



TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES COLLOQUIUM 2020


Theme: Building a Caring and Resilient Community

Friday 25 September, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Time	Activity	Speakers	Focus/Synopses/Abstracts
9:00 – 9:15	OPENING		
9:00 – 9:05	Welcome remarks	A/P Peter Pang, <i>Master, RC4</i>	
9:05 – 9:15	Opening address	Prof Florence Ling, <i>Vice-Provost (Student Life) & Dean of Residential Colleges</i>	
9:15 – 11:30	THREAD 1: BUILDING A CARING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY		
9:15 – 9:25	<p>Parallel Session 1.1: Fostering dialogue, social interaction and community building in RCs among students and staff</p> <p>Frydays at Rusa: Fostering dialogue and community building in a residential college</p>	Sadaf Ansari, RVRC	<p>Frydays at Rusa: Fostering dialogue and community building in a residential college</p> <p>Pastoral care, mentorship, and community building are natural extensions of teaching in the living-learning environment of a residential college. However, connecting with students outside the classroom as a Resident Fellow requires a different skillset to the ones used in formal teaching, and these skills may be unfamiliar to faculty who are new to the role. Sadaf’s talk is a reflection on the steep learning curve of her experience as a first-time Resident Fellow at RVRC. She will share some of the challenges she encountered that prompted her to reach out to students to seek their perspective about residential life. She will also outline the strategies she adopted for fostering pastoral care and community building in collaboration with a team of resident assistants. Central to her effort was a series of weekly informal interactions with residents called ‘Frydays at Rusa’, to practise and promote a culture of open dialogue among residents. To conclude, she will share how this experience positively informed her teaching practice within the classroom.</p> 

9:25 – 9:45	Socially distanced, digitally connected: building a new zone-based identity	Vyna Sani, RVRC	Socially distanced, digitally connected: building a new zone-based identity
9:45 – 10:00	Q&A for Parallel Session 1.1		<p>Forging a shared identity is essential to fostering community bonding in residential living. However, this has been challenging amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, where returning RVRC students have to reforge a house-based identity to primarily a zone-based one. Big social gatherings are restricted, further hampering bonding efforts, especially for new students.</p> <p>To facilitate new bonds between students in a challenging, yet low stakes and online environment, icebreakers are crucial. This talk would focus on Vyna’s reflections as a Resident Fellow in employing customizable 'Digital Breakout Rooms' as a bonding activity for residents during Zoom sessions. The carefully designed series of exercises or puzzles that residents collaboratively solve enhance digital social interaction and bonding. If you are an educator looking to add a bit of excitement in your online activities while promoting student collaboration, this is a highly adaptable tool you should consider.</p>
9:15 – 9:35	<p>Parallel Session 1.2: Fostering dialogue, social interaction and community building in RCs among students and staff</p> <p>Student leadership in residential colleges - challenges & possibilities (including Q&A)</p>	Desmond Ng, RVRC	<p>Student leadership in residential colleges - challenges & possibilities</p> <p>Student leaders are fully aware that this is a time of great uncertainty. Challenges such as the conflict between academic pursuits and leadership roles, lack of teamwork among student leaders, students' ignorance of university policies, especially given current COVID-19 situation, poor communication, just to mention a few, may negatively affect student leaders' effectiveness.</p> <p>“There is an uphill for every downhill, and downhill for every uphill.”</p> <p>However, the speaker believe that the current challenges will lead to future possibilities. What role do staff play in supporting our student leaders such that they too can build a Caring and Resilient Community among peers?</p> <p>Is there a need for staff to develop student leadership and cultivate their sense of commitment to supporting the developments of our Residential Colleges? Is there an intervention strategy if there is dysfunctionality among student leaders such as poor communication and collaboration?</p> 

9:35 – 10:00	Discussion: A whole-of-UTown approach to enhancing mental well-being and resilience of the residential college community	Wong Soon Fen and Siok Kuan Tambyah, CAPT	<p>Discussion: A whole-of-UTown approach to enhancing mental well-being and resilience of the residential college community</p> <p>This session is designed to be a conversation on what can be done to build a stronger community in University Town for students and staff (Fellows and admin staff). A stronger community encompasses various aspects of wellbeing related to mental wellness, resilience, and respect. While some programs are already in place for the NUS-wide campus, are there specific concerns and challenges for the residential colleges (RC) in University Town? Within each RC, what is being done (including student-led initiatives) to ensure the wellbeing of students and staff? How can the RCs work together to develop something at the University-Town level (e.g. in terms of sharing resources, and the scalability of suitable programs)?</p>
10:00-10:15	BREAK		
10:15 – 11:30	<p>Session 2: Building community and trust among faculty /fellows</p> <p>Discussion with RC Masters, USP Director & CDTL</p>	<p>A/P Peter Pang, <i>Master, RC4</i></p> <p>A/P Greg Dean Petersen, <i>Master, RVRC</i></p> <p>A/P Gary Tan, <i>Master, CAPT</i></p> <p>A/P Kelvin Pang, <i>Master, Tembusu</i></p> <p>A/P Kang Hway Chuan, <i>Director, USP</i></p> <p>A/P Adrian Lee, <i>Deputy Director (Professional Development), CDTL</i></p>	<p>Discussion with RC Masters, USP Director & CDTL</p> <p>'Community' is a word that is often used in relation to Residential Colleges. In a time when Colleges are having to adapt to changes and to rethink their place-based approach, these questions seem more important than ever: Who is included and what relationships are important when we talk about 'community' in RCs? What possible purpose can developing any community, such as an academic community, have in a context where competition is also present and encouraged through, for example, there being an emphasis on assessing individual performance for promotion? Is trying to develop a community simply anachronistic, idealistic or even performative? What possible role can 'community' among academic staff have now and in the future?</p>
11:30 – 12:30	LUNCH		

12:30 – 1:45			
THREAD 2: LEARNING FROM THE CRISIS FOR A MORE RESILIENT FUTURE: RETHINKING EDUCATION IN RCs			
12:30 – 12:50	Session 1: Is there a place for moral education in our curriculum?	Leung Wing Sze, USP	<p>Is there a place for moral education in our curriculum?</p> <p>In an educational context where the primary emphasis is on professional skills, the place of moral education sometimes appears to be insignificant. In her presentation, Wing Sze will first present philosophical accounts of the value of moral education. She will then focus on an existing campus-wide initiative-- Respect and Consent Workshop (which she helped design) --and explain the moral values underpinning the workshop. Finally, she will go into her class on human trafficking and labour migration and present some preliminary findings from her educational research project (AY2019-20) about whether and how the class raised students' sense of justice and pity.</p> 
12:50 – 1:10	Session 2: A call for higher education reform in the time of Covid19	Charles M. Burke, USP	<p>A call for higher education reform in the time of Covid19</p> <p>If you really want lifelong learning, anywhere students can teach themselves, they should teach themselves. Generating their own interests, questions, caveats, examples, and learning progress is something our students struggle with in particular, yet their ability to do so maybe the only way learning is transferred outside of the classroom. Singapore's education system may rely too heavily on providing instruction and made explicit learning objectives when the working world has no time for either. As a result, our graduates' reputation and productivity suffers in the workforce. This talk explores the potential for RCs in particular to provide opportunities and environments for self-directed learning.</p>
1:10 – 1:45	Q&A for Sessions 1 & 2		
1:45 – 2:00	BREAK		

2:00 – 3:15			
THREAD 3: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN THE NEW NORMAL: POSSIBILITIES FOR BUILDING A CARING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY			
2:00 – 2:25	Session 1: Reflections from practising experiential learning	Norman New Chin Guan; Eric Thomson Kerr; Kuan Yee Han; Lim Cheng Puay (RVRC, Tembusu)	Reflections from practising experiential learning
2:25 – 2:35	Q&A for Session 1		In this session colleagues from Ridge View Residential College (RVRC) and Tembusu will present from their reflections of adapting experiential learning environments to the new normal and also creating opportunities for authentic learning. Colleagues from RVRC will be discussing about the college's attempts to facilitate experiential learning in outdoors in the absence of physical instructor and also how teaching teams have pivoted from using sports and out-of-classroom activities to facilitating learning online while retaining the essence of experiential learning. Colleagues from Tembusu will be sharing their reflections from converting creative assignments and an exhibition into an online format and also how reflective approach can be introduced in assessments to help students consolidate their thoughts from experiential learning to develop empathy and foster a caring community.
2:35 – 3:00	Session 2: Innovations in outside classroom teaching (OCT)	Lynette Tan; Navarun Varma; Naviyn Prabhu Balakrishnan; Sue Chang-Koh; Lavanya Balachandran; Lynne Yang; Daniel Jew (RC4 & CAPT)	Innovations in outside classroom teaching (OCT)
3:00 – 3:15	Q&A for Session 2		In this session colleagues from Residential College4 (RC4) and College of Alice and Peter Tan (CAPT) will present their reflections on the practice and future of outside classroom teaching in their respective residential college curricula. RC4 colleagues will be presenting their reflections on pedagogical means that the college's STEER Himalaya program applied to create opportunities for students to learn and engage with complex issues of changes in land use patterns and environmental processes in the Western Himalaya of India. Given the current challenges for outside classroom teaching, the college will also be testing the waters for an idea to create an online authentic learning environment. Colleagues from CAPT will be sharing brief reflections on developing two aspects of the college's Living and Learning Programme: College-level Community Engagement, and Reading Groups. Colleagues will be sharing their thoughts on objectives, practices, evaluation and impact.
3:15 – 3:30	CLOSING		
	Closing Remarks	A/P Chng Huang Hoon, <i>Associate Provost, Undergraduate Education</i>	