

NEWS RELEASE

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NTU Singapore launches new series of courses for all undergraduates to bridge community service and academic learning

New Care, Serve, Learn courses aim to nurture socially conscious and civic-minded graduates

Medical student Chua Tze Hean takes lonely elderly out for a good meal, curbing social isolation. He and his volunteers source for transport to ferry the wheelchair bound and sponsors for the meal, but frequently pay the expenses out of their own pockets.

Bioengineering student Deandra Limandibhrata learnt sign language so she can communicate with the Deaf. She and her peers from the NTU Welfare Services Club have taken deaf and hearing-impaired youth to activities like bouldering.

These students are living proof that in caring for others, they have gained more than they give.

From next year, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) undergraduates can carry out similarly meaningful community service and earn academic credits through **Care, Serve, Learn**, a new series of courses in the University's mandatory Interdisciplinary Collaborative Core curriculum.

Along the way, students will deepen social awareness and build essential skills such as active listening, advocacy, and project management – skills that will equip and inspire in them a lifelong commitment to serve the community in the private, public, or non-profit sectors.

NTU Associate Provost (Undergraduate Education) Professor Gan Chee Lip said: "Beyond academic excellence, social-emotional learning and character-building experiences are equally important to help students better understand and navigate the world around them, and the role they can play in it. The Care, Serve, Learn course series builds on NTU's longstanding community engagement initiatives by introducing a structured academic component. This will encourage students to reflect more deeply

about social issues, and empower them to take meaningful action that can make a lasting difference.”

The course series will be rolled out progressively, starting with the cohort joining NTU in the new academic year that begins in August. This cohort will start on the Care, Serve, Learn courses in their second year.

Learn to serve, and serve to learn

The Care, Serve, Learn course series brings together the diverse community engagement efforts that NTU’s undergraduates have been part of over the years, and weaves them into a structured curriculum with clear learning outcomes.

In these courses, students will build foundational knowledge in community service and social work, before applying them while working with partner organisations in a selected sector.

NTU will partner with non-governmental organisations, charities, and government agencies across diverse sectors to uncover meaningful projects and initiatives where volunteer support can create lasting change.

Before students embark on community service, they will first attend training by NTU to understand broad service learning principles. Partner organisations may also conduct tailored trainings to help students understand the key issues within the students’ chosen sector.

For instance, students who are interested in working with children from disadvantaged backgrounds can opt for the **Uplift@NTU**, a new initiative conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Education. In this initiative, students will provide academic support and guidance to children and youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, in particular single-parent families, through community-based tutoring and mentoring.

After gaining first-hand experience, students will work together in their teams of six to eight to create and implement a solution that enhances the community engagement or service that they have provided.

Strengthening NTU’s vibrant culture of volunteerism

The Care, Serve, Learn courses build on NTU’s strong culture of volunteerism across its schools and student clubs.

A Good Meal, started by NTU final-year medical student Chua Tze Hean to bring joy to lonely seniors by bringing them out for good food and fresh air.

Since starting in early 2024, his team of 40 volunteers has organised outings for more than 120 seniors.

Tze Hean, who plans to specialise geriatric or palliative care, said: “It has been an extremely rewarding experience volunteering with the seniors. Their life stories have left a deep impression on me, and seeing them happy after our meals makes everything worthwhile. My volunteering experiences and clinical attachments has further strengthened my commitment to contribute. As long as I’m in a position to give, I will. The impact we make through supporting others is always worth far more than the effort.”

Another student, **Deandra Limandibhrata**, leads a team of 65 undergraduates at the NTU’s Welfare Services Club to teach English, Science, and Geography to children who are deaf or have hearing-impaired parents. They also organise and help with sign interpretation at activities that might otherwise be out of reach for deaf and hearing-impaired youth and adults, including art-jamming and bowling.

Deandra, a final-year bioengineering student, said: “Volunteering with the Deaf community has taught me to be more patient, observant, and open-minded. I’ve learned that communication goes far beyond speech – it can be a gesture, a text, or even a shared moment of laughter. More importantly, it is about understanding the Deaf culture. I’ve been struck by how warm, and open everyone in the community is, and how happy they are to share their stories. These moments have shown me the value of listening with empathy and being fully present.”

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About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 35,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Business, Computing & Data Science, Engineering, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, Medicine, Science, and Graduate colleges.

NTU is also home to world-renowned autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Earth Observatory of Singapore, Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources.

Ranked amongst the world's top universities, the University's main campus is also frequently listed among the world's most beautiful. Known for its sustainability, NTU has achieved 100% Green Mark Platinum certification for all its eligible building projects. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a medical campus in Novena, Singapore's healthcare district.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg