The challenges posed by complex educational issues in the face of a changing and uncertain future require school leaders, teachers, students and parents to engage in new ways of thinking, doing and being. This symposium draws on research and practices in school change and leadership from Singapore, the United States and elsewhere to raise questions about teaching, learning and assessment, and challenge assumptions about innovations in education. How can leaders and teachers in schools make sense of current dilemmas and be inspired to reimagine possibilities for the future of education in Singapore? What can schools do to enhance joy and create greater purpose in students’ learning? How can developments in technology be used to enhance teaching and learning in schools?

Join us at the inaugural NIE, NTU and Teachers College, Columbia University symposium to discuss the latest issues concerning Singapore schools.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- **What is “Joy of Learning”?”**
  Assoc. Prof. Ng Pak Tee, NIE
  1:30 - 1:50 pm

- **Learning for Change Leadership in the 21st Century**
  Prof. Debra Noumair, TC
  2:00 - 2:20 pm

- **Who are Schools For? Leadership in the Age of PISA**
  Prof. Emerita Frances Schoonmaker, TC
  2:30 - 2:50 pm

- **Empowering Students with Network Literacies for a Global Age**
  Asst. Prof. Suzanne Choo, NIE
  3:00 - 3:20 pm

- **Beyond Exams: Transforming schools in the changing educational landscape in Singapore**
  Friday, 11 January 2019
  1.15 – 3.30 pm
  Lecture Theatre 2 (NIE7-01-LT2)
  
  For enquiries, please email higherdegrees@nie.edu.sg
What is “Joy of Learning”?

Ng Pak Tee is an educator who teaches in the programmes for school leaders (Principal-ship and Head-of-Department-ship) at National Institute of Education (NIE), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore. Before joining the NIE, he was a mathematics teacher and a Ministry of Education (MOE) officer. Pak Tee’s recent keynote speeches were delivered at events such as the Google Global Education Symposium and the International Baccalaureate Global Conference.

His latest book is Learning from Singapore: The Power of Paradoxes, published by Routledge in 2017, one of the publisher’s bestsellers that same year.

ABSTRACT

What is “joy of learning”? How do we go about implementing this concept? Is it about injecting fun activities into classroom teaching? Is it about applied learning? Is it about reducing the number of examinations? How can school leaders and teachers in schools make sense of “joy of learning” in the light of preparing “future-ready learners”?

Who are Schools for? Leadership in the Age of PISA

After teaching elementary school for a dozen years, Frances Schoonmaker directed the graduate elementary and middle school teacher education program at Teachers College, Columbia University for nearly twenty years, a program drawing heavily on children’s literature and storytelling. Publications for children include five books in the Sterling Poetry for Young People series and Growing UpCaring, Exploring Values and Decision-Making (Glencoe/Macmillan), and most recently two books in an historical fantasy trilogy for middle grade readers: The Black Alabaster Box and The Red Abalone Shell (Auctus Publishers, 2018). Upon retirement from Teachers College, Schoonmaker was awarded the title Professor Emerita.

ABSTRACT

Looking at snippets from two kindergarten classes in a highly ranked school district in the U.S., separated by three decades, offers a concrete example of challenges to educational leadership. Teaching dispositions and skills necessary for democratic citizenship has been replaced by an approach that treats both teachers and students as deficit and in need of remediation. This reflects a world-wide trend in which curriculum of schools is driven by traditional forms of literacy must be supplemented by newer forms that recognize the importance of dialogue and socialization via mediated networks. In this talk, I highlight the significance of network literacies that involve the ability to make use of social networks via technology and media to extend learning. In the classroom, this necessitates designing environments that provide students with opportunities to participate in forms of participatory culture where learning occurs through dialogue and community-building. Using examples from my own classroom, I discuss the kinds of pedagogical strategies that contribute to students’ active engagement and sociocultural sensibilities as they develop dynamic networks with one another.

Learning for Change Leadership in the 21st Century

Debra A. Noumair is a Professor of Psychology and Education, Founder and Director of the Executive Masters Program in Change Leadership (XMA), and Director of Executive Education Programs in Change and Consultation in the Department of Organization and Leadership at Teachers College, Columbia University. Professor Noumair is currently engaged in teaching, research, consulting, and coaching; the focus of her work is on applying systems psychodynamics to executive education as well as to organization change with individuals, teams, and organizations.

ABSTRACT

Learning for Change Leadership in the 21st Century requires developing “x-ray vision”, the capacity to see beneath the surface of social systems to develop a rich and complex understanding of organizational life. In order to develop this “super-power”, it is essential to consider linking emotional processes, group dynamics, and organizational behavior. This approach provides a framework to see forces beneath the surface that influence the behavior of individuals, groups, and entire systems. By linking covert dynamics to overt behavior, by understanding the power of context, and by increasing self-awareness, educational leaders are able to use theory, research, and their own experience to lead change successfully in the 21st century.

Empowering Students with Network Literacies for a Global Age

Suzanne Choo is Assistant Dean, Teacher Education Programs in Change and Consultation in the Department of Organization and Leadership at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her interests include issues related to education for global and cosmopolitan citizenship particularly in relation to literature education.

ABSTRACT

One dominant characteristic of the twenty-first century is the increasing interconnections among people and cultures in the world. Increasingly, traditional forms of literacy must be supplemented by newer forms that recognize the importance of dialogue and socialization via mediated networks. In this talk, I highlight the significance of network literacies that involve the ability to make use of social networks via technology and media to extend learning. In the classroom, this necessitates designing environments that provide students with opportunities to participate in emerging knowledge networks offered on the internet as well as engage in forms of participatory culture where learning occurs through dialogue and community-building. Using examples from my own classroom, I discuss the kinds of pedagogical strategies that contribute to students’ active engagement and sociocultural sensibilities as they develop dynamic networks with one another.
Anyone who aspires to be a researcher or a scholar knows that the journey is long and challenging, and the demands and sacrifices are many. Even established researchers find the work continues to be filled with frustrations, and that the road to good research remains bumpy and filled with ethical questions. How do researchers manage the road bumps, maintain their integrity, and sustain their enthusiasm and energy when the going invariably gets tough?

Professor A. Lin Goodwin, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong, will address this question by discussing common dilemmas, conflicts and challenges facing anyone who aspires to be a researcher or scholar. She will begin by sharing perspectives critical to emerging (and established) scholars, as framed by her own theorizing and research on Dimensions of Knowledge for Teaching, and illuminated by extant international literature. Each of these perspectives suggests questions that scholars must consistently ask, and learning they must continuously seek so as to keep themselves wide awake to possibilities as they engage in research that, by its very nature, is designed to find answers and collapse data. She will then offer practical strategies for finding sanity, progress and meaning in the day-to-day-ness of the work that often seems uncertain, endless, and maddening. She will close by sharing three simple principles for living a happy (academic) life, no matter what one may choose to do or be.

In this talk, Professor A. Lin Goodwin, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong, will use her own journey as a researcher and teacher educator, to illustrate perennial tensions that researchers face—and can resolve—as they strive to engage in enquiry that will enhance the common good as well as their own careers.