own sake; the last of which I have to thank the kind and nurturing environment at UB which gave me freedom for my intellectual development.

New Provost Joins SIM Global Education

By Dr. Kevin McKelvey
Resident Director
SIM-UB Programs

The SIM-UB program is pleased to welcome Professor Wei Kwok Kee, who has joined SIM Global Education in the newly created role of Provost, from April 1, 2020. As Provost, Professor Wei provides leadership to SIM GE's academic mission of equipping and empowering learners for the future of work. This mission entails a strong focus on developing the institution's capacity for skills-based learning, leading to transformational learning experiences and enhanced opportunities for SIM-GE students.

Professor Wei has had a long and distinguished career in higher education. Most recently, he was the Provost's Chair Professor of Information Systems at the National University of Singapore (NUS), where he founded its Department of Information Systems. He was also the Founding Dean of NUS' School of Continuing and Lifelong Education (SCALE). During a 14-year tenure at the City University of Hong Kong (2002 – 2016), he served as Chair Professor of Information Systems, Dean of the College of Business, and Head of the Department of Information Systems. He has authored over 200 journal and conference papers.

We look forward to benefitting from Prof Wei's extensive experience in the coming years as we continue to offer University at Buffalo's highly interactive and experiential curriculum through our collaboration with SIM-GE.



New Leadership in the UB Office of International Education

By Dr. Kevin McKelvey
Resident Director
SIM-UB Programs

In August, 2021, Dr. Nojim Kwak became the new Vice Provost for International Education at the University at Buffalo, the State University of New York. Dr. Kwak was appointed following a national search, and comes to UB from the University at Michigan, where he was chair of the Department of Communication and Media and director of the Nam Center for Korean Studies. As Vice Provost for International Education at UB, Dr. Kwak oversees an extensive portfolio of overseas programs, exchanges, and international research projects, including UB's long-standing academic partnership with SIM. On behalf of the SIM-UB community, I would like to welcome Dr. Kwak to the wonderful cross-cultural collaboration between SIM and UB, where we look forward to many more years of continuing success in this innovative transnational program.

I would also like to thank Dr. John Wood, who served as Interim Vice Provost for International Education since January, 2020, for his excellent stewardship of the SIM-UB program and all of UB's other international interests, during what has been a period of unprecedented and unrivalled challenges.



Academic Advising:

Then and Now at SIM-UB

By Winnie Chan & Suzanne Lau

SUNY at Buffalo (UB) offers a flexible academic system which makes learning in the program an exciting experience. What makes it more unique is the availability of academic advisors for all UB students. This allows students to discuss their educational and career objectives. As academic advisors, we aspire to develop our students to be more independent, resourceful and confident individuals who are able to make well-informed decisions. In the past, students were allowed to walk-in for a chat with the academic advisors, who were easily accessible in their respective offices at the SIM campus. But with COVID-19, how has academic advising changed?

It was just a trial period for virtual academic advisement in March 2020. But the transition to fully



virtual academic advisement came in April 2020, as Singapore went into Circuit Breaker to break the chain of COVID-19. Remote academic advising is not a new practice, but we must admit, transitioning to virtual advisement may be slightly tougher than we expected it to be. Much patience is required on both ends – as students and advisors have to deal with both technical difficulties and distractions in the environment. Virtual advisement has definitely offered much accessibility to international students who may not be in the country to attend in-person advisements due to border restrictions during this period. However, the Academic Advisors at SIM-UB agreed that these technologies cannot replace the human connection when coming to an advisor's office.

Fast forward - over a year later, the COVID-19 situation shows some sense of stabilization. As such, the Academic Advisors are happy to resume in-person advisements gradually, as of 15 February 2021, by offering in-person as well as virtual advisements during this period. Bookings for appointments are still done on SIM Connect, but students must remember to check for sessions that they book, whether it is an in-person or virtual session.

Both Academic Advisors are grateful to all students who have been very gracious to respond to the changes. This is especially challenging with video conferencing platforms which constantly update their features; we often only realize these enhancements before a virtual session starts.



Many have said that COVID-19 has made us more adaptable, but it also makes us more patient and gracious towards others.

Last but not least, one might ask: how to be a good Academic Advisor? We think that some of the traits that are good to have are: patience, steadiness, understanding, and being a good listener with critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This is how we overcome our daily challenges with a big smile, and are prepared to walk that extra mile to support our students on the path to achieve their future goals.

For now, let's keep on "keeping on" with masks, washing and sanitizing hands and of course, being more kind to each other. Stay safe, everyone!

Three Pieces of Practical Advice for Students Looking for their First Job >>>>

By Karen Tang
Career Guidance
SIM Career Connect

MAKE YOUR RESUME EFFECTIVE

Go to job postings you are targeting, identify the skillsets that the employer is looking for and include them in your Resume. If you do not have the skillset, write an example of your closest possible experience—that is, transferable skills. Include important Keywords required for the job role; for example, you could mention "project management", "event management", "digital marketing".

SIM Career Connect conducts regular workshops on Resume Writing. We also assist you to vet your Resume when you upload it into our Career Portal called Unicorn.

1

MAXIMIZE ON YOUR NETWORKING

Job offers come easier with recommendations and through networks. Having an effective LinkedIn profile and tapping on the large professional network LinkedIn would help. LinkedIn has a button for you to highlight that you are "Open to Work".

Attend career events such as SIM Career Fairs and Career Talks by employers to interact and make a deeper impression. Follow-up after the interaction with a professional message on LinkedIn / email on your interest with the company.

2

PREPARE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT WELL

The Interview process these days involves a phone interview, and an online interview, as well as pre-hire assessments.

Get yourself familiar with the most common assessment tests used by employers to give yourself the best chance to succeed in securing the job!

3

Our Platforms

Where can I find the latest updates on SIM Career Connect?

One-Stop Integrated Career Platform - UNICORN
<https://qrco.de/sim-unicorn>
Enquiries: careerconnect@sim.edu.sg

New openings from employers will be posted weekly
Our Social Media Presence

Search for "SIM CareerConnect" Follow us

Our Services

Career Guidance, Career Talks, Alumni Sharing, Company Visits, Career Workshops and Training, On-Campus Recruitment

SIM UNICORN CAREER CONNECT

SIM Career Connect brings the Graduates First portal to you, where you will be able to access and practice over 70+ Industry Standard Assessments and Aptitude Tests! Assessments include Game-based Assessments, AI-powered Video Interviews, Numerical, Verbal, and Logical Reasoning; as well as Situational Judgement Tests, a Personality Questionnaire, CAPP and IBM IPAT Tests.

Register for Free Today at <https://qrco.de/SIMGRADFIRST>.

For appointments for career guidance with a career coach, please send an email request to Careerconnect@sim.edu.sg



Job Hunting in a Crisis: | 🔍

My Advice (and 2009 Experience)

By Katie Fassbinder
Assistant Resident Director
SIM-UB Programs

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? A common question of both career counselors and job interviewers. The truth is most of us are having difficulty creating a 5-week plan, let alone anticipating what 5 months or 5 years will bring. The global pandemic has taken a huge toll – with both the tragic loss of life, and the economic devastation it has ravaged. The additional uncertainty of COVID-19 has disrupted many of our early stages of career development and resume boosters: internships, entry-level job prospects, educational travel, and overseas studies. With travel bans, economic woes, startup hesitations, industry closures, in-person events cancelled, and classes on hold, people are right in making their health and safety a priority and putting a few things on hold before taking any needless risks. However, I can say with great certainty this is not and will not be the last time the things look gloomy economically speaking. As a millennial on the now “less young” end of the spectrum of my generation, this is the second economic crisis we’ve been dealt in a relatively short time. This one is much worse as it affects us all from every angle, though I do remember similar heavy thoughts trying to muddle my way through that 5-year question in the few interviews I had. I did a double major at a good uni, completed an internship, studied abroad twice, spoke a needed second language, and had a lot of job experience – where will I be in 5 years if I can’t even get my foot in the door? Luckily, after hustling several part-time jobs, I got a steady gig at a bank 6 months later that

ensured I was able to make ends meet. With that, I’m here to offer my tried and true advice to my Buffaloves on job-hunting in a rough market:

- 1. MAKE SURE YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER SHINES.** Set up a system, track your job applications, and tailor each resume and cover letter. Have someone else read them. Have someone else proofread them. For jobs that focus on particular qualities or skills, make sure those shine through explicitly. Don’t be humble or shy (but don’t lie). You need to sell yourself enough to get past resume scanners. Use the language they want. Double-check everything. Then double-check it again. Make sure your resume is not too difficult to read. You may enjoy a fresh, quirky format but does your potential boss? International resumes – make sure you include the cultural nuances. Applying for jobs in the USA? A birthdate gets your application tossed immediately.
- 2. DO YOUR RESEARCH.** For each job you apply to, be able to highlight the job duties that you have experience with and the company ethos in your resume and cover letter. Come to that interview prepared. Internalize their website through and through. Know the mission. Be able to verbalize how you are perfect for this job, this company, and **what you can contribute to them!** Research who is interviewing you, if possible. What is their background? Ask them thoughtful questions. Avoid shallow questions in the first interview. Pretend it’s a first date – don’t bring up salary just yet! Get that offer first. Then counter.
- 3. BE PROFESSIONAL AS HECK.** But, a little personality can help as well. ☺ Make sure your email etiquette is polished. Be mindful of peoples’ time. Don’t send needless emails, but don’t be afraid to follow up with a thank you (remember, it’s like a good first date - say thanks!) Practice your interview question responses. Make sure you know a strong answer to the most

common interview questions. Be able to tell your story well and be warm and friendly. Dress for the role. Be prepared. Make sure that your LinkedIn is solid and your social media is private. Google yourself to double check. Have strong references.

4. DON’T SHY AWAY FROM THE HUSTLE. Intern. Join CCAs. Get involved. Find a part-time job. Find another. Missing an in-demand skill in your desired field? Get it. Take a course on Python. Volunteer. Don’t slack. Don’t get down if you don’t hear anything right away. Employers sometimes take months to reply. In the meantime, do what you can to improve your circumstances. We are not entitled to anything. We have to earn it. Stay positive and stay competitive. You got this!

5. NETWORK. All my UB loves should be personally familiar with the name Karen Tang. If you are not, it may mean that you have been neglecting one of the best resources for your job search – SIM Career Connect! Get in there! Utilize your resources at school, especially SIM career fairs! Speak with your knowledgeable instructors. Immediately join our massive UB Alumni Association after reading this article. Speak to the EXCO. Check out your options on LinkedIn, and set your notifications to daily updates. Search out the type of work you want to do, and apply directly to these companies.

Buffalo students and graduates, you have the skills and training to excel in all of this. I have no worries for you. Be patient if you don’t get your dream job right away. Keep in mind that every step you take brings you an experience, a lesson, and can give you some transferable skills. **Always remember that you have the degree, and a supportive UB community cheering for you! You got this! Where do you see yourself in 5 years? STILL A PROUD UB ALUMNI!**

FAREWELL TO MS. KATIE



Ms. Katie Fassbinder arrived in Singapore to serve as Assistant Resident Director of the SIM-UB Programs in Summer 2016. After more than five years in this role, Katie is returning to the USA to take up a new position as Senior Assistant Director of International Careers at the University of Chicago. Moreover, Katie got married this past March, and will be joining her new husband in Chicago after a long separation due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

During her time in Singapore, Katie facilitated the UB Bound program, sending dozens of SIM-UB students to the home campus each semester before the pandemic interrupted student travel. She also coordinated the application processes for the SIM-UB scholarship, class valedictorians, honor societies, and helped to promote and participate in many other student activities. She has also been a great source of help to our local and visiting faculty members, Singapore UB alumni chapter, and to the administrative and support staff of the SIM-UB program both in Buffalo and Singapore. Although she will be missed, we all wish her great success in her future life and career!



UBB Meeting: Ms. Katie meets with UB Bound students from SIM-UB at the Buffalo campus.



Us @ UB: Ms. Katie celebrating the Lunar New Year with Resident Director, Dr. Kevin F. McKelvey



ISR: Ms. Katie greets new international students at the SIM-UB International Student Reception.

INTRODUCING THE NEW SIM-UB ASSISTANT RESIDENT DIRECTOR

Kandis Pogoda is the new Assistant Resident Director for the SIM-UB Programs. Though new to this role, she has nearly 10 years of experience in higher education and for five of those years, she managed international exchange programs between the U.S., Asia and Australia. She is originally from Southern California and has traveled to Singapore once to attend a conference. Kandis looks forward to becoming a part of the SIM-UB community as well as eating all the laksa and chilli crab she can find in Singapore.



HELLO
MY NAME IS

Kandis

WELCOME MS. ANN SUM TO THE SIM-UB TEAM

Ms. Ann Sum joined the SIM-UB team in October 2021. In addition to being a program coordinator for Business Administration and Sociology majors, Ann also takes care of international students' matters. When she is not at work, her favorite pastimes are catching Korean dramas and trekking. Let's welcome Ann!



HELLO
MY NAME IS

Ann

SIM-UB Student Council



The University at Buffalo Student Council (UBSC) is comprised of exemplary student leaders, and is a place where we shape new student affiliates into leaders of the future. UBSC consists of three departments: Events, Welfare and Publications. Our intention behind every event, initiative or content revolves around the idea of 'For Students, By Students'.

The Events department organizes three spectacular interactive orientation camps every academic year – with one for each of our three semesterly intakes. The Events department is also at the forefront when organizing internal programs, such as leadership and bonding camps or programs. Our past events include the annual Dinner & Dance, which is now known as Appreciation Night to commemorate all members' efforts and celebrate council accomplishments at the end of the working year.

The Publications department houses our media professionals. While they used to run an online magazine, The Bufo Horn, for about 10 semesters, the department has since transitioned from print media to the online visual medium via a YouTube channel that began early in 2021. Our content has transformed since then, delivering quality and relatable video content to engage the student body and maintain a sense of community. The Publications department currently has three content pillars working hard to produce new videos regularly – Bufo 101, Bufo Babbles and Bufo Nom Nom, and there are plans to expand into the TikTok space as well in the near future!



The Welfare department lives up to its name, catering to the needs and welfare of the student body. From fun engagement activities, CIP events, to free welfare packs, there's no knowing what the Welfare department has in store to enrich student lives and keep morale up during each semester! Having just concluded their first relaunch of UB merchandise which swept the student body by storm, the team is ready to pump out more fresh and beautiful designs in the coming semesters. Do look out for future batches of merch dropping!



Voice of a Scholar Winner of Fall 2020 SIM-UB Scholarship – Darryl Lim

W. Clement Stone once said, "You are the product of your environment."

Four years ago, I subscribed to such a belief.

When I first enrolled into SIM-UB, I was – like any other freshman – just trying to get by. For the better part of my first semester, I was trying to figure out what to do, how

to study, and honestly, where the next class was. I was overwhelmed, so I didn't really care about the "vibrant community" that the students seem to always talk about. It was not until one of my Communication professors mentioned that, in the Social Sciences, even the context (or environment) can play a part in shaping us as humans. It was a fascinating perspective. While I didn't have a scholarly "Eureka" moment, it stayed in the back of my mind.

Before I knew it, I was absorbed in my major – I started interacting with my professors more. Before I knew it, I started participating in the student culture – making more friends and engaging in school. And, before I knew it, I allowed my environment to shape me, and I became a part of this acclaimed community.

In my second year, I was the Vice President of our student council, UBSC. The pride of being a student councilor is known school wide and I was no different. I was humbled to have been given the opportunity to lead so many hardworking people. We ran freshmen camps, we ran welfare weeks, and we even wrote magazines – all for the friends we have in this school. It's exhausting enough to do it for a year, so call me crazy... I did it for three.

My efforts didn't come without merit though. I got to meet new people, develop myself, and most importantly – be a part of a place that inspires me to be my best. It's this feeling that I carry as, and allowed me to be, a scholar of SIM-UB.

I was excited to have been awarded the SIM-UB Scholarship, allowing me to represent the school and



study on the home campus, but COVID-19 thought otherwise. To say I was devastated was an understatement. For weeks I wallowed in misery, disappointed that I wasn't overseas representing the school. It took me a while before I realized that I could represent the school in my own way. I became enthusiastic in online classes, and even started a YouTube channel to make music.

We all cope with our environment in unique ways. I assessed the negatives, found the positives and let those parts shine through. With the help of my friends, family, professors, school staff, and all those I met throughout these four years, I realize instead that you are as much of a product of the environment as you allow yourself to be.

So, be the best version of you that you can be – for you're in the best place to do so.

SIM-UB STAFF DIRECTORY

Hay Lee Keng, Assistant Director
Susanne Lau, Academic Advisor
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Samantha Cheng, Senior Executive

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