NUS to ease Bt Timah move for students

Relocation allows it to take in more postgrad students and hold more short courses

By Melissa Lwee

THE National University of Singapore is acting to ease students' concern over the proposed move of its law and business faculties to the Bukit Timah campus.

To make it easier for non-law and business students taking modules at the faculties, and those staying at the Kent Ridge campus, NUS said it will have a regular shuttle service between the two campuses.

It may put the faculty's lectures on the Net too.

It is also looking at allowing those doing a double degree in law and economics to take all their law modules in one semester, and then move to Kent Ridge to do their economics modules in another semester.

Still, most of the 20 business and law undergraduates The Straits Times spoke to said they did not like the idea of being segregated from the rest of NUS.

Said business student Patricia Lee, 20: "Business students need to mix around with people from all walks of life to make contacts. The move will limit our socialising."

NUS said it will try to address this through varsity festivals like the annual Rag and Flag day.

The university said moving the two faculties to the Bukit Timah campus within the next year will allow NUS to take in more postgraduate students and hold more short courses for professionals.

Said its business dean, Professor Christopher Earley: "As Bukit Timah is nearer to town, the move will give us greater opportunities to interact with our working alumni. It means more internship opportunities for our students."

This way, he added, the NUS Business School will not lose out to the Singapore Management University (SMU), whose new campus is in the city.

Since SMU's decision to relocate, the question has been who will take over the picturesque Bukit Timah campus. Both NUS and the Nanyang Technological University made pitches for the place.

Last month, Deputy Prime Minister Tony Tan revealed at an alumni dinner that it would be NUS.

NUS provost Tan Chorh Chuan explained that the university decided to move its law and business faculties to Bukit Timah because of their executive nature.

"It's very important for a business school to be close to town, while it'll allow the law department to be much closer to the foreign embassies and law firms."

The decision also means the new law library will be more accessible to lawyers and legal firms.

Segregation aside, NUS undergraduates also remarked that moving from Kent Ridge within the next year is a "waste" of all the time, effort and money that went into renovating their faculties last year.

But second-year law student Huang Junjie sees no problem with this. "It's indeed a pity to leave behind relatively new faculties. However, I'm sure the Bukit Timah campus will more than make up for it," said the 22-year-old.