

Date: 23 March 2016

Time: 8:30-9:30pm

Venue: Tan Chin Tuan Lecture Theatre

Note-Taker: Swarnima Sircar/Isaac Lee **Speaker:** Annette Wu/Dee

Attendance: About 30 members of the student body

Agenda:

- Mascot discussion
- Group Discussions on community

Summary:

The town hall proceeded with 21 attendees (by Annette's count at 9pm). During the discussion, Dee and Annette pressed the hall to provide opinions on the three mascot choices: The clouded leopard, the whale, and the kingfisher. In particular, students focused on qualities should be considered when we choose a mascot. These qualities include the animal's symbolic meaning, how it may relate to the school, whether or not the geographic location of Singapore and Yale-NUS should direct us to choose a mascot, or other personal affiliations, or lack thereof, with the suggested mascot. After a discussion of 30 minutes, Annette directed the hall to enter groups of 4 to discuss community spirit in the school.

Agenda	Discussion Points	Action
Mascot	<p>Dee: States the pros and cons of the Clouded Leopard, Kingfisher, and Whale (found on slides)</p> <p>Jamie B.: Would the whale garner sufficient attention to it?</p> <p>Matthew Ware: One problem with the whale mascot is that it may require us to specify further what species of whale we may want. If we do specify whale further, what kind of whale would we want? The three most commonly found whales have names like Humpback, killer, or sperm may not be the most tasteful names to have. So, we might just want to keep the description to "whale".</p> <p>Carmen: The whale can be tailored according to the merchandise, cute whales or fierce whales.</p> <p>Why the whale was so popular was out of a dinner conversation during a Christmas party. It was not suggested earlier because the dragon was on the table at the time, but it slowly garnered support and got ~120 votes. Gentle but fearsome, a third culture mammal which travels all over the world, like our students. There are whales in SEA, and a</p>	NA

whale is in the Lee Kong Chian Museum too.

Aadit: the kingfisher has many colours, neon blue and others too.

Annette: Chris Asplund is aware of many birds in the area, and kingfishers are found in our school and many areas around our school. It comes out around 7am, and maybe it's an animal which is a little closer to home.

Nik: The kingfisher may not be a mascot which could associate with me or others in my level. It has represented other symbols which the kingfisher has been in the past to the juniors.

Jamie: Notes the associations of the kingfisher from the confessions, wants to look long-term and maybe the mascot can hold other meanings for the future batches. The connotations drawn from that online post were probably more related to the post and not the picture.

Lishani: Agrees with Jamie's position.

Nik: The association may pass with the passing of the juniors and sophomores, but still holds his stand.

Matthew: Personally, the concept art for the dragon was different from the visualisation of it. In this case, the concept art for the kingfisher looks strikingly like the Confessions image, but the final design could be changed.

Aadit: Choosing a big cat for a small school may be a cop-out. Whale and Kingfisher may be unprecedented. Choosing a leopard may be an unimpressive choice.

Vasudha: Clouded leopards are smaller cats compared to lions.

Carmen: The whale is unique among many schools.

Jamie: "Clouded Leopard" may be a difficult name to say. Even if we try to pursue the leopard option, outsiders will just say "leopard" and would not take it any further than that.

Keith: Has the student government considered that there will be mascot costumes as well. Would these be feasible?

Dee The ratification process is only a show of support for the mascot, but there remain larger factors which may have to be considered when we choose a mascot.

Dee: Does anyone have anything to say about whether it is a problem that the clouded leopard is endangered?

Vasudha: Regarding the endangered question, it may not match with our spirit to have an endangered animal to reflect our school.

Annette: Appreciates everyone who came down. Why is the mascot important to some of our students? Another word used is totem, which holds a different connotation for others in our society. What kind of community would we be building when we decide on a mascot, if at all?

Sara R.: Does not think that there are many whales in Singapore. A unique part of YNC is our location. Having a mascot representing the uniqueness of our location should be a really important consideration when we choose a mascot is essential. A kingfisher, which is here at YNC, is pretty cool.

Aadit: Realistically, to call someone a whale may be unflattering, a leopard may be slightly better, and being called a kingfisher may be ambivalent. There is no baggage which a whale or a leopard may have.

Vasudha: Another point refers to why mascots were selected in other colleges. Elephant skin example for the Jumbo mascot in Tufts. The kingfisher, since it is seen on our campus too, might make it a good argument to have it represent YNC.