Yale profs to teach at new liberal arts college

34 visiting academics to lecture, teach courses at Yale-NUS over next 4 years

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STUDENTS at Singapore’s first liberal arts college are to be taught by 34 visiting professors from Yale University, it was announced yesterday.

The academics will teach courses and give guest lectures in disciplines that cut across the arts, humanities, and social and natural sciences.

Yale-NUS – a tie-up between the American Ivy League institution and the National University of Singapore – will also have about 50 full-time faculty members, with many of them drawn from leading universities and research institutes.

Yesterday, the college said the 34 professors will visit over the next four years. Some will teach mini-courses lasting up to two weeks, while others will stay for a full semester. Professors from Yale will also be involved in further developing the curriculum for the college, which opens in August with an intake of 150 students.

The visiting academics include political science professor Bryan Garsten, who links the history of political thought with contemporary issues. “I am looking forward to learning how the responses at Yale-NUS differ from those at Yale,” he said.

Yale professor of history Valerie Hansen said she found Singapore particularly attractive because of its proximity to so many important ports on the maritime Silk Road. “I love teaching on site, because visiting historic sites and museums makes it possible to bring history to life in the classroom,” she added.

Yale-NUS president Pericles Lewis said the new college expects to announce more visitors in the future, as many faculty members from its Ivy League parent school are keen to teach there.

“Imagine being able to learn from these top scholars, and having the opportunity to discuss, debate and analyse issues together with them,” he said.

“This will augment the active learning that the students will already gain from the permanent faculty of the college, and broaden their academic exposure.”

Yale-NUS has so far hired 38 faculty members, describing some as “rising stars” of academia.

They include Associate Professor Jeremy Kua from the University of San Diego and theoretical physicist Shaffique Adam from the National Institute of Standards and Technology in the United States.

The college will hire a total of 100 faculty members over the next several years. By then, its enrolment will have reached 1,000.

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