

Getting To Know Our Professors

Associate Professor Ivy Maria Lim



A/P Ivy Maria Lim
is currently the Head of
Humanities and Social
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Academic Group.

What content area do you specialise in? How does it impact your work at NIE?

I am a historian by training and I study the development of lineage society in maritime China during the sixteenth century. In NIE, I teach content courses in Singapore and Chinese history at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. My research interests have helped me develop courses in Asian women's history and the maritime history of China.

How did your interest in the content or research area come about?

Would you believe it – martial arts novels?! I was pulled into the world of Chinese history through the martial arts novels that blended fictional heroes with real historical events. Reading those novels sparked my interest in Chinese history and narratives of the past only deepened that interest further when I was able to lay my hands on Chinese manuscripts and lineage genealogies created long ago. The stories contained in the documents bring to life a world we have lost and that we still do not fully understand.

Why is NIE a good place for you to do your work?

NIE has given me space to not only carry on with my research on China but has also enabled me to develop secondary research interests in Singapore's history as well as in history pedagogy. What I appreciate deeply as well are the opportunities afforded to an academic content staff like myself to interact with curriculum studies colleagues and with seconded teaching fellows. Not only was I able to develop new understandings of my discipline as a historian and history educator through collaborative projects but I have also been able to hone my classroom teaching from their advice and suggestions.

What does NIE offer to higher degree students that is unique?

NIE is unique in the range of courses that we offer to higher degree students. Not only can higher degree students choose from coursework programmes to research programmes, they are also afforded the flexibility of learning from a range of faculty members with diverse expertise.

What have you learned from your students?

The graduate students in NIE have impressed me with their determination and motivation to upgrade their knowledge and skills, despite the fact that many of them have to juggle professional and personal commitments in addition to their studies.

What advice would you give to those who would like to pursue a higher degree programme?

Lay the foundation well. Do not rush into a higher degree programme because it is the thing to do. Instead, ask yourself why you are doing it and prepare yourself for it. When in the higher degree programme, make the most of your time by interacting with your peers and professors to get the most you can out of the experience.