



Professor Simon Chesterman will continue to serve as dean of the Faculty of Law at the National University of Singapore while the university convenes a global search for his successor. PHOTO: NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

NUS law dean to be dean of NUS College



Prof Chesterman's appointment as NUS College dean comes after a shock announcement last August that Yale-NUS College (above) will be merged to bring together the best elements of the liberal arts institution and the University Scholars Programme into a "new college" - now known as NUS College. LIANHE ZAOBAO FILE PHOTO

Simon Chesterman concurrently appointed vice-provost for educational innovation at NUS

Tay Hong Yi

National University of Singapore law dean Simon Chesterman will be the first dean of the new NUS College, the result of a merger between Yale-NUS College and the University Scholars Programme.

Professor Chesterman was named dean-designate of the college with effect from Jan 1 and will assume his new role come July 1, said NUS in a statement yesterday.

This comes after a shock announcement last August that Yale-NUS College will be merged to bring together the best elements of the liberal arts institution and the University Scholars Programme into a "new college" - now known as NUS College.

NUS said Prof Chesterman will continue to serve as dean of the Faculty of Law while it convenes a global search for his successor.

He will also be concurrently appointed vice-provost for educational innovation at NUS, where he will focus on extending best practices in education - in particular, those piloted in NUS College - across the whole of NUS.

A Rhodes scholar, Prof Chesterman obtained his PhD in international law from the University of Oxford in 2000 and has taught at the universities of Melbourne, Oxford, Southampton and Columbia, as well as Sciences Po in France.

He has been a member of NUS' law faculty since 2007, serving as its dean since 2012.

Prof Chesterman has been "instrumental in transforming legal education in Singapore, including increasing Asian and civil law content, as well as enhancing experiential learning opportunities through the Centre for Pro Bono & Clinical Legal Education", said NUS.

NUS president Tan Eng Chye said: "A strong advocate for interdisciplinary education, Simon is an inspirational and collaborative leader who has contributed much to the higher education landscape in Singapore and internationally."

Prof Chesterman said: "I am humbled and deeply honoured to serve as the inaugural dean of NUS College. Attending university is about more than just studies and preparing for a career. It should do that, of course, but it is also a time of self-exploration and growth, pursuing one's passion while working alongside those from different backgrounds."

Responding to queries from *The Straits Times*, Prof Chesterman said his new role allows him to introduce an emphasis on critical and analytical skills that are transferable across different paths in life, and a commitment to service, to a wider and more diverse group of students. "NUS College builds on two outstanding programmes - the University Scholars Programme and the Yale-NUS College. Faculty, staff and students from both have been tremendously supportive throughout this process."

"NUS College takes the best of their experiences by offering a rich and rigorous residential programme that draws on the liberal arts tradition, while also opening pathways to almost all the degree programmes offered by NUS, as well as leveraging our many global partnerships," he said.

In its statement, NUS said the name of NUS College was selected after consultation with multiple stakeholders, including industry leaders and employers, board members, counsellors, parents, faculty, staff, students and alumni.

NUS College will be a new undergraduate honours college offering a "broad-based, interdisciplinary education through deeper integration with the rest of NUS".

The first intake will be for up to 400 students in the 2022/2023 academic year, which starts in August.

All students applying for admission to NUS can apply to NUS College, except for those seeking admission to architecture, dentistry, industrial design, landscape architecture, medicine, music, nursing and pharmacy courses.

hytay@sph.com.sg