



Top Master

Nowadays a Bachelor's Degree isn't enough anymore; many people are going for further studies. One prime example is 37-year-old Timothy Hsi, who graduated at the top of his Master of Guidance & Counselling class in 2005

Having obtained his Bachelor of Arts at the National University of Singapore, Timothy then went on to take up a Master of Guidance & Counselling at James Cook University (JCU). He joined the programme in March 2004 and completed it in June 2005; it cost him approximately S\$14,000.

When asked why he chose to take up this programme, the affable Timothy had this to say: "The opportunity to be in the pioneer batch of the Master of Guidance & Counselling postgraduate programme appealed to me! Also, the programme offered was ideal as I was looking for a one which meets my academic and professional growth needs."

In addition, Timothy picked JCU over other universities because of the flexibility and the timing of the classes. "The block mode (30-hour lessons every weekday evening, including two full weekends for one week straight, every two months) was ideal for my needs," he said.

When he started the course, he was already working with the Singapore Management University (SMU) and when he graduated, he continued to work there as a University Counsellor.

"I am heading the university's Centre for Counselling & Guidance. Besides overseeing the Centre, I am also in the adjunct faculty with the Lee Kong Chian School of Business, teaching a course on 'Facilitation & Counselling Skills' and have also been appointed as the first HouseMaster of the new SMU city hostel at Prinsep Street which opened its doors to SMU undergraduates in January this year," explained Timothy.

That's a whole load of jargon for those not in the loop, and Timothy clears the air. The duties for him as the Head of Centre for Counselling & Guidance are:

- Strategise and direct programmes, services and activities of the Centre

- Provide professional counselling services to SMU's student community
- Train, supervise and direct a team of para-professional counsellors known as SMU Peer Helpers who assist in running the Centre and act as the eyes and ears for the counsellors at the Centre. The SMU Peer Helpers are drawn from the SMU student community.
- Supervise the operations of the SMU Wellness Centre, which is run by the SMU Peer Helpers. The SMU Wellness Centre is a place for students to unwind, de-stress and connect with one another in a relaxing environment.

At the Adjunct Faculty, he teaches an academic course – "Facilitation & Counselling Skills". This is an optional life skill course for undergraduates and is a pre-requisite for students wanting to enrol as a SMU Peer Helper.

As HouseMaster, Timothy works with a team of Residential Seniors to lead and manage the residential life and activities of 250 students of over ten different nationalities at the SMU city hostel.

And if you thought this was admirable, Timothy even plans to continue his studies sometime in the future. Eyeing a doctorate in Counselling / Educational Leadership, Timothy would definitely recommend JCU to those who are interested in further studies.

"JCU has established itself as a credible offshore university which fills the niche for psychology, counselling and various other needs for students in Singapore and around the region," he concludes with a smile.