



SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

SEKOLAH PENGAJIAN SISWAZAH

سكوله فعاجين سيسوازه

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GRADUATE TIMES

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA | JULY 2022



Lifting the barriers



#WeLoveUPM

Deans Forward

>> The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has always been perceptive towards student welfare. Covid19 has left us with very little option to prepare for the worst; however, it is with great perseverance and determination, that our students have managed to overcome such a devastating phase. Therefore, I would like to congratulate all students and staff of the SGS who have been working very hard throughout the past couple of years to ensure that student candidature and rendered services progressed well, respectively. Maintaining minimum disruption to the existing academic processes and procedures is indeed a challenge during the pandemic, but as a team, we have managed to do so with adaptive strategies supported by the University.

I strongly believe that consistent commitments and a clear goal were the main factors that have kept us going through this unexpected challenge. On that note, this edition of Graduate Times is mainly focused on how the lifting of the enforced barriers impact us in general. The effort to gather different perspectives is essential to help us understand the challenges faced by stakeholders. I hope that this edition of Graduate Times could give students insights on current processes and procedures, amended rules and regulations as well as services and assistance at SGS.
Stay safe everyone.

**Ms. Pavithra
Panir Selvam**
Graduate Times Editor



Editor's Letter

>> Just when we thought that time is all that we can take up for free, it eventually gave us a special ticket to pause and re-evaluate things around us. Covid19 outbreak and the Movement Control Order (MCO) that followed along the game, showed how delicate and fragile our emotions could be at the most unpredictable phase in life. Students had to go through so many challenges just to complete their academic requirements such as exams, thesis, viva etc.

In between all these tasks, most postgraduates are also entitled to other roles in life as a spouse, parent, or an employee/employer. Therefore, this edition of Graduate Times has specifically gathered some insights on how our postgraduates marched through the Covid19 trail. I, on behalf of my editorial board, would like to also express our heartiest gratitude for those who have assisted us in producing this edition of Graduate Times.

Prof. Dr. Zalilah Mohd Shariff
Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia



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Enhancing Research Ideas

PUTRA SARJANA SEMINARS OFFER EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE TOWARDS RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

Putra Sarjana was primarily established as a learning support programme, directed to active Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) postgraduates. The main idea is to cater students' knowledge set skills by providing a range of necessary skills that can be applied in their research, career, academic and other subsequent prospects. Seminars and workshops are tailored with field experts, according to current research needs. This includes senior lecturers, professors, and practitioners from within and outside of UPM itself. Apart from academic-related sessions, it also encompasses activities that integrate social, psychomotor, affective, and emotional intelligence domains. Therefore, students who participate in Putra Sarjana seminars would not only be able to hone their research skills, but they also get to experience a broader spectrum of knowledge as an individual.

The first half of the year focused on research skills, mainly on publication and academic writing requirements. Till date, a total of five (5) online seminars were conducted on a weekly basis. The following are the list of all the sessions that have successfully secured maximum number of 300 participants:

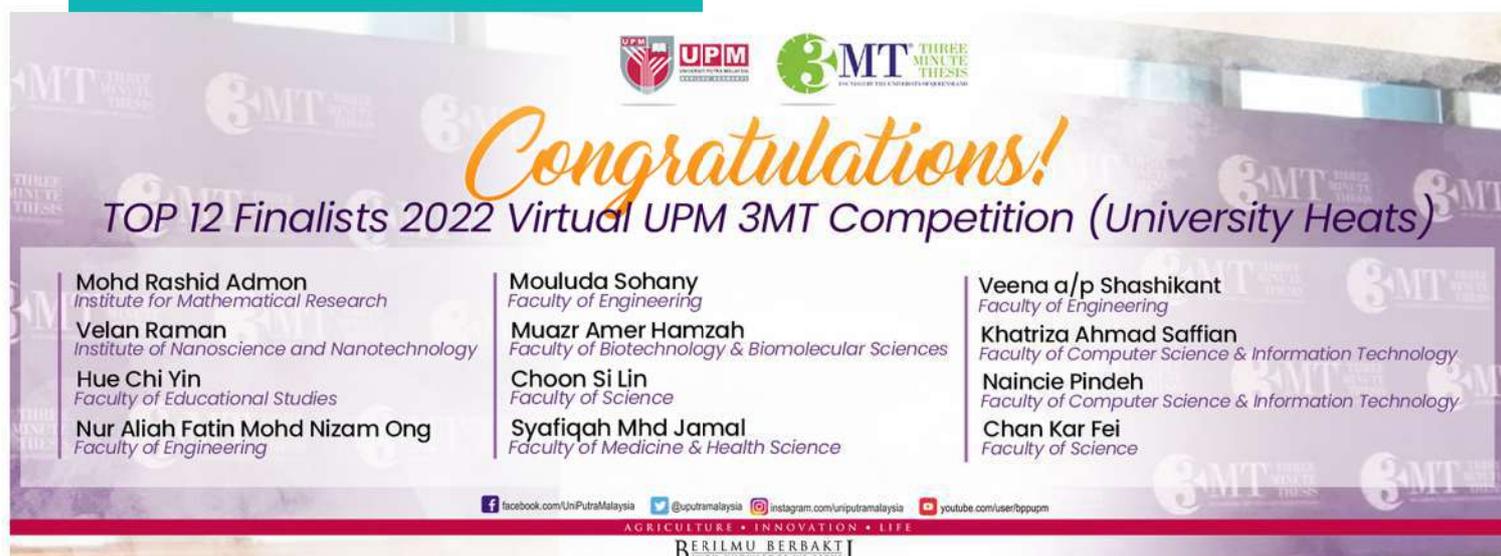


DATE/TIME	TITLE	SPEAKER
2nd June 2022 10.00 am- 12.00 pm	Thesis Development Journey for PhD and Master students	Dr. Thavamaran Kanesan
23rd June 2022 11.30 am- 01.30 pm	The Viva Voce	Prof. Ts. Dr. Zuriati Ahmad Zukarnain
30th June 2022 10.30 am-12.30 pm	Grammar Points	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Noritah Omar
1st July 2022 10.00 am- 12.00 pm	Hight Impact Publishing Class for students and Academicians, an Attempt to Extract Journals	Dr. Thavamaran Kanesan, <i>Chief Editor of Proofreading by a UK PhD</i>
1st July 2022 10.00 am- 12.00 pm	Biosafety and Biosecurity Awareness Briefing	Biosafety and Biosecurity Awareness Briefing

3 MINUTES THESIS (3MT) SPEAKS VOLUME ON RESEARCH IDEAS



Summarizing an entire research plan in just 3 minutes might seem impossible however, the key skill to communicate a research's significance(s) to a group of non-experts shows the researcher's understanding of his/her scientific approach. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has conducted its annual 3MT competition, University level, from 11th April 2022 till 20th April 2022 via Zoom. Three winners from each category; Science, Science & Engineering and Social Science, were trained to represent UPM in the National level held online on the 28th of June 2022. UPM has managed to secure several placings in the Nationals, raising the expectations in setting the par higher next year. Congratulations to all the participants at both the University and Nationals for your outstanding performance. Moreover, SGS extends its heartiest gratitude to the all-faculty officers, administrative staffs and coaches involved in making the process a success. What is a victory without its warriors?



Students' CORNER

GSC Teh Tarik Session!
(Face-to-face)

IDENTIFY RESEARCH GAPS
STRONG PROBLEM STATEMENT
TIPS & TRICKS PUBLISH IN
HIGH RANK JOURNALS
TIPS ON PREPARATION FOR VIVA

LIMITED
200
LOCAL &
INTERNATIONAL
POSTGRADUATE
STUDENTS
ONLY!

Any queries:
Anne: +60132188817
Bella: +60128500392
Utba: +60163270786

REGISTER NOW:
 To secure your seat
 To get the official certificate

17 JUNE 22
2:30 PM - 5:00 PM
Venue: DKSPE I (SPE)
Face-to-face

WHEN TEH TARIK ATTRACTS

Casual deliverance can bring extraordinary impact in an event's reachability. This statement was proven with results by the School of Business and Economic's Postgraduate Student Club 2022 (GSC). Their "Teh Tarik Session " with international speaker Prof. Dr. Mustapha Younis from the United States, has the greatest number of postgraduate participants till date, in the faculty. The topic was 'Tips on Preparation for Viva', and the participants ranged from local to international students. This hybrid event has successfully attracted a total of 555 postgraduate students to register and fully attend the talk. Compliments and encouraging remarks from participants signified how interactive the session was. The hall was occupied to the max with 350 participants, giving them the badge of an outstandingly victorious event!

Get to know
your representatives!

VOICES OF POSTGRADUATES IN THE UPM STUDENTS' PARLIAMENT

Congratulations to Nur Farihin Abd Hadi Khan and Siti Nabilah upon being elected as the Postgraduates members in UPM Students Representative Council (MPP) for the 2021/2022 Board. These ladies are now entitled a seat in the UPM Students' Union Parliament to discuss, scrutinize, propose, and execute initiatives that are related to postgraduates' welfare. Soar high as you move forward ladies!

PUTRA GRADUATE ASSOCIATION (PGA) : BRIDGES STUDENTS AND SGS

Newly established PGA is an official postgraduate student's association that caters to both local & international students. Board of Executives are elected among postgrad students with years of experiences in academic and industries, giving out a promising track for exciting events/activities! Membership is open to all current and active UPM postgraduates, who are interested in being a part of SGS or even UPM's agendas focused on postgraduates. So, wait no more and register yourselves with PGA right away!





CELEBRATING THE SUCCESS WITH GRADUANDS

Being a graduate means a lot of different things for those who have worked hard for it therefore, the efforts of gaining that success should be celebrated with much honour. Many had faced challenges beyond what our imagination could expect, juggling between work, academics, family, and health in the pandemic period. Hence, it was the utmost priority of the University management in ensuring their moment of celebration is handled in the best way possible. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) took up the role in managing postgraduate graduands during the 45th and 46th UPM Convocation Ceremony that was held on the 8th of January- 13th January 2022 and 19th-24th of March 2022. Approximately, a total of 3000 postgraduate graduands were listed for both sessions, The process started with registration, information pooling, announcements, and academic regalia collection and ended with the graduation ceremony itself on the 24th of March 2022. Graduands' welfare and comfort were SGS's top priority in ensuring their graduation ceremony remains a memorable one. The pleasure of handling postgraduates from various backgrounds, stories, and aspirations gave a glimpse of gratitude for every member of SGS in dut

Reaching Out : SGS BROADENS ITS SPEC

YES2Malaysia - The Biggest Education Malaysia Fusion Expo in Jeddah



Feedbacks and on-ground analysis is very crucial in understanding the current needs of prospective students. On that note, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has participated in the Yes2Malaysia-The Biggest Education Malaysia Fusion Expo organized by REXPO, Education Malaysia Global Assist and supported by Education Malaysia which starts on 12th May until 18th May 2022 in Consulate General of Malaysia, Jeddah and EMGA REXPO Jeddah Office.

UPM was represented by officers from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and Division of Admission and Division of Academic Governance (BKAD); Mrs. Rahmawati Umar and Mrs. Norliya Yahya. The expo features more than 16 exhibitors representing top Malaysian Universities including UPM and foreign branch campuses. Various activities such as briefing sessions with potential students and sponsors from various agencies were conducted throughout the expo to deliver updated information on the

courses/assistance/services available in the participating universities. Visitors were able to obtain various information on financing, scholarships, admission, and other related information by asking directly to the representative of each university and colleges. The top three courses rated by students in Jeddah, Arab Saudi offered by UPM are in business, health sciences and information technology. UPM booth was visited by almost 100 visitors in a time with most school leavers, parents, teachers, university students, working adults, members of the industry and the public seeking higher education opportunities.

Enhancing Two-Way Communication Between Students and Sponsors

The effectiveness of an implemented initiative could not be measured without feedback and opinion. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) handled a visit from the Tertiary Education Fund (TETFUND) Nigeria, an educational fund placed under the Nigerian Ministry of Education. Till 2022, a total of 357 Nigerian TETFUND sponsored students have been furthering their post-graduate studies in UPM, across fields of studies. The visit that gathered current scholarship recipients with six (6) representing delegates at the Tun Rashdan Baba Auditorium, became a plebiscite session regarding sponsorship processes and issues faced by the students. The session was followed with a meeting between TETFUND delegates, SGS management team and Bursary to discuss students' issues as well as the best solution for the matters. Nigerian student representative, Abu Bakar, voiced out several matters from the students' point of view in the meeting. Sponsorship disbursement processes, documentation and communication with students were among the mainly discussed topics throughout the session. Such sessions are crucial in ensuring students welfare and good institutional rapport by the UPM management.





To Turkey for Training

Training and constant exposure to various administrative practices are crucial in developing an adaptive approach. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has participated in the 'Blended Workshop and Training for University International Officers & Administrators' staff training programme organized by the Middle East Technical University, Ankara Turkey in collaboration with the National Academy of Education Administration. The workshop was held from May 30th till June 3rd 2022. The intensive training module was participated in by 17 universities, across the Middle East region. University Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) were among the public universities that have attended from Malaysia meanwhile, the Kasetsart University has represented Thailand in the occasion.

Ms. Nadjla, the Head of Institutional Relations and Financial Aid Unit, has represented SGS throughout the training. She was given the opportunity to present a comprehensive framework on "Partnership Development and Assessment Approaches" during the Panel Session on May 31st 2022, alongside other colleagues from different departments in UPM. Feedbacks and suggestions were collected in order to improve the whole presentation hence, provided more opportunities in revising appropriate amendments in future.





CHIT CHAT *bits*

This section has collected some brief opinions of students and staff on their preferences when it comes to studying/working throughout the Movement Control Order (MCO) period. Some of them have even mentioned how SGS has assisted them while some have expressed the difficulties along the way. Nothing was easy nor normal when the barrier commenced, wasn't it?



“

I felt studying at home during the Movement Control Order (MCO) gave me more time to focus on my writings. It was much more convenient compared to attending physical classes. SGS was being helpful by the quick responses through email or phone class, if I were to contact them for assistance.

”

Mohd Fakhru Radzi
(Master of Science in Microbial Biotechnology)



“

I went through a lot of procedural challenges due to the strict policies to enter Malaysia. I was able to continue with my coursework subjects from my country however it was hard on my research work. The second wave of Covid19 made it much more difficult but apart from that it was okay. The network problem was the most challenging issue for me to attend online classes and I feel like attending physical classes here gives a very minimal amount of distraction. SGS does help me in certain matters when I reach out to them.

”

Mura Bello
(PhD in Environmental Hydrology and Hydrogeology)



“

I am a full-time student and I felt it was quite hard because my study was totally lab-based, and we were not allowed to come back to campus during the MCO period. I came back to campus around July 2022 to continue my research works. I did not have to contact SGS much within this period as I was already in my 4th semester and was focused on my research works as well as writings.

”

Chan Yee Han
(Master of Science Immunopharmacology)



“

It is easier to manage and assist students face-to-face as the message deliverance is much clearer when students are here, physically. It requires time and different levels of reachability if we are to help them in certain matters, so it is better to go with the physical approaches.

”

Muhammad Atfi MD Khamijah
(Admission Unit, School of Graduate Studies)

PRIORITISING POSTGRADUATES' WELFARE & NEEDS

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AIDS FOR THOSE IN NEED

A sufficient and conducive environment is crucial in ensuring students' academic performance as a whole. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has always been actively proposing and scouting for possible entities/agencies to provide scholarships for our active students. Schemes, financial aids and scholarships are always open for application, except for those with specific deadlines, in order for students to apply. The following is the list of financial assistance that SGS is currently offering for the postgraduate students:



A total of 546 local and 82 international postgraduate students are currently receiving the above listed financial assistance. SGS is more than welcoming for students to apply the available funds as it will help their academic journey in such a huge way. For more information, send in your inquiries to sgs_financialaid@upm.edu.my.

REVAMPING THESIS SUBMISSION METHODS



Pertaining to the alarming health emergency and Movement Control Order (MCO) enforcement throughout 2020 till 2022, SGS has several times revamped its methods in accepting students' thesis submissions. Students were assisted in submitting their thesis online and viva voce appointments were made to be held virtually, throughout 2020. It was then gradually adapted into hybrid practice when the Government started to loosen the restrictions in several sectors. Therefore, it eased the process for students to Graduate on Time (GOT) as per how they have it planned. Now, SGS is actively utilising hybrid practices in ensuring the efficiency of thesis submission and viva voce matters. This greatly helps in facilitating postgraduates that could not travel back to Malaysia due to Covid19 restrictions or those who are undergoing quarantine in the related dates.



JUGGLING GRADES, TIME AND A LIFE

BY

Aissvarya Sankar

PHD IN HUMAN GENETICS

PANDEMIC! If you ask me how life was before it, I would simply say I don't remember. Even though the Covid-19 pandemic started only 2 years back, it surely feels forever. Times were tough during the pandemic with travel restrictions, shortage of food supplies, unemployment and the fear of getting Covid constantly running in our minds. Social and financial factors aside, the pandemic definitely took a toll on students' education and their mental health. The education gap between students grew wider and the interest of students' towards education grew narrower. It is a little easier when you have a system such as schools or a group of friends among undergraduate students but can the same be said for postgraduate students? Postgraduate life is indeed a lonely one. Your supervisors, your colleagues, your lab mates may be there for you but at the end of the day, it's you and your project. During the challenging time of the pandemic, postgraduate students everywhere faced many obstacles. Not being able to go to the lab to conduct their projects, unable to carry out field work resulting in failure to achieve their milestones.

Personally, I found the 'lockdown' period to be a difficult chapter in my life. Being cooped at home and not being able to complete my targeted work due to various restrictions definitely taught me a thing or two. Regardless of what life throws at you, you will only come out stronger. Besides my project and

studies, I was also an appointed Graduate Research Assistant, college fellow and a volunteer in a few NGOs. I will not lie and say juggling the workload between these was a stroll in a park. **IT WAS HARD.** There are times I broke down and cried my eyes out. But what kept me going was my motivation. Why am I here, why am I doing this? All of us started this postgraduate journey for a reason and my reason is what pushed me forward. Planning ahead, making daily to-do lists and having regular meetings with my supervisor really helped me manage my work and achieve my target even when I was at home. Waking up every day and spending just 5 minutes to list down your targets of the day will allow you to visualise what needs to be done and push you towards it. I remember telling my parents they need to set an appointment to meet me at least 2 weeks ahead for me to arrange my schedule and work. Of course they laughed. You may be thinking, this girl must be all work and no play but here's a secret. If you can plan ahead and make a visualisation of your tasks, you will be surprised with the time you have left for self-indulgence. Work and life balance is important for your own well-being, mentally and emotionally. In the end, life is more than about mere existence, it is about living. Go out and live, get out of your comfort zones and strive for excellence. If you put your heart into something, you will work to achieve it and nothing is going to stop you, not even a PANDEMIC!

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pg_admission@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Admission application · Deferment of admission · English requirements · Registration for new students
sgs_academic@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Deferment of semester · Add/drop subject · Academic candidature · Supervision · Examination · Graduation (Transcript, Senate Letter, Certificate) · Confirmation Letter
sgs_financialaid@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Financial assistance/scholarships (GRF,SGRA,GRA,IGSS,PASS & BKW)
sgs_intl.programme@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · UPM-ICP (Joint/Dual/Double degree) · International scholarships · Financial assistance for international presentation and research attachment · Mobility programme
sgs_thesis@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Thesis submission for examination · Thesis submission after the final examination (viva voce) · Viva voce arrangement · Appointment of examiners · Publication requirements (GS-25)
sgs_putrasarjana@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Students' general welfare · Learning support programme · SGS social network sites
bursar.student_pg@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Tuition fees · Dropped status due to outstanding fees
visapass@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · New application for Student Pass · Extension/Renewal Pass · New/Renewal Dependant Pass Application
idec_helpdesk@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · UPM-ID student email (e.g GS12345@student.upm.edu.my) issues
cadeinovasi@upm.edu.my	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Putra Blast (content or profile) issues · Putra Virtual ID (PutraVID)

A student with a study status of 'Dropped' is not permitted to access any system via UPM-ID (GS12345@student.upm.edu.my). You may have not paid your current semester tuition fees. Please contact the Finance Section of Bursar Office via bursar.student_pg@upm.edu.my to check the amount of fees to be paid for the current semester and refer to https://sgs.upm.edu.my/current_students/study_costs_and_method_of_payment-12582 for tuition fee payment options. Once payment has been made, please email the copies of the payment receipt to bursar.student_pg@upm.edu.my, or else the said payment will not be processed.

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A woman wearing a red and white hijab is walking on a paved path in the foreground. In the background, a large sign reads '#WeLoveUPM' in white and red letters. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a building in the distance.

#WeLoveUPM