Getting students to pay it forward

Local universities are stepping up efforts to groom students who are socially aware and will help take Singapore forward, Goh Chai Liong reports.

Don’t wave placards, offer solutions instead

SIT students, who used to sport placards in protest actions, have been asked to offer solutions instead of just protesting, local university officials have said.

"We don’t want people wandering in the streets. We’d rather they take a problem and focus on how to solve it," said Ken Ong, principal of NUS’s School of the Arts.

In the past, students would take to the streets to protest against issues like tuition fees and living costs. But today, they are being encouraged to think critically and come up with practical solutions.

"It’s not just about waving a placard and saying, ‘Let’s protest!’ It’s about understanding the issue and finding a way to tackle it," said Margaret Tan, principal of NUS’s School of Business.

Students are being encouraged to think about the long-term implications of their actions and consider the broader impact of their solutions.

"We want them to think about the consequences of their actions and whether their solutions are sustainable in the long run," said Dr. Lee, principal of NUS’s School of Engineering.

This shift in focus is part of a broader effort to groom socially aware and responsible students who will contribute positively to society.

"We want our students to be ethical and responsible leaders who make a difference in the world," said Dr. Ho, principal of NUS’s School of Law.

In addition to academic coursework, students are being encouraged to engage in community service and social outreach activities.

"We believe that social responsibility is not just about what you do in your studies, but also about what you do outside of the classroom," said Dr. Khor, principal of NUS’s School of Social Sciences.

By promoting a culture of social responsibility and encouraging students to think critically, these universities hope to produce socially aware and responsible leaders who will contribute positively to society.

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