



# Education in Asia



The 21st century is known as the Asian century, marked by the area's growing role as engine of the global economy. For global policy experts and future professionals, Asia is already where the action is.

"As an analyst of global affairs, I find it tremendously exciting to be based in Asia, where I can observe and try to understand the tremendous economic and power shifts that are taking place right before our eyes," says Khong Yuen Foong, Li Ka Shing Professor of Political Science at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY School).



# Education in Asia

## Dynamic Perspectives

Professor Khong had previously been on the faculty of Oxford University and, before that, Harvard University. His research interests include U.S. foreign policy and international affairs of the Asia Pacific.

“I had been perfectly happy interpreting Asia, and America’s relationship with Asia, from my perch in the West, but here in Singapore, I am close to the pulse of a changing Asia,” says Khong. “When I taught U.S. foreign policy in the United States, we were viewing it from the perspective of the formulators of the policies. Here in Singapore, we are usually discussing U.S. policies from the perspective of those at the receiving end of the policies.”

More than 80 percent of students at the LKY School come from outside of Singapore. “Faculty and students here are very cosmopolitan,” says Khong. “Thanks to the great diversity of viewpoints, there is an emotional resonance that electrifies the class. Imagine discussing the South China Sea disputes in a class with students from China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, India, Europe, and the United States!”

The international diversity of students and faculty at the LKY School was a major draw for John-Paul Parmigiani, an American student who decided to pursue his Master in Public Policy (MPP) in Asia.

“At the LKY School, I learned a lot about working on teams with people from very different cultures,” says Parmigiani, who graduated in 2011. “We had the opportunity to work collaboratively on a broad range of assignments.”

In 2013, Parmigiani worked with a classmate from the LKY School and others to co-found Impact Hub Accra, a nonprofit hub that provides workspace, networking opportunities, and more for entrepreneurs in Ghana. The enterprise is part of the global Impact Hub network supporting social innovation and collaboration. They chose West Africa as a prime location for making an impact in a region with some of the world’s biggest social problems and greatest opportunities. Ghana’s relatively strong economy helps make its capital city, Accra, a promising place to do business. After serving as CEO for more than three years, Parmigiani is currently the board chairman.



John-Paul Parmigiani (left) is co-founder and board chairman of Impact Hub Accra.

Parmigiani is focusing on partnerships and fundraising for the hub, including efforts to develop a new health innovation center in Ghana. “My job is very relationship-based,” he says. “At the LKY School, I learned to work with people from diverse backgrounds while being exposed to leading methodologies for decision-making. I now apply those experiences on a daily basis.”

In fact, relationships formed in Singapore have also been crucial to his networking and fundraising success. From his office in New Jersey, he has remained in close touch with former cohorts in New York City who are now working at organizations such as the United Nations. One of Parmigiani’s key contacts at Facebook is someone he first met at a conference at the LKY School.



## Gateway to Asia

“Singapore’s location in the heart of Southeast Asia provides a hard-to-match vantage point from which to observe and analyze the region’s shifting economic and geopolitical dynamics,” observes Khong. He says LKY School faculty members are in a prime position, through their teaching and research, to understand and communicate the perspectives of Asia’s new powers.

“I see Asia as a laboratory where the forces and personalities of international relations work themselves out during a time of change, and I see Singapore as a neutral perch from which to record, explain, and perhaps even anticipate the trajectory of new developments,” says Khong.

Parmigiani was initially drawn to Singapore as a place to study because of his perception that “something in Southeast Asia is working very well.” It was time to get to know Asia better.

**“At the LKY School, I learned a lot about working on teams with people from very different cultures.”**

– John-Paul Parmigiani, MPP, 2011

## A LEADING GLOBAL PUBLIC POLICY SCHOOL

The LKY School’s six graduate degree programs include a new two-year Master of International Affairs program, which offers an Asian dimension in the global discourse on international affairs.

The LKY School currently has double-degree arrangements with five universities worldwide, and student-exchange agreements with 14 universities.

Alumni from 80 countries form a dynamic global community.

For more information: <http://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg>

In addition to learning from the school’s world-class professors and lecturers, Parmigiani was exposed to Asia through his fellow students. “Everyone was coming from a different culture and a different perspective,” he says. “We got to know each other very well, and I believe that was a major advantage of being at the LKY School.”

The city’s location was another plus. “Singapore is close to many fascinating and exciting places to explore on a student’s budget,” says Parmigiani. In addition to traveling in countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Cambodia, he was able to work with a classmate on a research project on post-tsunami relief efforts in Sumatra as viewed from a Singapore-government perspective.

Within Singapore itself, Parmigiani appreciated the opportunity to experience a variety of different cultures in a comfortable, safe, and vibrant cosmopolitan setting. “Singapore is a globally connected city where I was able to explore places like Little India and Chinatown and enjoy great food from all over Southeast Asia,” he says. “The Botanic Gardens are unbelievable—possibly the best in the world—and are located right next to the LKY School. I often went running there.”

Singapore is free of the traffic congestion that plagues some Asian cities. The city is a clean, efficiently run metropolis with a good public transportation system.



## A World-Class University

At the LKY School, Parmigiani benefited from a strong work ethic among his classmates. “Students work hard and take the program very seriously,” he says. “From the school’s professional, diplomatic atmosphere, I learned skills that I continue to apply.”

Parmigiani also has a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from the American University of Paris and has taken graduate-level classes at Stanford University and Harvard University. He appreciated the rigorous and pragmatic approach of his classes at the LKY School, where students are exposed to leading researchers and renowned guest speakers from around the world.

In fact, quality of education has become a key attraction of Asia as a place to study. Benefiting from strong government support, Asia’s leading universities have risen to world prominence in recent global rankings such as the 2016 *Times Higher Education* World University Rankings.



“Governments here are devoting greater resources to their universities because they have come to realize that having strong educational institutions is indispensable to technological, social, and economic progress,” says Khong. “Asian universities are striving to be the best they can, and you can see this in their impressive rise in the global university rankings.”

At the National University of Singapore, such efforts are apparent at the LKY School, where Khong says faculty support is unrivaled in terms of grants to hire research assistants and help with applying for external grants. In the 2016 QS University Rankings, NUS is ranked first in Asia and 12th in the world.

Khong foresees continued growth opportunities for Asia and the quality of its universities. “Barring a serious military conflict, I believe China and India will continue to rack up solid growth rates. The Southeast Asian countries poised to benefit include Singapore, Vietnam, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, and others.”

In the last decade, China has replaced the U.S. as the number-one trading partner for almost all Southeast Asian countries, but Khong says China’s strength should also be a reason for caution. “In growing with China, countries may have to take heed of China’s political and strategic concerns in the region. The dilemma of accommodating the strategic interests of an economic benefactor is one that will increasingly confront countries in Southeast Asia.”

But one thing is clear: “LKY School students will graduate with a widely respected degree and an impressive global network of friends pursuing careers in policy, business, consulting, or academia,” says Khong.

**“Thanks to the great diversity of viewpoints, there is an emotional resonance that electrifies the class. Imagine discussing the South China Sea disputes in a class with students from China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, India, Europe, and the United States!”**

– Khong Yuen Foong, Li Ka Shing Professor of Political Science, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore





# An Education in Public Policy Changes Lives YOURS AND OTHERS

Receive a world-class education to effect real change at  
Asia's leading school of public policy.

*Introducing our new Master in International Affairs programme  
commencing in 2017.*



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE IS RANKED

#1 IN ASIA ♦ #12 IN THE WORLD ♦ #7 IN SOCIAL POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

2016/2017 QS World University Rankings®



Applications open from 1 August until 31 December 2016

## OUR GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### Full Scholarships Available

**MIA**

Master in  
International Affairs  
\*NEW\*

**MPP**

Master in  
Public Policy

**MPA**

Master in Public  
Administration

**MPM**

Master in Public  
Management

**MPAM**

Master in Public Administration  
and Management (*Chinese*)

**PhD**

PhD in  
Public Policy



Receive first-hand information about our graduate programmes and scholarships by attending our information sessions. For more details, please visit <http://bit.ly/lkyspp-graduate-program>