

Mixing with own race is norm

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GEORGE TOWN: The same sight greeted me at the canteens and bus stops at Universiti Sains Malaysia.

There was no mixing of the races. Students stuck to others of their own race.

There were one or two exceptions but almost all of them were chatting or walking or eating with friends of their own race.

However, there was a better mix when they were in lecture halls and when they were involved in co-curricular activities.

Undergraduates I spoke to said it was normal for them to mix only with students of their own race.

Those I met said such behaviour was nothing abnormal and they preferred to hang out with those from the same ethnic group when it came to non-academic or extra-curricular activities.

School of Communications second year student L. Sangeetha, 22, said that was the reality of campus life.

She admitted that although there were no problems mixing with other races, most just preferred their own kind.

"When it comes to having lunch or other activities, we prefer to stick with friends from the same race," the Taiping-born undergraduate said.

Sangeetha, however,



Sangeetha has good rapport with others

stressed that she had a good rapport with students from other ethnic groups.

She said the university's ethnic relations course, which she took last semester, had enabled her to have a better understanding of other ethnic and religious groups.

She voiced support for the revised ethnic relations module.

Her opinion was shared by an undergraduate from the School of Physics, Zuriati Jusoh, 21.

The second year student from Kelantan said she had a wonderful experience when doing a group project for the



Khoo Sok Hui says students are mature

ethnic relations course last year.

"We selected traditional musical instruments as the theme and each of us in the group was tasked to study about the different races and come out with a presentation.

"It was not only a learning process as it also taught us the need to be more tolerant and respectful of other races and their religious practices," she added.

Her coursemate, Nordiana Mohd Mustaza, hoped that the tutorial classes for the revised module would be presented in a more interesting way.

"I think more visuals would



Zuriati Jusoh supports the module

make the classes more cheerful."

The duo, however, said the 1969 riots and the Kampung Medan parts should not be omitted from the module.

"The incidents should be told as a reminder for future generations on the importance of social tolerance," said Nordiana.

Khoo Sok Hui, 20, from the School of Arts, agreed that history should be told as it is, to avoid confusion and speculation. She added that students are mature enough to know the dangers of playing up sensitive issues. — By Adie Suri Zulkefli