



Exchange Report

National University of Singapore

2015 Fall, ZHOU Guangliang, 20175564

|| Monthly Event Log ||

|| Arriving in Singapore ||

Since I missed the orientation days, a sense of uncertainty floated around. However, as soon as I saw its land surrounded by the ocean, the uncertainty turned into fondness and admiration to this city-state.

|| August ||

Key Word: China town, National Day SG50, Parliament, Marina Bay Sands

After a gathering event, my local buddy brought me to **China town** in Singapore to taste delicious food, ranging from South to North, including many Hong Kong dishes. We also visited some **temples** (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam) nearby. ||

August 9th is Singapore's **National Day**, and in 2015 it was the 50th, thus people celebrated quite enthusiastically. Banners of "SG50" were floating around almost everywhere I went, malls were having discounts too. There were firework and live shows around BayFront, and so many people (nationals and tourists) went there. || The **Parliament** commences monthly, with date and venue announced on its official website. Sit-ins are welcomed, and I went to the August 17th session, with my passport. It was an exciting experience for me since I had a first taste of democracy. The Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong was there too, but his presence lasted for less than 30 minutes. ||

I also went to **Marina Bay Sands**, the most famous hotel in Singapore, and it felt really good when looking down on the financial district, which was rather small compared to Hong Kong.||

|| September ||

Key Word: Hand-made mooncake, MBA talk, SMU speaker, Treetop Walk, Election

A friend brought me to a Christian Church (sorry that I cannot distinguish religious factions) that organized Mid-Autumn Festival events, including a **hand-made mooncake** workshop. To be honest, the events are not so interesting but the mooncakes are tasty. ||

I also attended a **talk on Islamic Banking**, and found that attendants were all MBAs that had several years work experience. This is a stark contrast to HKUST's postgraduate students, most of which come directly after graduating from mainland universities. ||

I also went to **SMU** (Singapore Management University) for a talk on EU given by Vice President of European Commission, who was young and handsome but actually had served as Finland Prime Minister from 2011-2014. The souvenir from SMU looked quite fashionable. ||

Tree Top Walk is a walking path around MacRitchie Reservoir, surrounded by forests and grassland. I went there with several friends, and it took about four hours to reach the bridge on top of trees and get back. It was great fun, and the air is quite fresh given that the haze is very bad during this semester.||

As 2015 is the **election** year, I intended to watch the polling site given that I had never experienced this before. The polling sites were difficult to locate since they were disclosed to the voters only. However, I still managed to find one from a ticket posted online. Unfortunately to go in there, an authentic ticket and ID was needed. So this attempt failed.||

-----Photo Gallery-----



Lots of People Celebrating National Day



Parliament



Tree Top Walk - 1



Tree Top Walk - 2



SMU Talk by EC Vice President



|| October ||

Key Word: Project, Geylang

October was full of projects and **midterms**, so I didn't went out as often. One reminder: Singaporeans are very, very chur, just like mainland students, so be prepared when they rush to get things done when it the due is approaching ☺|| I went to **Geylang** to taste the Geylang Lor 9 Frog Porridge (芽籠九巷田雞粥), which was very delicious of course. Actually this is not frog in the porridge, but frog dishes and porridge. The overall style was quite similar to Hong Kong dishes. Also in Geylang, there is a red light district, located in even-numbered streets, whereas odd-numbered streets are filled with delicious food.||

|| November ||

Key Word: Speed dating, Chinese President, Museums, Farewell party

NUS Chinese Society organized a **speed dating event**, like the Chinese TV show “非誠勿擾”, it was quite fun as an audience to watch students ranging from year 3 to PHD came to seek for partners. They shared details of their lives, and triggered my further thought on career choice. ||

Chinese President Xi Jinping was visiting NUS on November 5th, and gave a speech. Many Chinese students there anticipated to see him, but the time and venue was confidential, thus people (including me) cannot get a chance to meet him face to face. ||

I went to **Singapore Art Museum**, and at that time there was some contemporary art theme. The exhibition had taken various forms utilizing sound, visualization and space, which was quite inspiring and interesting.||

NUS Museum is also worth visiting. I can only describe this place with one word: AMAZING! It was definitely beyond your expectation of any “University Museum”. The exhibition included various plants and animals, and also dinosaur skeletons. Every display is well-organized, and coupled with reader-friendly knowledge.||

I met many friends coming from China to study in NUS, and they were very generous and helpful. Some even organized a small-scale **farewell party** for us, and presented us with letters of wishes. ||

|| Ending Comment ||

At the very end of my journey, three friends accompanied me to the airport, and waved me goodbye, very moving. The time I spend in NUS was undoubtedly worthwhile, and I really harvested lots of inspirations, precious memories, and careful thoughts for future.

|| General Exchange Information ||

1) Visa Procedures

NUS gave me an application number, and I needed to apply for a Student Pass through a Singapore government website.

After I arrived in NUS, there was some registration to complete, and then can I get the student card.

2) Orientation Activities

I missed out the orientation activities due to late check-in. If you intend to do so, please make sure you don't come on Saturday and Sunday without sending a notice in advance.

Hand-made Mooncakes



Beer	Price	Change	Vol	High
Blue Lion Lager	11.80	-0.20	15	12.00
Somersby Apple Cider	11.80	-0.20	45	12.00
Hoegaarden	12.80	-0.20	102	13.00
Bavaria Premium	12.80	-0.20	42	13.00
Pilsener Beer	12.80	-0.20	30	13.00
Snakebite	12.80	-0.20	73	13.00
Black and Tan	12.80	-0.20	10	13.00
Black Velvet	12.80	-0.20	8	13.00
Black and Blonde	12.80	-0.20	83	13.00
Bucket of 6 Blue Lion	40.00	-0.20	84	40.20

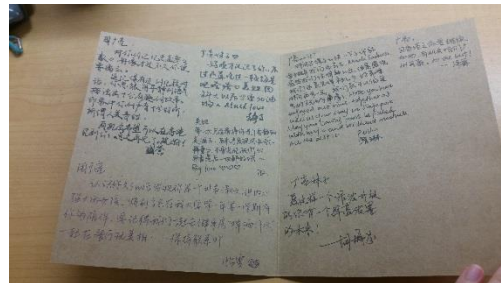
Stock Exchange for Beer in a Bar



Geylang Lor 9 Frog Porridge ★★★★★



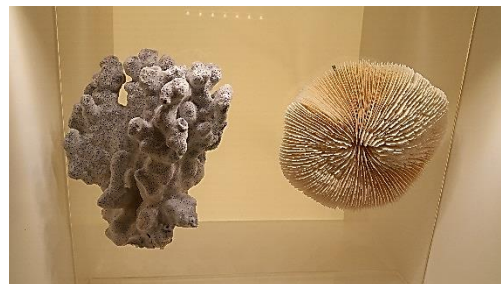
Student Organized Speed Dating



Letter from Farewell Party



NUS Museum - 1



NUS Museum - 2

3) International Services & Activities

Some activities are organized for exchange students, with email notifications. There is a money changer located at the nearest metro station Kent Ridge.

4) Accommodations

Generally exchange students will be offered accommodations choices, but business and economics classrooms are near Sheares/Kent Ridge Hall, where most live local and Chinese students. UTown is another alternative, which is new and modernized, but quite far from classrooms (more than 20minutes walk). There are mostly single rooms and many without air conditioners, with other settings similar to HKUST.

5) Courses Registration

Exchange students cannot take part in ordinary course enrolment as local students. There is a list of what courses we can take, and we have to make choices as early as filling the application form for exchange. After the semester commences, there is still chances to add more courses. However, business courses are extremely competitive, and needs to be selected as soon as possible.

6) Teaching & Assessment Methods

Generally it takes the same form as HKUST, some have attendance and some without, but definitely more group work and presentations. Professors are very aware of introducing the industry, instead of only teaching theories.

7) Sports & Recreation Facilities

Generally there will be a small gym and a piano in each Hall. I live in Sheares Hall, and use the gym twice a week, but the piano room is locked and people in charge don't respond to request for use. Also, there is an athletic field and several multifunctional sports rooms.

8) Cost/Expenses

Besides Hall fee and flight tickets, I spent less than 1500 USD. Some students travel to nearby counties, and will need to increase the budget. Generally the price is similar to Hong Kong after converting to HKD.

9) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are various events for NUS students to sign up, also lots of student societies.

10) Health & Safety

It seems to have insurance for students, but I didn't utilize this. Besides, in Fall semester, heavy haze will arrive from Indonesia to Singapore, so masks are needed.

11) Food

Food courts are very common in Singapore. They are a cluster of 10 ~ 20 small counters of different style of food, selling Chinese, western, noodles, and all sorts of categories of food. It is worth noting that every food court will have a counter for drinks, ranging from various juice to milo (chocolate milk). Water chestnut is the drink I recommend most.

In NUS, there are at least 5 large canteens (food court), the best of which is engineering canteen (opposite central library), and several small restaurants. McDonald's and Starbucks are present as well. Some Halls have meal plan that includes every dinner in the semester. Although each meal in the plan costs around 2 SGD on average, the quality is unstable and sometime bad.

12) Transportation

Very convenient and easy to understand. Metro and bus covers most regions. There are still some difference from Hong Kong: People stand on the left and walk on the right; cars will stop at zebra crossing if drivers notice you are going to cross.

There are internal free school buses in NUS, linking to the nearest metro station.

-----Food Gallery-----



Coconut (off-campus)★★★★



Late Plate★★★★



Coconut Soup (off-campus)★★★★



Pork (off-campus)★★★★

13) Climate

Quite hot. It was like all-time summer in Hong Kong. Temperature around 25-35 C. Sometimes classrooms and metro are a bit cool, and one hoody is enough.

14) Communication

Classes are all in English. People there speak English and Chinese (Mandarin), I could understand 95% of talking on the street. Street signs are multilingual.

|| Items to Bring ||

Summer clothes (absolutely no need for winter clothes)

Mask (for the haze in fall)

Cash in SGD (food courts only accept cash)

Umbrella (rainy and humid in mid-August)

|| Advanced Practices in NUS ||

Although HKUST has many practices that bests NUS, there are still some practices that might be more welcomed by students in NUS.

Academic

- Class enrolment system
- Mid-term and final examinations are university-wide coordinated.
- During examinations, there are large electronic display of time at the front.

Administrative

- Student ID card as room and Hall key.
- Desk pads for seats in Lecture Theaters have a slot for a pen not to drop.

Facility

- Food quality is far better due to competition in food court counters.



Frozen Yogurt (off-campus) ★★★



Reedz Cafe ★★★



A counter at UTown ★★★★★