



**NANYANG  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY**  
SINGAPORE

# NEW HORIZONS

ISSUE NO. 1

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## SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

### FEATURE

- The future of Social Sciences in NTU and beyond

### PEOPLE

- Nanyang Visiting Professor: Professor Helga Nowotny
- Growing with Geography and Urban Studies

### RESEARCH GRANTS

- MOE Tier 1
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# CHAIR'S MESSAGE

## PROFESSOR LIU HONG

Tan Kah Kee Endowed Professor of Public Policy and Global Affairs

Chair, School of Social Sciences  
Nanyang Technological University



Dear Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends,

This April will be the School of Social Sciences' (SSS) first anniversary—a year after the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) was restructured into two Schools. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone—NTU leadership, faculty members, management and support staff, students and alumni—who have been supportive and efficacious as we worked hard to ensure a smooth transition. I am also honoured to carry on from Chair of HSS to Chair of SSS.

As part and parcel of NTU's dynamic growth trajectory, we are very proud of our remarkable history—from a "start-up" of just 53 students to a behemoth of over 3,700 students and more than 200 faculty members across nine majors in 13 years. But as we have outgrown the administrative structure that was in place more than a decade ago, the reorganisation of HSS was necessary and timely. Change, as we know, is not always easy, but with it comes the opportunity to forge a new path for SSS and leave behind a legacy we can all be proud of. While this legacy was affectionately recorded in the HSS newsletter, *HORIZONS*, I am delighted that the name of SSS' newsletter, *NEW HORIZONS*, embraces both continuity and change. The School looks forward to contributing to NTU's exciting future developments under the

leadership of President Subra Suresh and the new senior management team.

In the inaugural issue of *NEW HORIZONS*, we recognise the outstanding contributions of our faculty and staff, and welcome new additions to SSS—among them are three faculty members who are developing a new Minor, Geography and Urban Studies, to be offered in AY2018/2019. The new Minor is one of the many developments we can expect from SSS as we strive to provide for the educational aspirations of our students, while adapting to the needs of today's society in Singapore.

Our feature story looks at the future of the social sciences at NTU and beyond. Advances in technology are offering innovative solutions and improving lives, but at the same time, posing new challenges to society. There is no question that the social sciences can play a critical role in enhancing the societal benefits of new technology while mitigating its repercussions. As an institution that aims to contribute to cutting-edge global scholarship and to nourish future leaders, it is our duty to ensure our graduates are well-equipped to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I hope you will enjoy our very first issue of *NEW HORIZONS*, and we look forward to your continued support for SSS's further development!

## OUR NEW FACULTY AND ACHIEVEMENTS

A warm welcome to the new additions to our faculty!

Subject Area/ Programme	Name/Designation
Economics	Assistant Professor Tan Teck Yong
Sociology – Geography & Urban Studies	Assistant Professor Ian Rowen
Sociology – Geography & Urban Studies	Assistant Professor Felicity Chan
Sociology – Geography & Urban Studies	Assistant Professor Ye Junjia
Psychology	Assistant Professor Olivia Choy
Public Policy and Global Affairs	Assistant Professor Sabrina Luk

The School of Social Sciences would like to extend our congratulations to the following faculty and staff for their contributions to the School and University:

### Faculty Promotion to Professor

Name	Programme
Professor Annabel Chen Shen-Hsing	Psychology

### Assistant Professor Cheon selected as APS Rising Star

Hats off to Assistant Professor Bobby K. Cheon from Psychology! He has been selected as a Rising Star by the Association for Psychological Science (APS) for 2017. APS, one of the largest international associations for psychology, publishes some of the top journals in the field. The Rising Star designation recognises outstanding psychological scientists in the earliest stages of their research career post-PhD whose innovative work has already advanced the field and indicates great potential for their continued contributions. Congratulations, Assistant Professor Cheon!

## HAVE COURAGE IN WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN: SSS CONVOCATION 2017

For the 448 graduates of the School of Social Sciences (SSS), 31 July 2017 was a day of celebration and triumph as they donned their gowns and mortarboards and received their degree scrolls. Their four-year journey as university undergraduates had come to an end.

Gracing the convocation ceremony for School of Humanities and School of Social Sciences as guest speaker was Ms Sun Xueling, Member of Parliament for Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC. In her address,

she offered her thoughts on the role social sciences play in today's world of technology, and some advice on how the graduates could contribute to society as social scientists.

Meanwhile, in his valedictorian speech, Mr Mohammad Syafiq Bin Mohammad Suhaini, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, reminded his classmates that even as they enter the next stage in their lives, "life is so much more than just work". He then called upon his classmates to hold

### Faculty Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

Name	Programme
Associate Professor Premchand Dommaraju	Sociology

### SSS Management Support Officer Award

Award	Name
Best Customer Service	Asphalela Binti Ahmad
Best Leadership	Chan Weng Hoo
Best Teamwork	Undergraduate Education Team

### Long Service Award

Name	Programme/ Office
Associate Professor Joyce Pang Shu Min	Psychology
Woon Siew Liang, Mandy	Finance



Valedictorian Mr Mohammad Syafiq receiving his degree scroll from Prof Alan Chan, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

true to their cause and prepare themselves to meet future challenges.

"A true believer is one who, despite being shaken to his very core, remains faithful to what he believes in," he asserted.

## SSS RECEIVES GENEROUS DONATION FROM NTU ALUMNI

School of Social Sciences (SSS) received a generous donation of S\$100,000 for its scholarship fund from Nanyang International Club (NIC). NIC's contribution is the first major donation to SSS, and it was presented by Dr Sun Xia—founding president of NIC and NTU alumna of Class 2006—to Professor Liu Hong, Chair of SSS, at a dinner for graduates of the Master of Science in Managerial Economics AY2016/2017. The dinner, held at InterContinental Hotel Singapore on 26 January 2018, was hosted by Nanyang Centre for Public Administration (NCPA) and Lien Ying Chow Legacy Fellowship.

The contribution is the first major donation to SSS, and is from China-born NTU alumni, some of whom are now citizens or permanent residents of Singapore. This demonstrates NIC's strong attachment to Singapore and NTU while promoting friendly relations between Singapore and China.

"This scholarship is to encourage SSS undergraduate students to forge a better

understanding of contemporary China from an interdisciplinary and regional perspective, which is becoming increasingly important," said Professor Liu. "China is now the second largest economy in the world and a key driving force for Asia's economic growth."

"As Chair of SSS and Director of NCPA, I've had the privilege of working closely with Dr Sun Xia and NIC for the past few years," Professor Liu added, "and we are very grateful to her and NIC's generous support. With the Ministry of Education's matching fund, this scholarship now amounts to \$250,000."

Dr Sun Xia (Nanyang Business School, Class of 2006) received the Nanyang Alumni Achievement Award in 2017 for her outstanding contributions to the global NTU alumni community. She has served the NTU Alumni Association (AA) (Beijing) for almost a decade, helping grow its members to more than 2,000 alumni. She is presently a member of the NTU Alumni Council as well.



Dr Sun Xia (right) presenting the donation to SSS on behalf of NIC to NTU Provost, Prof Ling San (centre) and Prof Liu Hong (left)

The NIC was launched in 2016. Its purpose is to develop friendship, improve exchanges and investment opportunities as well as give back to its alma mater. Some of its members comprise of presidents of NTUAA and NTU alumni who are established Chinese entrepreneurs from various provinces in China.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN THE ERA OF UNCERTAINTY



Professor Helga Nowotny (foreground) and Assistant Professor Wang Jue organised the two-day workshop in November

Assistant Professor Wang Jue from Public Policy and Global Affairs and Nanyang Visiting Professor, Professor Helga Nowotny, organised a two-day workshop which was held from 27 to 28 November 2017 at the Orchid Room at Campus Clubhouse. The workshop, entitled 'Science, Technology and Innovation in the Era of Uncertainty', explored how global uncertainty affects talent, research collaborations, and government responses

The workshop opened with opening remarks from Professor Liu Hong, Chair of School of Social Sciences, as well as Nanyang Visiting Professor, Professor Helga Nowotny. It featured three themes: Recruitment and Mobility of Scientific

Talent; Research Collaboration; and Government Responses and Policies. Each theme included presentations from various professors hailing from universities in France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, China and Singapore. Their presentations addressed issues surrounding these topics, from examining recruitment strategies of scientific talent, to encouraging collaboration among researchers, and exploring government funding of research and policies, and their implementation.

The workshop was sponsored by NTU's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, and National Research Foundation Singapore.

# WORKSHOP ON AGEING AND POPULATION POLICY IN CHINA AND OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES

Contributed by Assistant Professor Zhan Shaohua

Sociologists of School of Social Sciences organised an international workshop, entitled 'Confronting a Grey Society: China's Eldercare and Population Policy in Comparative Perspective', on 23 August 2017. The workshop was held under the aegis of a joint Singaporean-German research project, with the University of Würzburg as the German partner. It opened with welcome remarks by Professor K.K. Luke, the Associate Dean (Research) of College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and was attended by more than 40 scholars and researchers from Europe, the United States, China, and Singapore.

The workshop was composed of four sessions which included the following

topics: 'Population Planning', 'Fertility Trends', 'Aging in China', and 'Aging in Asia'. Renowned demographer and China expert from the University of Cologne, Professor Thomas Scharping, elaborated on the history of political and demographic deliberations of the family planning policy in China. Dr Björn Alpermann, Chair Professor at University of Würzburg, delivered a speech on the shifts in population politics after the end of the one-child policy. Professor Jiehua Lu from Peking University shared his empirical study on patterns and determinants of care needs of Chinese elderly while Professor Shingo Shimada from Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, presented a comparative study on demographic change and elderly care in

Germany and Japan. Other presentations at the workshop touched on gender inequality, biopolitics, fertility decline and urban transformations in China as well as ageing issues in India and Singapore.

The workshop was convened by Assistant Professor Zhan Shaohua and Associate Professor Xiao Hong, and financially supported by the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and Nanyang Technological University. A follow-up workshop will be held in the University of Würzburg in January 2018, with scholars from the two sides planning to launch further collaborative research in future.

# NOTES FROM THE FIELD: AN EVENING WITH ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KAMALUDEEN

Contributed by School of Social Sciences Graduate Student Club

The School of Social Sciences Graduate Student Club (SSGSC) organised its inaugural professional development programme on Wednesday, 8 November 2017. The first session featured Associate Professor Kamaludeen Mohamed from the Sociology department. Held at The Hive, it was attended by 20 participants – undergraduate and graduate students from the School of Social Sciences as well as alumni and postgraduate students from the School of Humanities.

'Notes from the Field' is intended as an informal sharing session by faculty members from the School of Social Sciences, and aims to give students a greater insight into the world of academia, as well as to foster a greater sense of collegiality in the School.



Associate Professor Kamaludeen sharing his insights of and experiences in academia with students

Associate Professor Kamaludeen discussed issues of identity and ethnicity as participants in Singapore's education system and academia in general, by using anecdotes in his life journey as an academic and social scientist as vignettes. He answered some questions from the audience pertaining to

the nature of doing graduate studies. He also offered honest and thought-provoking advice on managing individual expectations of graduate life, acknowledging and accommodating different life stages of an individual, and practical suggestions on dealing with study, work, and life as a researcher.

# GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN GERONTOLOGY WELCOMES ITS PIONEERING COHORT

Contributed by Ms Ler Soh Wah

The School of Social Sciences launched a new graduate programme, Master of Science (MSc) in Applied Gerontology, in July 2017. It welcomed its pioneering cohort of 40 students who are made up of civil servants, therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, healthcare professionals, social workers, managers, mid-career individuals, mature students as well as young executives.

With Singapore's greying population is on the rise, the introduction of a gerontology

programme is timely as there is an urgent need for more trained professionals to join the silver industry. The MSc in Applied Gerontology is an interdisciplinary programme with Asian focus on the needs of the silver population. Its comprehensive curriculum draws from information and insights of social and behavioural sciences, health and medicine, business and policy, and design and engineering.

For candidates interested to pursue this programme, there are several external

scholarships available. One of these is the Ngee Ann Kongsi Postgraduate Scholarship in Social Sciences, which has been awarded to four students in the first intake of the MSc programme. These individuals are:

- Cally Chantale Ng Jiaying – Social Work Associate
- Kek Zhen Liang – Programme Executive
- Lai Suay Theng, Laura – Volunteer Pioneer Generation Ambassador (PGA)
- Mo Minyi – Nurse Manager

# PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE CROWNED REGIONAL WINNER IN 2017 UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

Ms Scarlet Leong Xin Min, psychology graduate of Class 2017, was awarded the 2017 Undergraduate Awards in September. She was Asia's Regional Winner for Psychology for her Undergraduate Research Experience on Campus (URECA) paper, 'Mindful Art Making: A Pilot Approach for Reducing Burnout Among Hospice Care Workers'.

Scarlet was a URECA student with Assistant Professor Andy Ho's research laboratory, Action Research for Community Health (ARCH). The paper, which had been shortlisted as a Highly Commended Entrant, sprang from a larger research project helmed by Assistant Professor Ho.

She admitted that she always had an appreciation for the study of visual arts, despite being a Psychology major; this led to her finding out more about the 'Mindful Art Making' project. Recounting her experience, Scarlet found data collection



Undergraduate Awards Winner Scarlet Leong (left) with Assistant Professor Andy Ho (Psychology)

a tiresome but necessary process. Nonetheless, it instilled in her a discipline and a rigor for research that prepared her for her thesis project in her final year. And what made it worthwhile was the results that supported their research hypothesis.

"All in all, the research process became not only extrinsically rewarding, but intrinsically fulfilling," she said, "and I am humbled to have our home-grown paper mentioned on an international platform."

## BUILDING A COMMUNITY THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: EAUI SUMMER SCHOOL 2017

Held from 31 July to 5 August 2017, the East Asian University Institute (EAUI) Summer School was hosted by NTU, as well as School of Social Sciences (SSS), School of Humanities (SoH), and Nanyang Centre of Public Administration (NCPA). Close to 40 participants from the five partner universities took part in the symposiums, field trips and presentations offered.

The Summer School commenced with a welcome speech by Professor Liu Hong, Chair of School of Social Sciences. Addressing faculty members as well as student participants from the five universities, Professor Liu shared recent developments at NTU and how partnering with top universities in Asia in formal mechanisms such as the EAUI complement the research of faculty and learning of students.

Exploring this year's theme of "Asian Regional Community Building through Transnational Knowledge Exchange", leading scholars from the five universities



Participating faculty and students of EAUI Summer School 2017

presented different regional/state and theoretical perspectives. The symposium, meanwhile, addressed the complexities of Asian regional community building by identifying the top-down (regionalism) and bottom-up (regionalisation) approaches to establish an Asian regional community.

Korea University will take over from NTU to host EAUI Summer School 2018 where all

five institutions are expected to attend once again.

The EAUI has been organising annual Summer and Winter Schools since 2012. It was launched by five partner universities: Waseda University, Korea University, Nanyang Technological University, Peking University, and Thammasat University.

well-received. The Tea Reception was an opportunity for participants to find out the latest publishing tips, trends, and perspectives on the reviewing process from top journal editors. Another high point was the the 61st Economic Society of Singapore's (ESS) annual dinner, held in conjunction with the SERC dinner on 2 August where Singapore's Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat was conferred the 6th Honorary Fellowship by the ESS. He was also the ESS dinner's Guest-of-Honour.

A highlight of the conference was a Plenary Tea Reception with Journal Editors, an exclusive feature of the SERC, which was

## NTU EGC PENS AGREEMENT WITH RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN ASIA PACIFIC

Contributed by Ms Youjin Cecilia Kim

NTU Economic Growth Centre (EGC) signed the Research Centres Networking Group agreement with other research institutions in Asia Pacific region on 3 August 2017. The agreement was signed during the Singapore Economic Review Conference 2017 at Mandarin Orchard Singapore Hotel.

Research Centres Networking Group (RCNG) is a visiting research programme that aims to facilitate research between faculty and research fellows across the network. The agreement is effective for three years from the date it was signed, 12 September 2013.

According to the RCNG agreement, faculty from the research centres or universities in

the network are able to visit other member institutions for one to three weeks, subject to the research need and budget of the host institution. Members of the networking group can also convene at joint workshops and conferences on common themes across research centres.

For this round, the network is comprised of ten academic institutions in Australia, China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Members of the RCNG agreement are:

- Graduate School of Economics, Kobe University (Japan)
- Asian Development Bank Institute, Asian Development Bank (Japan)
- Asian Growth Research Institute (Japan)

- School of Economics, Hiroshima University (Japan)
- Arndt Corden Department of Economics, Australia National University (Australia)
- University of Economics (Vietnam)
- Graduate School of International Studies, Korea University (Korea)
- Centre for New Structural Economics, Peking University (China)
- Centre for Research of Private Economy, Zhejiang University (China)
- Economic Growth Centre, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore)

Faculty members who are interested in the programme can contact Youjin Cecilia Kim at [d-egc@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:d-egc@ntu.edu.sg).

## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: ISSUES, CHALLENGES, AND SOLUTIONS – EAAERE 2017 CONFERENCE

Contributed by Ms Youjin Cecilia Kim

The Economic Growth Centre (EGC) organised the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of East Asian Association of Environment and Resource Economics (EAAERE) 2017 Conference, with generous support from NTU Sustainable Earth Office, and Alumni Association of National Taipei University. Hosted for the first time in Singapore, the Conference was held at Mandarin Orchard from 5 to 7 August 2017 and had some 150 scholars in attendance.

Professor Hsio Chen, President of EAAERE and Head of Economics at National Taipei University, as well as Professor Euston Quah, Economics Head and EGC Director from NTU welcomed scholars from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, India, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea as well as Australia, France, the

United Kingdom and the United States. The two professors also introduced the theme for the Conference: 'Environment and Sustainable Development: Issues, Challenges, and Solutions'.

Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, was the Guest-of-Honour. In her opening address for the event, she spoke on Singapore's endeavours on sustainable development, the country's impending challenges such as water resource, air pollution, and waste management, and introduced the ministry's blueprint and current initiatives. Following this were two keynote speeches by Professor Robert Stavins, Director of Harvard Environmental Economics Program and John F. Kenney School of Government at Harvard University,

and by Professor Ng Yew Kwang, Albert Winsemius Chair Professor of Economics at NTU and the EAAERE Conference.

The conference consisted of three parallel streams with comprised of eighteen sessions, which covered impending issues in sustainable growth such as Environment and Health Implications, Choice of Energy, Fishery and Climate Change Impact and Regulatory Practices and Productivity of firms. The conference concluded with a speech – "Coase and Game with Empty Cores", by Professor Parkash Chander, Executive Director of the Centre for Environmental Economics and Climate Change at Jindal School of Government and Public Policy – and four parallel and one poster sessions.

## THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN NTU AND BEYOND

The School of Social Sciences (SSS) was established in April 2017, after 13 years as part of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS). The restructuring was necessary to adapt to the remarkable growth of HSS, which had outgrown its administrative structure put in place more than a decade ago. It had become the largest school in Nanyang Technological University (NTU), with more than 3,700 undergraduates and over 200 faculty members spread across nine majors.

The reorganisation was also effected in consideration for NTU's humanities and social sciences students—two Schools, SSS and School of Humanities, would better serve the needs of a growing student population.

Professor Liu Hong, previously Chair of HSS from 2011 to 2017, and now Chair of SSS, greeted the restructuring gladly. "The establishment of SSS represents NTU's continuous efforts in fulfilling the evolving educational needs and aspirations of its students," he said. "It

also boosts the opportunity for the future growth, and facilitates collaboration and interdisciplinary research." In addition, the reorganisation allowed the School to concentrate on the development of its degree programmes.

Today, SSS has close to 2,000 undergraduates and more than 100 faculty members in the fields of Economics, Psychology, Public Policy and Global Affairs, and Sociology.

### Looking back

Founded in 2004, HSS began with only 53 students reading Economics, Chinese, English, Psychology, and Sociology followed in 2005. The School was formed to support NTU's goal of becoming one of Singapore's leading in research and education in diverse disciplines. HSS aimed to not only boost scholarship and nurture a vibrant research culture, but also produce work- and world-ready graduates who are prepared to take on the challenges and issues facing Singapore and the world.



Riding on the increased demand for tertiary education in humanities and social sciences, HSS increased its offerings of degree programmes. Linguistics and Multilingual Studies was added in 2008. History, Public Policy and Global Affairs, and Philosophy were then introduced in 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively. In order to encourage multidisciplinary education, a double major Bachelor of Arts programme was introduced. Students were able to read two majors from HSS and its sister schools—the School of Art, Design and Media, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information.

### Adapting to changes

Changes were expected with the reorganisation—from appointing a new

Chair and forming a new management committee to creating new student clubs and even altering the building's façade to reflect that two Schools were housed within. The changes were part of SSS' distinctive identity—one that acknowledged SSS' history when it was once HSS—and position the School as a leading institution for the Social Sciences in Asia.

There was much to be done before the reorganisation was effected. A new management committee was set up to determine the direction SSS would take, and to decide on initiatives to be implemented. The mission and vision of SSS, while it echoed its predecessor, was now more focused. Professor Liu Hong, previously Chair of HSS from 2010 until the

reorganisation of the School, was named Chair of SSS. This ensured a continuation of strong leadership, which was welcomed by all.

Further to these administrative changes within SSS, student clubs needed to be reformed. A pro tem committee was formed for the undergraduate students' School of Social Sciences Club to prepare for the Club's constitution before elections for a new executive committee could be held. The School of Social Sciences Graduate Students Club was also formalised for the graduate students.

These changes presented a chance for students to come up with fresh ideas to make the student clubs unique from their



I think the restructuring has brought about positive changes...I noticed there is more interaction among SSS students than before. I know of juniors from SSS' freshmen orientation who are still in contact with one another or even taking electives together. ”

**Bryan Lim,**  
vice president,  
SSS Club pro tem committee

predecessors. It was also an opportunity to strengthen ties among their fellow schoolmates.

"I think the restructuring has brought about positive changes," said Bryan Lim, vice-president of the SSS Club pro tem committee, and a Year 3 Economics student who had witnessed the restructuring. "From a student's perspective, I noticed there is more interaction among SSS students than before—possibly because we now have only four subject areas, and it's common to bump into friends from the various subjects around school. I know of juniors from SSS' freshmen orientation camp still in contact with one another or even taking electives together."



The university's leadership team at NTU Town Hall in January 2018 (from left to right): Ms Tan Aik Na, Vice President (Administration); Prof Ling San, NTU Provost and Vice President (Academic); Prof Subra Suresh, NTU President; Prof Lam Khin Yong, Vice President (Research); Prof Alan Chan, Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, and Vice President (Alumni and Advancement)

But what remained is the School's unwavering dedication to provide quality education to its students and equip them with the right skills that would prepare them for today's constantly changing world. Its vision and mission were not any different from when it was HSS. Now as SSS, it still desired to create vibrant, creative societies and nurture critical and creative thinking in students in a world driven by technology, global connectedness, and climate change.

#### The call for social sciences in NTU and beyond

The central role the social sciences plays in society today is undisputed. While technology has unequivocally taken the driver's seat and is disrupting industries, the social sciences provide crucial knowledge for society to come to a collective understanding as to how it can benefit from or mitigate the outcomes of technological developments. Technological advances are one of the biggest and latest challenges our world faces today; new challenges demand fresh perspectives and approaches in confronting them that the social sciences can best provide.

Professor Alan Chan, Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, and Social

Sciences, and Vice President (Alumni and Advancement), acknowledged that dealing with technological changes is a modern imperative. Speaking at the panel discussion at NTU's town hall in January, he said it required a concerted effort from all concerned individuals wanting to create a better society. Technologies, he noted, are reshaping the human landscape in significant ways.

"[E]very technology can be used for the benefit of society, or it can also be abused or misused," Professor Chan observed. "There is the question of developing new technologies in the service of humanity. There's the question of applying technologies for the interest of society. There's also the need to ensure there are robust regulatory frameworks to ensure the proper use of technologies." The arts, humanities and social sciences unquestionably have a critical role to play in ameliorating the consequences of technology.

The call for the social sciences is critical, especially with Singapore's shifting social and economic landscape. Singapore, like most developed countries, is dealing with several social issues which include—but

not limited to—a rapidly greying population, social mobility, and social diversity. These are issues where social sciences research would be valuable.

In November 2016, Singapore's Ministry of Education (MOE) announced it had set aside \$350 million over the next five years for research in social sciences and humanities. This is notably an increase of 45 per cent of MOE's spending on research in social sciences and humanities compared to five years prior. Additionally, the funding is part of the work of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) set up by the government in January 2016. Its purpose is to provide a coordinated direction for social science and humanities research. Meanwhile, SSRC aims to develop the social science and humanities research ecosystem by supporting research that is relevant to Singapore and other societies; building global networks of researchers and policymakers as well as encouraging cross-disciplinary work; and developing local talent in these fields. As a research-intensive institution, NTU would benefit from this initiative.

#### Being adaptable to society's needs

SSS' programmes are created with the

needs of today's society in Singapore and beyond in mind. The curriculum ensures that students learn not only from textbooks and history, but also stay in tune to current trends and events.

The School's latest graduate programme addresses one of Singapore's main societal concerns—rapidly aging population. The Master of Science in Applied Gerontology programme offers an interdisciplinary Asia-focused curriculum, ensuring its relevance in the region. Its courses concentrate on the challenges of an aging population from the perspectives of social sciences as well as related courses in engineering, design, and medicine. It welcomed its pioneering cohort in July 2017, and had received 70 applications for 25 spots when it was launched.

And as part of SSS' initiative to expand its programme offerings and interdisciplinary studies, a new minor will be introduced come the 2018/2019 academic year. The minor, Geography and Urban Studies, will be helmed by three assistant professors specialising in human geography. With the addition of this minor, students would have greater insight, exposure and freedom to pursue interdisciplinary interests beyond traditional school lines.

Assistant Professor Felicity Chan, one of the three professors in charge of the minor, summed up the importance of human geography: "I think what [geography] has at its core is the study of space and society and I think this is extremely core to Singapore. It is going to be extremely relevant as

Singapore becomes 7 million or 10 million at some point. We want our geography programme to equip students to think spatially and to understand the significance of space in their everyday lives as well as in the way they think about relationships and society."

The new offering takes into consideration key issues such as migration, immigration and social activism societies in Singapore and around the world today grapple with. Undergraduates can look forward to an expanded universe of society-related topics that are also research interests of these professors. Geography and Urban Studies offered by SSS will complement physical geography courses offered by Asian School of the Environment (ASE) and National Institute of Education (NIE).

These developments demonstrate how SSS strives to remain relevant in today's ever changing world while fulfilling its ideals of teaching and scholarship in the social sciences. According to the QS World University Rankings, NTU is ranked among the top 50 universities in the world, with the social sciences ranked 22<sup>nd</sup>. Given that the university is less than 50 years of age, and the social sciences in NTU started not more than 14 years ago, this is a commendable feat.

Rankings are important, but strong values are essential for success are well. In his message to students, NTU President Professor Subra Suresh expressed his honour in being part of a university that stands for the values that he holds dear—

“As future leaders and global citizens, [students] will have a substantial impact in influencing the human condition and the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

”

**NTU President  
Professor  
Subra Suresh**

excellence in education, learning, discovery and innovation; sustainable impact on society; global engagement; improving the human condition; and dedication to our communities. "As future leaders and global citizens, you will have a substantial impact in influencing the human condition and the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> century," he added.

Our mission is not to merely improve our standing among the world's best universities. We must also ensure students from SSS develop a breadth of imagination and depth of perspective, and are well-equipped to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century—in NTU and beyond.



## NANYANG VISITING PROFESSOR: PROFESSOR HELGA NOWOTNY



Professor Helga Nowotny is Professor Emerita of Science and Technology Studies, ETH Zurich, and a founding member and former President of the European Research Council (ERC). The establishment of the ERC was a major breakthrough in Europe, which transformed the European research landscape, attracted international talent, and helped shape the development of a knowledge-based economy throughout the European Union.

Currently, Professor Nowotny is Chair of the European Research Area Council Forum Austria, an expert panel advising the Austrian Minister responsible for science and research. She is also Vice-President of the Council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings; and University Council member of the Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich. Professor Nowotny has been Nanyang Visiting Professor at NTU since 2016, and in that capacity contributed significantly to the University and especially the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.

Professor Nowotny received her Ph.D. in Sociology from Columbia University,

New York, following a doctorate in jurisprudence from the University of Vienna. She has held teaching and research positions at a number of institutions, including the University of Vienna; Cambridge University; and the Center for Social Science Research, Berlin, among many others. Professor Nowotny is a Foreign Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and several other Academies as well.

Throughout her distinguished career, Professor Nowotny has been at the forefront of science and innovation policy matters. A prolific scholar at the same time, Professor Nowotny has published widely, especially in Science and Technology Studies (STS) and on the changing conceptions of time in social contexts.

A strong advocate of interdisciplinary research, Professor Nowotny has been actively involved in the development of social science and complexity science at NTU. Not only has she contributed in many

important ways to research and innovation at NTU, but also her advice is much sought after by policy makers in Singapore. She has provided expert input to further developing Singapore's research landscape, especially on the optimal structure and funding strategy of research councils, and also the contribution of the social sciences and humanities to economic and social development.

*\* Extracted from the citation read at Professor Nowotny's conferment of the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters in 2017*

## GROWING WITH GEOGRAPHY AND URBAN STUDIES

School of Social Sciences welcomed three new faculty members—Assistant Professors Felicity Chan, Ian Rowen, and Ye Junjia. They joined NTU in the second half of 2017.

They will be spearheading a new Minor in Geography and Urban Studies, which will be offered in the 2018/2019 academic year. Its primary focus will be on human geography, and will complement the physical geography programmes and courses offered at the Asian School of the Environment (ASE) and National Institute of Education (NIE). This gives students a more interdisciplinary perspective to the subject of geography.

"We recognise that Singapore is not only 100 percent urbanised, but it is in a region that has all these other dimensions of the environment that we should know of," Assistant Professor Felicity Chan says. "There is a bigger environment—the global environment as well as a more immediately, regional environment out there—which is critical for us to understand."

Assistant Professor Ian Rowen adds that while Singapore may not have volcanoes or earthquakes, she plays a significant social, political and economic role in the region. "Singapore is not simply a clichéd crossroads, but in itself it's positioned more than anywhere in Southeast Asia

to be participating in broader scholarly conversations about space, power, economy and so on."

Assistant Professor Ye Junjia hopes that the new Minor will broaden students' minds when they think about space and urban life—one of the many topics the new Minor will include. "One of the takeaways we want for all our students is that space matters," she comments. "In fact, space has become more important when we think about borders, processes of exclusion, density, or even about apps such as Tinder and Uber."

Geography and Urban Studies is slated to be a Major in the near future.



**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR FELICITY CHAN**  
By Ms Violet Koh

Since her secondary school days, Assistant Professor Felicity Chan found her forte in maps and geography, which marked the beginning of her lifelong pursuit of the subject. Her passion in seeking to understand how people interact and connect with the urban environment has led her to places all over the world—United States, Germany and Switzerland, where she spent the last 15 years in these countries. She also speaks four languages – English, Mandarin, German and Indonesian.

Assistant Professor Chan is fascinated with maps and is an ardent lover of them: "I am excited about maps—I love maps—and mapping, and I'm interested in how people interact in space, and how the spatial

arrangement affects that interaction." This is just one reason for her love of geography.

Another reason for her love for the subject is her curiosity for human interaction in the urban environment. She shares how she did particularly well in geography while in secondary school and seemed to understand it better compared to other subjects. This led her to taking on the subject in junior college as well. "I think it's because I've always been interested in how people interact in the urban environment," she comments. She recalls how she was in an architecture course but dropped out of it after three days and went back to doing geography. "I was interested in the built environment but geography seems to

have a lot more," she says. "It's a lot more talking about nature, talking about human relationships in nature and with nature, and about the dynamics of social relations in cities."

Presently, she is looking into a new area of research, which she calls the urban imprints of foreign talents in Singapore, through the lens of international schools. "They are what you call the 'network society'," she said referring to this group of talents, "and many of them are very connected to the global network. They have that sort of ability to shape the environment around them."

## ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IAN ROWEN

By Ms Violet Koh



in his work but also his hobbies. In his free time, he finds himself playing wei qi, reading classical Daoist texts, doing yoga, rock climbing, scuba diving and making interactive art installations. Also fluent in Mandarin Chinese and Bahasa Indonesia, his works as a translator include "Tibetan Environmentalists in China: The King of Dzi," and award-winning films such as 'Splendid Float' and 'Spider Lilies'.

Of his multifaceted interests and hobbies, Assistant Professor Rowen shares that it was on his East Asian Studies advisor's suggestion that he gravitated towards geography: "Space permeates just about any aspect of human enquiry. Geography, historically, was a science of empire; it's moved on from the past. But geography is in many ways an expansive discipline. It has its own traditions yet also touches

on a variety of disciplines, be they cultural anthropology, political science, sociology and so on. All of these have spatial dimensions."

He has many notable professional achievements - some of which date back to his graduate student days where he was successfully published in flagship journals of three different disciplines - *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Asian Studies* and the *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*. Also during his time as a graduate student, he delivered invited talks from Stanford University to School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and even New York University, Shanghai. But perhaps one of the highlights of his academic life would be his article on the Sunflower movement in the *Journal of Asian Studies* published by Cambridge University Press: "My article was on a list of many publications that Chinese censors tried to get pulled from the Cambridge University Press website. To see my work listed alongside that of so many esteemed scholars was a great honor."

Once a translator, journalist, musician, tour guide, hotelier, entrepreneur and now an academic in NTU, Assistant Professor Ian Rowen's eclectic nature is not only reflected

## ASSISTANT PROFESSOR YE JUNJIA



Born and raised in Singapore, growing up to be an academe was not something Assistant Professor Ye Junjia had envisioned for herself. While she had enjoyed geography through her years in secondary school and junior college, she kept an open mind on how far her interest in the subject would take her. "The general

idea was for me to go for four years and see where life takes me," she reveals.

As it turns out, her curiosity for geography took her to many places, both physically and intellectually. Instead of spending just four years in Canada, she ended up staying there for 10, earning her Bachelor's and Master's degrees at York University, and her doctorate at The University of British Columbia. She flew across the Atlantic Ocean to be a postdoctoral research fellow at the Max Planck Institute in Germany, and thereafter, travelled to down under to New Zealand to be a Research Leader in the Urban Encounters project at Massey University. She then returned to Singapore, and joined NTU as an assistant professor in July 2017.

After being away for almost two decades, the self-confessed "city-phile" is thrilled to finally be able to work on research that is focused on Singapore. "It is really nice

being in Singapore doing the sort of work that I do because there's so much going on," she enthuses. "I'm very excited to be in a place where the field is not so far removed from me, geographically, anymore." She is currently working on research that takes a critical look at inclusion and integration in the context of migrant workers in Singapore.

If she had not gone down the academia route, she might have been a chef, Assistant Professor Ye reveals; it was something she had contemplated while waiting for the results of her PhD application. Now she turns to cooking to unwind from the daily grind, whipping up mouthwatering dishes like shakshuka or chicken tajine, and hosting leisurely dinners for her loved ones at home. "The whole ritual of going to the grocery store, making lists, buying things; I enjoy it all," she says. "The whole process of assembling, and waiting, and smelling... there's quite a sensuousness to a meal that I find quite satisfying."

# RESEARCH GRANTS

## MOE ACADEMIC RESEARCH GRANT AWARDS

### MOE TIER 1 GRANTS

Subject	Principal Investigator	Project Title
Sociology	Associate Professor Sun Hsiao-Li Shirley	Addressing Social Issues in Precision Medicine: Comparing Singapore, the United States of America and Canada

## EXTERNAL GRANTS

Subject	Funding Agency/Grant Type	Principal Investigator	Project Title
Psychology	DSO National Laboratories	Associate Professor Joyce Pang Shu Min	Examining Contact Theory in Online Environments
Psychology	NRF – Behavioural Studies in Energy, Water, Waste and Transportation Sectors (BSEWWT)	Assistant Professor Kenichi Ito	Making Recycling Fun In Singapore
Psychology	MSF	Assistant Professor Eunae Cho	Predictors and Consequences of Work-Family Experiences: Study of Working Caregivers of Older Adults

## TYPE A – SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH THEMATIC GRANT CALL 2016

### PSYCHOLOGY

#### Title:

Fostering Harmonious Intergroup Relations in Early Childhood

#### Principal Investigator:

Assistant Professor Setoh Pei Pei

#### Description:

In Singapore's ethnically diverse community, promoting intergroup harmony is essential. As racial biases are known to be firmly entrenched and resistant to change once we enter adulthood, it is crucial to understand the nature and early development of such

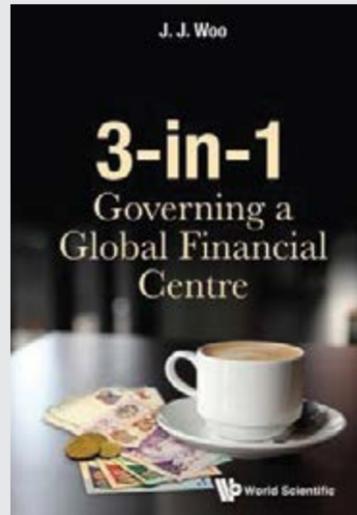
biases in order to develop early prevention and intervention strategies. The project aims to investigate the development of race preferences in Singaporean children with the goal of gaining knowledge about the major contributors to pro-ingroup behaviour during childhood, as well as key insights about the relationship between identity development and social attitude formation.

Insights from the project will lay the empirical foundation for developing novel early intervention methods, and

an evidence based, experimentally-validated pre-school intergroup harmony curriculum. The latter will help shape children's identity to encompass the values of inclusivity, diversity, and unity. The project will contribute to the enhancement of pre-school education, through Nanyang Technological University's collaboration with NTUC First Campus, which will include the implementation of the intergroup harmony curriculum at NTUC First Campus pre-schools.

# PUBLICATIONS

## BOOKS



### **3-in-1: Governing a Global Financial Centre**

Assistant Professor Woo Jun Jie (Public Policy and Global Affairs), NTU, Singapore & Harvard

3-in-1: Governing a Global Financial Centre provides a comprehensive understanding of Singapore's past development and future success as a global financial centre. It focuses on three transformational processes that have determined the city-state's financial sector development and governance — globalisation, financialisation, and centralisation — and their impacts across three areas: the economy, governance, and technology. More importantly, this book takes a multidimensional approach

by considering the inter-related and interdependent nature of these three transformational processes. Just like the 3-in-1 coffee mix that is such a ubiquitous feature of everyday life in Singapore, the individual ingredients of Singapore's success as a global financial centre do not act alone, but as an integrated whole that manifests itself in one final product: the global financial centre.

<越境アジアと地域ガバナンス: 東アジアにおける歴史・政治経済の発展の新たな分析  
> ["Transnational Network and Global Governance: Toward a New Interpretation of History and the Political Economy of East Asia,"] (in Japanese). 田中仁主编『21世紀の東アジアと歴史問題: 思索と対話のための政治史論』(京都: 法律文化出版社, 2017).

Professor Liu Hong (Public Policy and Global Affairs). 2017. In Hitoshi Tanaka, ed., *The Historical Controversy and East Asia of the 21st Century: A Political History for Reflection and Conversation* (Kyoto: Hôritsu Bunka Publisher, 2017), 123-135.

### **Transnational Social Underpinnings of Chinese Capitalism: Dual Embeddedness and New Migrant Entrepreneurship in Singapore**

Professor Liu Hong (Public Policy and Global Affairs) and Ren Na. In Yos Santasombat ed., *Chinese Capitalism in Southeast Asia: Cultures and Practices* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 57-84.

### **Lee Kuan Yew's Thoughts on Talent and Singapore's Development Strategy**

Professor Liu Hong (Public Policy and Global Affairs) and Zhang Huimei. 2017. In Chen-Ning Yang, Ying-shih Yu, Wang Gungwu, et al., *Lee Kuan Yew Through the Eyes of Chinese Scholars* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co., 2017), 97-115.

### **Changing Patterns of Chinese Immigration and Diasporic Formation in the United States**

Min Zhou and Professor Liu Hong (Public Policy and Global Affairs). 2017. In Min Zhou, ed., *Contemporary Chinese Diasporas* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 403-424.

### **Diaspora and Migration: History of the Chinese in Southeast Asia**

Els Van Dongen and Professor Liu Hong (Public Policy and Global Affairs). 2017. In Gracia Liu-Farrer and Brenda Yeoh eds., *Routledge Handbook of Asian Migration* (London: Routledge, 2018), 33-48.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

### **Youth Activism**

Assistant Professor Ian Rowen (Sociology). 2017. In Ogawa, Akihiro (ed) *Routledge Handbook on Civil Society in Asia*. Routledge.

### **Tourism as a territorial strategy in the South China Sea**

Assistant Professor Ian Rowen (Sociology). 2017. In Spangler, Jonathan., Lopes de Souza, Moises and Dean Karalekas (eds.), *Enterprises, Localities, People, and Policy in the South China Sea: Beneath the Surface*. Springer.

### **在台灣上演「一中」 Performing 'One China' in Taiwan: An ethnography of Chinese tourism [In Chinese].**

Assistant Professor Ian Rowen (Sociology). 2017. In 吳介民 Wu, Jieh-min et al (eds) 吊燈裡的巨蟒: 中國因素作用力與反作用力 *The Anaconda in the Chandelier: Mechanisms of influence and resistance in the China factor*, 左岸出版社 Rive Gauche Publishing House.

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

### Contours of Urban Diversity and Coexistence

Assistant Professor Ye Junjia (Sociology). 2017. *Geography Compass* (invited review article by Cultural Geography editor, Katy Bennett), 10.1111/gec3.12327

The celebration of co-presence within city life has a long history in urban studies, beginning with analyses of contact with subjects different from ourselves. As new diversities arising from migration continue to both enrich and complicate the dynamics of urban community, there has been a renewed interest in the potential of the everyday intercultural encounter in

shared spaces. This paper identifies two key strands of geographical imaginations in the growing fields of urban diversity and coexistence. I first review the geography of togetherness through the sharing of space before moving on to discuss the spatialities of structured and structuring practices that can enclose these micro-publics. Consequently, I then highlight the work

of difference-making that is done at both policy and everyday level that generates, filters, sorts, and organizes diversity. What emerges is the need for more attention to the impact of governance and management of diversity and the contingent effects of the characteristics and histories of migrant populations and the local politics of place.

### Educating the Developmental State: Policy Integration and Mechanism Redesign in Singapore's SkillsFuture Scheme

Assistant Professor Woo Jun Jie (Public Policy and Global Affairs), *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 1-18

As an archetypal developmental state, Singapore has always emphasized the role of higher education as a means of human capital development. The recent introduction of the SkillsFuture scheme represents a similarly development-

oriented higher education policy initiative. Taking a policy design approach and drawing from mechanism design, this paper argues that the SkillsFuture scheme constitutes an act of policy 'integration', whereby new policy instruments and goals

are added to an existing policy mix without compromising instrument mix consistency or coherence of policy goals. However, the presence of information asymmetries has also resulted in a need for 'mechanism redesign'.

### How Does Culture Matter in the Face of Globalisation?

Associate Professor Bobby K. Cheon (Psychology). 2017. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 12 (5), 810-823

Globalization has made exposure to multiple cultures not only possible, but often necessary and unavoidable. This article focuses on how people react and adapt to increasing globalization and multiculturalism. We posit that reactions to multiculturalism and intercultural contact are not universal and are themselves shaped by cultural experiences. That is,

culture provides a frame of reference for reconciling and negotiating the inflow of foreign cultures and peoples. Although exposure to foreign cultures can widen one's worldview, thereby enhancing creativity and reducing prejudice, intercultural contact can also bring about negative exclusionary responses such as aversion, disgust, and defensiveness. We explore

how culture and individual differences, such as a belief in racial essentialism, critically shape reactions to intercultural contact. Our discussion sheds light on recent geopolitical and societal shifts that reflect an increased backlash against rising globalization and cultural diversity.

### Hukou Reform and Land Politics in China: Rise of a Tripartite Alliance

Assistant Professor Zhan Shaohua (Sociology). 2017. *The China Journal*, 78, 25-49.

This article calls attention to the role of capital, large capital in particular, in recent reforms to China's system of household registration (hukou). It argues that a tripartite alliance between agrarian capital, urban capital, and local governments arose in the first decade of this century and

has become a major force driving locally initiated hukou reforms. The main goal of reform has been to facilitate the transfer of land rights from rural residents so that rural land could be used to generate profits and government revenue. While rural residents are compensated for the loss of land

rights, many face increasing insecurity in their livelihoods. The article is based on an extensive survey of local policy documents and a case study of Chengdu Municipality in Sichuan Province.

### Internal Spatial Fix: China's Geographical Solution to Food Supply and its Limits

Assistant Professor Zhan Shaohua (Sociology), Lingli Huang. 2017. *Geoforum*, 85, 140-152.

Over the past three decades, China has managed to maintain and even increase grain production in the context of rapid industrialization and urbanization through a process of internal spatial fix in which grain production is relocated to and concentrated in less developed inland

regions. However, the fix created political and environmental problems that will undermine it in the future. Using national statistical data and two case studies, the paper demonstrates how the fix has been a result of complex interactions between central and local actors and is a key factor

shaping China's trajectories of food politics and agrarian transitions. It also reveals that confronting the underproduction crisis of food under capitalist accumulation China has first sought to produce sufficient grain within its national border rather than rely on overseas resources.

### Lessons Learned from Public and Private Contract Managers for Effective Local Government Contracting Out: The Case of New Jersey

Assistant Professor Kim Soojin (Public Policy and Global Affairs). 2017. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 40(9), 756-769.

To date, very few studies have explored practical strategies for exercising effective financial management of local government contracts through two main stakeholders' perspectives of the contracting system at the same time. Employing a series of

semi-structured interviews with public officials and private contractors in New Jersey, this study attempts to fill this gap in the scholarship. The finding of this study suggests that government agencies should pay greater attention to competitive bids

without favoritism, contract specificity, a statewide performance database, sufficient staffing with well-trained personnel, strong leadership, team-based structures, two-way communication, and evaluation based on both qualitative and quantitative values.

### Managing Urban Diversity Through Differential Inclusion in Singapore

Assistant Professor Ye Junjia (Sociology). 2017. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 35 (6), 1033-1052

This paper interrogates processes of everyday urban diversification by challenging dominant narratives of "diversity" and "integration". I address the management aspects of urban diversification through the normative and productive categorisations of race, citizenship and civility in shared spaces to highlight the forms of differential inclusion of newcomers, drawing upon ethnographic data from Jurong West in Singapore,

to explain subjective inclusion through state-led measures and everyday forms of coexistence. There are two key aspects of differential inclusion discussed here: a) the explicit rules that form the basis of differential state treatment of its population by race, ethnicity and citizenship status and b) the implicit principles in which migrants are included according to normative forms of appropriate behaviour in public spaces. Consequently, social norms and civility

become tools of inclusion, and, relationally, exclusion, producing a politicised logic of managing diversity both in structural and everyday spaces. Recognising the profound ways in which differential inclusion shapes space through its subtle yet pervasive ways not only imparts analytical purchase to the study of everyday interactions but also grafts the meaning of belonging and difference onto the ever-changing contours of diversification in the city.

### Moving beyond the Influence of Neighbors on Policy Diffusion:

#### Local Influences on Decisions to Conduct Property Tax Reassessment in New York

Assistant Professor Kim Soojin (Public Policy and Global Affairs), Eom Tae Ho, Bae Hyunhoe. 2017. *American Review of Public Administration*, 47(5), 599-614.

Over the past few decades, research on policy adoption and diffusion has grown rapidly. Despite the relatively large number of publications, however, little attention has been paid to the important question of why a policy is differently implemented or diffused across governments. To answer this question and improve our understanding of local policy choice beyond widely cited neighboring influences, we closely examine the roles of three main policy actors—internal actors, external actors, and go-

betweens—in the local policy diffusion process, drawing particularly upon property tax reassessment scenarios. In addition, we focus on nested institutional arrangements, including form of government and type of property tax assessor, that affect the policy decisions of internal actors. Using data on cities and towns in New York State for 1993-2010, we estimate event history models of property tax reassessment activities. Our findings reveal that regional interactions with neighbors that have already adopted

the policy and top-down go-betweens through positive inducements can help facilitate property tax reassessment across municipalities. Reformed municipal governments in the council-manager form, along with appointed assessors, are also most likely to adopt reassessment policy frequently, compared with other institutional arrangements. Overall, this study advances the policy diffusion literature by exploring the roles of different influences through a more detailed, broader approach.

### Neurobiology of Culturally Common Maternal Responses to Infant Cry

Marc H. Bornstein, Diane L. Putnick, Paola Rigo, Assistant Professor Gianluca Esposito (Psychology), James E. Swain, Joan T. D. Suwalsky, Xueyun Su, Xiaoxia Du, Kaihua Zhang, Linda R. Cote, Nicola De Pisapia, Paola Venuti. 2017. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (PNAS), 114 (45), E9465-E9473

This report coordinates assessments of five types of behavioral responses in new mothers to their own infants' cries with neurobiological responses in new mothers to their own infants' cries and in experienced mothers and inexperienced nonmothers to infant cries and other emotional and control sounds. We found that 684 new primipara mothers in 11 countries (Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, France, Kenya, Israel, Italy, Japan, South Korea, and the United States) preferentially responded to their infants' vocalizing distress by picking up and holding and by talking to their

infants, as opposed to displaying affection, distracting, or nurturing. Complementary functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) analyses of brain responses to their own infants' cries in 43 new primipara US mothers revealed enhanced activity in concordant brain territories linked to the intention to move and to speak, to process auditory stimulation, and to caregive [supplementary motor area (SMA), inferior frontal regions, superior temporal regions, midbrain, and striatum]. Further, fMRI brain responses to infant cries in 50 Chinese and Italian mothers replicated,

extended, and, through parcellation, refined the results. Brains of inexperienced nonmothers activated differently. Culturally common responses to own infant cry coupled with corresponding fMRI findings to own infant and to generic infant cries identified specific, common, and automatic caregiving reactions in mothers to infant vocal expressions of distress and point to their putative neurobiological bases. Candidate behaviors embedded in the nervous systems of human caregivers lie at the intersection of evolutionary biology and developmental cultural psychology.

### Racial Categorization Predicts Implicit Racial Bias in Preschool Children

Assistant Professor Setoh Peipei (Psychology), Kristy J. J. Lee, Lijun Zhang, Miao K. Qian, Paul C. Quinn, Gail D. Heyman, Kang Lee. 2017. *Child Development*. 10.1111/cdev.12851

This research investigated the relation between racial categorization and implicit racial bias in majority and minority children. Chinese and Indian 3- to 7-year-olds from Singapore (N = 158) categorized Chinese and Indian faces by race and had their implicit and explicit racial biases measured.

Majority Chinese children, but not minority Indian children, showed implicit bias favoring own race. Regardless of ethnicity, children's racial categorization performance correlated positively with implicit racial bias. Also, Chinese children, but not Indian children, displayed explicit bias favoring

own race. Furthermore, children's explicit bias was unrelated to racial categorization performance and implicit bias. The findings support a perceptual-social linkage in the emergence of implicit racial bias and have implications for designing programs to promote interracial harmony.

### Riding on Self-sufficiency: Grain Policy and the Rise of Agrarian Capital in China

Assistant Professor Zhan Shaohua (Sociology). 2017. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 54, 151-161.

Rapid expansion of agrarian capitalism in China has commanded much attention. This paper situates the rise of agrarian capital in the context of fear regarding "Who will feed China?", demonstrating how the pursuit of grain self-sufficiency in the country has fueled the expansion of agribusiness enterprises and large farms.

The policies to increase grain production, including the grain crop subsidy program, the incentive scheme for grain-producing regions, and the policy of nurturing new agricultural units, provide favorable conditions for agrarian capital of both domestic and foreign origins to take root and expand. As a result, the emphasis

on self-sufficiency has strengthened the alliance between the state and large capital, and placed small farming households at a disadvantage. The paper draws attention to the interconnections between food politics and rural transformation, and offers an alternative perspective on agrarian capitalism in China.

### Sociotechnical Resilience: A Preliminary Concept

Associate Professor Sulfikar Amir (Sociology), Vivek Kant. 2017. *Risk Analysis*, 38(1), 8-16

This article presents the concept of sociotechnical resilience by employing an interdisciplinary perspective derived from the fields of science and technology studies, human factors, safety science, organizational studies, and systems engineering. Highlighting the hybrid nature of sociotechnical systems, we identify

three main constituents that characterize sociotechnical resilience: informational relations, sociomaterial structures, and anticipatory practices. Further, we frame sociotechnical resilience as undergirded by the notion of transformability with an emphasis on intentional activities, focusing on the ability of sociotechnical

systems to shift from one form to another in the aftermath of shock and disturbance. We propose that the triad of relations, structures, and practices are fundamental aspects required to comprehend the resilience of sociotechnical systems during times of crisis.

### Strategic Public Management for Financial Condition: Focus on Fund Balances of School Districts

Assistant Professor Kim Soojin (Public Policy and Global Affairs), Sangyub Ryu. 2017. *The Social Science Journal*, 54(3), 249-260.

Scholars have emphasized the roles of strategic public management and the financial condition but little is known about the link between the two. Finding the missing link is the purpose of this study. By analyzing data from K-12 Texas school districts, this study investigates how top

managers' strategic efforts toward their superiors, subordinates, and external stakeholders affect the financial condition of school districts. The findings suggest that superintendents' managing upward toward school boards increases fund balances, whereas managing downward toward

school principals decreases fund balances. Apparently, the relationships between school boards, superintendents, and school principals contain different priorities and incentives that influence their behaviors in managing school district budgets.

### Taiwan's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: The Geopolitics of Transitional Justice in a Contested State

Assistant Professor Ian Rowen (Sociology), Jamie Rowen. 2017. *International Journal of Transitional Justice*. 11(1), 92-112.

This article examines Taiwan's new president's 2016 proposal for a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC), and addresses the ways in which this TRC serves domestic, regional and international policy goals. For Taiwan as a contested state, the TRC is part of a legitimation strategy that includes consolidation of a collective

memory about earlier authoritarian state violence, cultural and political distinction from the irredentism and authoritarianism of China, and demonstration of adherence to international norms of democracy and human rights. We argue that the Taiwan case reveals the instrumentality of a TRC as a geopolitical strategy, particularly for

relatively stable democracies facing external existential threats from an authoritarian country. We further demonstrate the need for ongoing research on transitional justice in Asia, and emphasize that political transitions are not only situated within nation states, but also in regions where TRCs may have profound geopolitical effects.

### Touring in Heterotopia: Travel, Sovereignty, and Exceptional Spaces in Taiwan and China

Assistant Professor Ian Rowen (Sociology). 2017. *Asian Anthropology*, 16(1), 20-34

This article uses the case of Chinese tourism to Taiwan to theorize the mutual constitution of tourism mobilities and exceptional spaces of sovereignty. Human flows between China and Taiwan have proliferated despite incompatible sovereign claims. Since 2008, China has sent millions of tourists across the Taiwan Strait even as it points over a thousand missiles in the same

direction. Taiwan, itself a "de facto state" and therefore an "exceptional space" in the normative world order of sovereign nation-states, is partly defined by its relations with China. This relationship is being refashioned through cross-Strait tourism. Based on analysis of border-crossing regulations and ethnographies of tourist spaces, particularly at airports and protest sites, conducted

between 2012 and 2015, this article argues that tourism mobilities are not only the effect but also the cause of transformations in the performance of sovereignty and territoriality. In other words, such mobilities not only articulate within exceptional spaces, but they can produce and reconfigure such spaces as well.

### Understanding Human Performance in Sociotechnical Systems – Steps Towards a Generic Framework

Associate Professor Sulfikar Amir (Sociology), 2017, *Safety Science*, doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2017.07.008

Humans, their performance, actions and decisions play a significant role in a vast range of operations in complex sociotechnical systems. Numerous studies have therefore endeavoured to understand people's actions and/or inactions within their working environment and to identify those factors, also known as Performance Shaping Factors (PSFs), that contribute either positively or negatively to sociotechnical system performance. However, the majority of those studies are often created based on data and research derived from a specific domain,

and therefore are difficult to apply beyond the domain of interest. Thus, this paper presents a generic framework to develop a standardised list of PSFs, referred to as (Cross-Sectoral Performance Shaping Factors, C-PSFs), to be used across sectors to describe the immediate and latent factors that affect human performance in a structured and consistent manner. Building upon the existing Railway-Performance Shaping Factors taxonomy and the fundamental concepts of Cognitive and Behavioral Science, the new C-PSFs taxonomy illustrates the numerous

possible interdependencies between the human operator and a system's constraints. The former provides the empirical evidence for the C-PSFs taxonomy's generic factors, while the latter justifies the transferability and applicability of the taxonomy to a broad range of sociotechnical sectors. The analysis of two accidents, from the railway and energy sectors, support such evidence. The proposed taxonomy provides a common baseline set of PSFs across sectors and its usage can greatly improve safety management systems of cross-sectoral organisations.

