# SMU
## SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Lee Kong Chian
School of
**Business**

## UNGC COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE) REPORT

January 27, 2016

# 1. Renewal of Commitment to the Principles of UNGC

The Lee Kong Chian School of Business (LKCSB), Singapore Management University (SMU) is committed to the Principles of United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). We believe that business schools today have an important role to play in moulding students into socially responsible managers and in responding to the social and environmental challenges that the world is confronted with.

As businesses become more globalized, it is equally important to inculcate in our students a strong sense of fair play and non-discrimination in areas concerning age, gender, physical condition, race, as well as nationality. Competition for employment, positions, awards, and recognition should be based on merit measured according to set criteria.

Besides imparting these principles to our students, the University and the School also puts these principles to practice in our work environment.

This report offers examples of past initiatives as well as ongoing ones that have been undertaken in support of the aforementioned beliefs. We are proud to be a UNGC member and hereby express our continued commitment to UNGC principles.


*Professor Gerry George*
*Dean and Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*
*Lee Kong Chian School of Business*

## 2. Examples of practices in relation to the implementation of one or more Principles

### Principle 6: Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

<u>Fair Employment Practices</u>

SMU is a meritocratic organisation and our practices in employment and occupation are consistent with the Fair Employment Guidelines supported by the Singapore Ministry of Manpower, unions and employers. SMU also has a diverse workforce in terms of ethnicity, religion, age, and gender and implements fair and merit-based employment practices.

Our employment practices adhere to the five principles of the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices that were put in place by Singapore's Ministry of Manpower, labour unions and employers.

The 5 principles of Fair Employment Practices are:

a.   Recruit and select on the basis of merit (such as skills, experience or ability to perform the job) regardless of age, race, gender, religion, marital status and family responsibilities, or disability ;

b.   Treat your employees fairly and with respect and put in place progressive human resource management systems ;

c.   Provide employees with opportunities for training and development based on their strengths and needs, to help them achieve their full potential ; and

d.   Reward your employees fairly based on their ability, performance, contribution and experience.

SMU believes that by practising fair employment, we support the growth of a fair and inclusive workplace that helps our employees perform to their full potential.

<u>GLUE Initiative</u>

Besides practising fair employment, the University invests resources into building a culture of inclusion and encouraging students to embrace diversity. One example of efforts in this area is the *glue* initiative.

Organised by the Diversity and Inclusion team of the Office of Global Learning, the *glue* series of talks, workshops, and seminars are held throughout the year and are aimed at tackling sticky issues and strengthening social bonds.

The inaugural *glue* conference held in Feb 2014 focused on the theme of "Building a Culture of Inclusion within Institutes of Higher Learning". Distinguished speakers and presenters explored key questions surrounding inclusion and disability within the education system. Topics included:

- Moving Beyond Open-mindedness: Igniting Individual and Organisational Transformation
- Disability in Meritocracy: Exploring Singapore's Education System
- Including Students with Disabilities within Higher Education Institutes: Lessons from Ireland
- Panel Discussion: When I was in school
    - Four panellists take a look back at their experiences in school while exploring issues surrounding disability inclusion.

Since then, *glue* has grown from strength to strength as we continue to explore and promote dialogue on relevant issues. The following are some examples of events that were organised for SMU and the larger community:

- Normalisation, Integration, Inclusion
    - Former Belgian minister Wivina Demeester gave a talk on the broad policy and philosophical underpinnings of "diversity", while sharing details of her social enterprise, Monnikenheide, a rehabilitation and residential village for people with disabilities.
- Everyone is Special, We all have Special Needs
    - A facilitated discussion on different types of disability and their implications. This discussion was led by author and therapist, Kim Barthel, a consultant with special-education school Rainbow Centre.
- Diversity within a Different U
    - Cross-cultural communication specialist Cara Steenstra led an interactive workshop focusing on issues such as self-awareness and active listening.
- Navigating the Rewarding yet Impossible World of Diversity & Inclusion
    - Organised with support from the British High Commission Singapore, Queen's Counsel and UK civil service diversity champion, Sir Paul Jenkins, spoke to an audience of 224 people at this first public glue event.[1]

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[1] Office of Global Learning, Singapore Management University, http://www.smu.edu.sg/global/diversity-and-inclusion/initiatives (October 15, 2015)

## Principle 8: Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

## Principle 9: Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

### SMU GROW

SMU GROW is a university-wide initiative to (a) create global awareness on environmentalism, food production, consumption and security, (b) promote sustainable urban living, and (c) provide for underprivileged members in our community. Involving students, staff, faculty, alumni and other members of our community, this initiative seeks to advance global citizenship on campus.

As the only local university with a campus integrated into the heart of the city, SMU's pulse connects to multiple stakeholders, who share the vibrant urban centre downtown. Hence, connecting education to sustainability in people's lives, businesses and the environment is vital.

The initiative signals another positive step for the University as it strives to become a leader in transformative education – one of the building blocks of SMU Vision 2025 – by making a difference in the lives of not just students, faculty and staff, but also the community around SMU, through holistic learning and experiences. This cannot take place just inside the classroom, but must also be outside, in the real world classroom.

For a start, the initiative sees down-to-earth activities taking root. The rollout includes conducting workshops for staff and faculty that introduce sustainable living through growing foods in environmentally-friendly ways, having planter boxes up for adoption, serving healthy meals to staff, and running a logo design contest. SMU GROW will be dovetailed with the 80-hour community service required of SMU students, and built into the annual community service project SMU Challenge that delivers food and household needs to residents. It will also be woven into co-curricular activities (CCAs) and classroom modules. Food from each harvest will be brought to the community organised by The Centre for Social Responsibility (C4SR), and GROW welcomes individuals and groups to garden and grow food for a good cause at SMU.

The overall notion includes these aspects: sharing knowledge on eating and living right, sustainable farming and living, urban eco practices that protect the environment, growing food and feeding people, nurturing and build a caring community, contributing back to society, and making meaningful connections in society with no boundaries.

SMU GROW believes that the simple act of planting can inform and shape views on life, society, sustainability, trade and development. Aiming to cultivate change through experiential and reflexive learning, the programme joins a global urban farming movement that seeks to create global awareness on environmentalism, food production, consumption and security. It is also intended to promote sustainable urban living, provide for underprivileged members in the community, and enrich SMU's holistic, broad-based education.[2]

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[2] "SMU Grow Takes Root to Kickstart Green Movement", http://www.smu.edu.sg/news/2015/01/08/smu-grow-takes-root-to-kickstart-green-movement (January 8, 20150)

# 3. Assessment of outcomes

<u>Fair Employment Practices</u>

SMU's fair employment practices are open to whistle blowing by staff and members of the public. There are direct feedback channels to SMU senior management and board members for staff, job candidates, and members of the public. Complaints are investigated to ensure continued compliance and consistent practice.

The University also conducts an employee engagement survey every other year. This survey includes questions about human resource practices, including fair employment. Should there be a significant gap between what is perceived by staff and prescribed principles, focus groups are arranged to find out the cause and implement corrective measures.

SMU's fair employment practices are also subject to random mystery audit by the government body that oversees fair employment practices.

In all of these areas, SMU has not had to take significant corrective measures. All tweaking of policies and practices have been voluntary, to reinforce our belief in fair employment practices.

<u>GLUE Initiative</u>

The *glue* initiative has seen sustained activity since its inception. This is in the form of a continuous stream of conference, seminars, talks, and workshops and these have reached an audience that extends beyond the University. For instance, the first public event held in September 2013, a talk by Sir Paul Jenkins on navigating the world of diversity and inclusion, attracted 224 attendees.

<u>SMU GROW</u>

Like the *glue* initiative, SMU GROW has achieved significant reach as well. Various platforms have been put in place to disseminate information (information such as the benefits of urban farming) and to teach the university community how to care for the communal farm. This has included regular workshops, a website (http://smugrow.tusi.sg/), as well as a facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/smugrow/). The initiative has also been featured by the local media on numerous occasions, including the English, Chinese, and Malay dailies.