1 What is University Scholars Programme?

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The University Scholars Programme (USP) is an undergraduate academic programme that aims to shape independent, adaptable thinkers and doers who will make an impact in the world. USP provides students with an innovative curriculum, diverse global opportunities and a transformative learning environment. Each year, around 200 incoming NUS students are admitted to USP. Students in USP are concurrently enrolled in one of seven faculties or schools in NUS – Arts and Social Sciences, Business, Computing, Design and Environment, Engineering, Law, and Science. They do 30% of their academic work in USP and 70% in their home faculty or school. The total workload is the same as that of any other NUS undergraduate’s under an honours programme.

Innovative Curriculum

The USP curriculum is designed to develop students in their analytical, reasoning and thinking skills. Students take modules in three structured tiers—Foundation, Inquiry and Reflection. Foundation modules focus on writing and critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning, and also help students situate their knowledge within the larger history of ideas. Inquiry modules provide opportunities to practise these skills—through multidisciplinary inquiry, independent research, overseas academic exchange and other out-of-the-classroom learning—and in so doing, inflect and refine them. The single Reflection module offers the space for synthesis and encourages students to look back on their learning and ahead to post-university life. Many USP modules are inter- or multidisciplinary, while the curriculum as a whole (covering humanities, social sciences, sciences and technologies) has a multidisciplinary structure. The USP classroom, in bringing together students from seven NUS faculties and numerous majors, has a multidisciplinary composition, thereby better preparing students for the modern workplace. All modules are conducted as small seminars and rely on strong interpersonal interaction and vigorous discussion. Having class sizes of 10 to 30 students facilitate a learning experience that is targeted and collaborative, and brings about meaningful interactions with professors and among students.

Diverse Global Opportunities

USP believes in learning beyond textbooks and thus offers over 40 different International Programmes in over 20 countries. These international exchange programmes, combined with unique internships, community service projects and various short-term programmes, give our students the real-world experience necessary to learn important life skills, to become more adaptable and open to different worldviews. Some of these programmes are student-initiated and driven, a defining feature in USP that is very much encouraged and supported.
Transformative Learning Environment through the USP Residential College

Multidisciplinary learning is richly integrated with residential living at the USP residential college. Located at NUS University Town, USP comprises a residential block (Cinnamon College), two learn lobes with offices and classrooms, a multi-purpose hall, dining hall, reading room, multimedia laboratory and student lounges. Students take USP modules within these premises. Facilities and programmes at the residential college are designed to cultivate an open and supportive environment that meets and develops students’ needs and interests. Through organising and participating in the wide array of events and activities hosted at the residential college, interacting with diverse groups of people, and enjoying moments of solitude and reflection, USP students have the opportunity to create and develop close bonds of community and belonging.

All USP students stay at the USP residential college in year one and a second year of their choice. Many of them choose to stay on thereafter, subject to availability.