

The elements of success

AT UCSI University's Faculty of Business and Information Science (FoBIS), the correlation between the accounting practice, economic vitality and public trust has long been acknowledged.

Academicians and students work hand-in-hand to address challenges in the practice and their efforts frequently pay off. The recent success of Lee Pei Ying, Toh Chin Yau and their lecturer Shakerin Ismail is a good example.

Seeking to identify the factors within an organisation that influence the quality of financial data, the trio won the Best Paper Award at the 10th Asia-Pacific Business and Humanities Conference 2016.

What began as a regular classroom exercise evolved into something far more significant for the trio and their paper is currently in review to be published in a high-ranking journal by World Business Institute in Australia.

Taking it all in his stride, Shakerin says that the award is testament to the good work being done at UCSI to promote the best accounting practices.

"By identifying the influencing factors, organisations will have concrete insights into how they may make necessary adjustments or changes in their governance to generate more reliable financial information.

This will subsequently enhance their credibility," says Shakerin.

This research provided Lee and Toh with an enriching learning experience and a chance to hone critical competencies beyond textbook knowledge.

"Winning this award was the best moment in my study life. Research requires a lot of discipline but during the process I learnt a lot about technique, teamwork and communication skills," says Lee.

Lee graduated last month at UCSI's 29th convocation but has already secured employment as an audit associate at KPMG.

"This paper was a challenge and we couldn't have completed it without each other's support. I'm really proud that our work has been recognised and is valued by the accounting industry," says Toh, who has opted to pursue his ACCA qualification.

This collaboration is one of the fruits of UCSI's holistic approach to education, which emphasises a keen industry focus.

UCSI is running Malaysia's most extensive academic-industry network,

having secured more than 3,500 internship partners to offer advantageous industry exposure to students.

Each study year, UCSI students are sent for a two-month internship with some of the best names in the industry. These include KPMG, Crowe Horwath, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young and most major banks in Malaysia.

As a result, students are intimately familiar with not only working fundamentals but the current challenges faced by corporations.

"Being technically strong isn't the whole package anymore. Today's professionals must also possess competitive career skills such as critical and analytical thinking, leadership and communication skills to perform well in their workplace," says Prof Dr Ooi Keng Boon, dean of FoBIS.

It helps too that UCSI is home to a thriving culture of inquisitiveness and discovery. Lim Czi Xian, who read her degree in finance and investment, is a multidisciplinary powerhouse whose list of self-initiated achievements includes a chemistry certificate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and a summer spent teaching philosophy in Japan under Harvard's H-Lab 2015 programme.

"My dream is to make significant contributions to society and I want to learn all that I can so that I am well

prepared to do so. UCSI has been great in connecting me with opportunities and my lecturers were really helpful," she says.

During her time at UCSI, Lim interned at HSBC Bank, participated in the Credit Suisse HOLT Valuation and CIMB Asean Stock Challenges, attended an intensive Blue Ocean Strategy programme, and was a university delegate to Asean regional summits for three consecutive years.

"UCSI is about providing education that is balanced, relevant and visionary and we design our programmes and student growth opportunities around this goal," says Prof Ooi.

Currently, its Department of Accounting and Finance offers BA (Hons)

Accounting, BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance and BSc (Hons) Finance and Investment programmes.

UCSI's Kuala Lumpur campus is open daily for extended counselling sessions, including weekends and public holidays.

■ For more information about UCSI University's FoBIS, call 03-9101 8882 or visit www.ucsiuniversity.edu.my/onlineenquiry.



Lim passed a stringent selection process to be chosen as one of 80 seminar leaders for the Harvard H-Lab summer programme. For a month, she taught 15- to 18-year-old students in the Japanese town of Obuse.



(From left) Toh, Shakerin and Lee wanted to strengthen the reliability of financial reporting. Their research subsequently won them the Best Paper Award at the 10th Asia-Pacific Business and Humanities Conference 2016.