Dr. Tan Teck Koon is Associate Professor (Mycology) at the Department of Biological Science of National University of Singapore (NUS). He took up the current position as the Dean of Students of NUS in 2003. Dr. Tan has extensive experience in student affairs both in the regional and international arena. He is the Honorary Advisor and former President of the Asia Pacific Student Services Association.

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Presentation Synopsis

Learning Beyond the Classroom

Students’ active involvement in co-curricular activities (CCAs) contributes to the vibrancy of student life, builds a sense of identity and camaraderie, and enhances the students’ holistic development. It is one form of learning beyond the classroom. Although CCA involvement is not mandatory in the National University of Singapore (NUS), it is very much a part of the educational philosophy of the university. Active involvement in CCAs is strongly encouraged, supported, and recognized. CCA involvement by students in NUS is predominantly student-driven by more than 70 NUS student organizations and interest groups. The range of CCAs includes leadership in student organizations, sports, community service, social activism, arts and culture, social entrepreneurship, outdoor adventure, and a spectrum of hobbies and discipline related interests. Students are at liberty to form their interest groups or embark on a CCA, and the university will support it once it has been evaluated and endorsed. The motivation for CCA involvement is diverse and ranges from a keen interest to pursue a chosen activity, a desire for personal enrichment, or simply to earn a hostel place on campus. The university recognizes the time invested by students in CCAs and their contributions, and provides strong encouragement in the form of complimentary and congratulatory messages, feature in campus news and articles, citations, appreciation events, and student CCA achievement awards. Learning beyond the classroom through CCA involvement has contributed to a more holistic development of our students, many of whom have acquired attributes, apart from academic grades, desired by employers. Many of these active students continue to lead in contributing to society after their graduation.