

Singapore Education Trip 2007

A group of Psychology students taking the Professional Development Module were entrusted with the task of organizing an educational trip at the beginning of the May 2007 semester. After almost three months of planning and fundraising, the trip to Singapore finally became a reality on the 20th of July 2007.

The participants, consisting of 37 Psychology students and a Psychology lecturer, took a late night train to Singapore to visit the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) of Singapore and the National University of Singapore (NUS). At IMH, they were treated to a brief talk by Mr. Kenji, a practising psychologist, who explained the responsibilities and challenges of his job, and also the different therapeutic areas covered by the hospital. They were also taken on a tour to the Emergency Services Centre which provides medical outpatient services to the public; the gardens in which horticultural therapy is carried out; the café which is staffed by patients recovering from mental illnesses prior to their return to society, and a centre which provides medical and therapeutic services to children with development-related disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism.

They then headed over to the Kent Ridge Campus of NUS to learn more about the progress of psychology in Singapore and to visit the Psychology laboratories at NUS. Welcomed by the Head of the Department of Psychology, Professor George Bishop, they were treated to a short talk about NUS, the research facilities available and development of the Psychology department. Later on, they visited many labs, among them, the Cardiovascular Psychophysiology Lab, where they were given the chance to participate in an experiment which measures our heart rates and blood pressure in response to doing Math questions. At the Brain and Behaviour lab, they saw brain imaging machines that measured brain waves when they hear words and music. Finally, at the Language and Gesture lab, they saw observation rooms where researchers observed behaviour of infants.

And what would a visit overseas be without a little shopping treat? They made their way to City Hall as well as Bugis Street and immersed themselves in the sights and sounds of our neighbour down south.

From this educational trip, they have acquired more knowledge on the workings of mental institutions and how psychology professionals play a role in helping people with mental illnesses. They also saw experiments and equipments that they had only heard and read about in their Psychology textbooks. This trip to Singapore has definitely opened their eyes to the potential of psychology, its importance in the society and where it can take them in the future and the Organizing Committee was proud to have had this learning opportunity which taught them many lessons in event planning, event management, and crisis management.



1 - Mr. James, lecturer, handing a souvenir of thanks to Professor Bishop of NUS

2 - Group photo at the Department of Psychology, NUS