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Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy cancels Dickson Yeo's PhD candidature



Yeo Jun Wei Dickson has pleaded guilty in the US to using a fake consultancy business to obtain information for Chinese intelligence. (Photo: Facebook/Dickson Yeo)



Ang Hwee Min

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Responding to CNA's queries, the spokesperson said in a statement that this move comes after information released by the US Department of Justice. The statement noted that Yeo has pleaded guilty in the US to one count of acting within the US as an illegal agent of a foreign power.

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Yeo enrolled as a PhD student in LKYSP's Public Policy programme in 2015. In 2019, he applied for, and was granted, a leave of absence, the spokesperson said.



"I'm interested in the intersection between Foreign Policy, Security and Political Economy with regards to China's growing assertiveness in the Asia-

Pacific Region. My core research focus is on China's framework of treatment for Small but Pivotal States (Nexus States) along its Belt and Road Initiative trajectory. These states are diminutive but are crucial junctions for a growing power."

Yeo Jun Wei Dickson, PhD Candidate
2015 | [LinkedIn](#) | [Website](#)

Screengrab of Dickson Yeo's profile, which was up on LKYSP's website until Jul 25, 2020.

Checks by CNA showed that while he was a student at LKYSP, Yeo researched and wrote papers on China's treatment of small states. He proposed a thesis titled "How does China



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READ: Arrest of Dickson Yeo - Investigations have not revealed any direct threat to Singapore's security, says MHA

The 29 papers and presentations uploaded online revealed that he was also a visiting researcher at Peking University for International Relations and Public Policy.

On his profile, Yeo also published a "brief note" on US President Barack Obama's foreign policy. In the paper, he said Mr Obama's "main goal" was to "re-establish American economic leadership" while "persecuting the war on terror by not alienating America's friends".

In another paper studying US intervention in Afghanistan, Yeo had concluded that the intervention was "primarily dependent" on "obtaining international support for domestic legitimisation of action" following the 9/11 attacks.

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"This arbitrary definition of legitimacy, once obtained, ignored the principles of self determination and non-intervention," he wrote.

FORMER TOP DIPLOMAT LINKS YEO WITH EXPELLED PROFESSOR

In a Facebook post on Saturday, former top Singapore diplomat Bilahari Kausikan said that Yeo's PhD supervisor at LKYSPP was [former LKYSPP Professor Huang Jing](#). Mr Kausikan did not indicate the source of the information.

Prof Huang was identified in 2017 as an "agent of influence for a foreign country" by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Without naming the country, MHA said that Prof Huang "knowingly interacted with intelligence organisations and agents of the foreign country, and cooperated with them to influence the Singapore Government's foreign policy and public opinion in Singapore".



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[Yeo pleaded guilty](#) on Friday (Jul 24) to using a fake consultancy business in the United States as a front to collect sensitive US information for Chinese intelligence. He entered his plea in federal court in Washington to one charge of operating illegally as a foreign agent.

[READ: How a Singaporean man went from NUS PhD student to working for Chinese intelligence in the US](#)

In his plea, Yeo admitted to working between 2015 and 2019 for Chinese intelligence, spotting and assessing Americans with access to “valuable non-public information”.

He was recruited by Chinese intelligence operatives and went on to work for them after he went to Beijing to give a presentation on politics.

Yeo was arrested after he returned to the US in November 2019; upon his return, he had planned to ask an informant for classified information and also reveal whom he was working for, according to court documents. However, he was stopped by US law enforcement agents and arrested after he landed at the airport.

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LAST FACEBOOK POST IN NOVEMBER 2019

According to information from his Facebook page, Yeo was born on Feb 22, 1981.

On Nov 6, 2019, Yeo posted on Facebook that he was “flying yet again”, and later posted a photo of a boarding counter at a Japanese airport that showed details for an 11.05am flight to John F Kennedy International Airport in New York.



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where are you?"



Screengrabs of Yeo's last Facebook posts in early November 2019. He was arrested that month in the US by law enforcement agents.

FAKE CONSULTANCY BUSINESS

In court documents, it is said that Yeo was directed by Chinese intelligence to open up a fake consultancy and offer jobs in the US.

The fake business bore the same name as a prominent US consulting firm that conducts public and government relations.

The website of one such company - which has since been taken down - bears Yeo's name, and what appears to be his email address and Singapore phone number. It was further claimed that the company was "formed as a result of a brain-storm between multiple parties in Singapore and Shanghai".



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were from US military or government personnel with security clearances, and gave his Chinese handlers the resumes that he thought they would find interesting.

Before becoming a PhD candidate at LKYSPP, Yeo was also an energy analyst at the NUS Energy Studies Institute in 2011.

Source: CNA/hw(ac)

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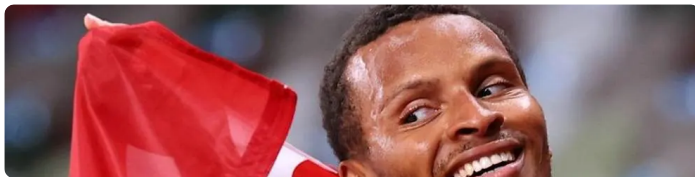
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