

Over 60% of Yale-NUS grads found jobs or are furthering studies

The number, however, is low compared with other Singapore varsities

TOH EE MING
toheeming@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – More than 60 per cent of the pioneer graduating cohort of Yale-NUS College in Singapore have secured jobs or university places for graduate studies, a proportion that appears to pale in comparison to the other varsities here.

Established as Singapore's first liberal arts college in 2011 through a partnership between Yale University and the National University of Singa-

pore (NUS), the school held its graduation ceremony for some 120 students yesterday.

Those with job offers will be going into consulting work (24 per cent), the public sector (24 per cent), and the education industry (14 per cent). Others were offered jobs in start-ups, the science and engineering field, finance, communications, and more. Students pursuing graduate studies have been accepted into universities such as Harvard University and University College London, while others will be taking up the Princeton in Asia Fellowship, and the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme, for example.

Addressing the relatively low number of employment and graduate places that it has compared with NUS and

Nanyang Technological University, a Yale-NUS College spokesperson told TODAY that NUS and NTU take their graduate employment numbers from the annual Ministry of Education survey, which is done six months after students leave the institutions.

“The Yale-NUS numbers shared are taken from a pre-graduation survey, before our students have even left campus. As there is a six-month time differential between the statistics, to compare both sets of statistics as like-for-like would be inaccurate,” the spokesperson said.

Speaking at the ceremony yesterday, Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills), reiterated that the liberal arts occupies a very special place within Singapore's higher-education landscape, such as providing many options to suit students' different interests, aptitudes and styles of learning. This would, in turn, produce more diverse talents.

He also urged graduates to use their skills to give back to the community, and for them to keep that “sense of adventure, fearlessness ... and some of that youthful foolishness” they possess.

Professor Richard C Levin, president emeritus of Yale University,

spoke about how the graduates are entering a workforce where certain values are “under attack”. He mentioned anti-globalisation sentiments, which are “much stronger than a decade ago”, as well as xenophobia.

He called on graduates “to stand up for openness and toleration”: “As citizens of the 21st century, you need to take this responsibility seriously. The stakes are too high; disengagement is not an option for those like you, who have benefited from the privilege of a superior education.”

Mr Anshuman Mohan from the graduating class, who also spoke at the event, recalled the special moments that the students had together, such as them hosting a gala dinner to thank construction workers who built the new campus.

In an earlier interview with TODAY, founding president of Yale-NUS College Professor Pericles Lewis said that he was confident of the job prospects for liberal-arts graduates, who could go into fields such as finance and consulting, the arts and government.

From August next year, the college aims to take in 250 students yearly, up from the 200 or so students that it accepted last August.