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Singapore Management University

PRESS RELEASE

New Singapore Management University School To Lead The Way In The Digital Economy

Bachelors Degree First In Singapore to combine Applied IT with Business and the Social Sciences

The Singapore Management University (SMU) announces the formation of a fourth school, The School of Information Systems (SIS). The new school will specialize in information technology (IT) as well as business management and a broader understanding of the technology industry. It has been set up in response to the changing needs of the region's digital economy. The SIS will welcome its first students in August 2003 and applications are being accepted as of this academic year.

Benchmarked against similar innovative programs in the United States, SISM will have a cross-disciplinary approach, preparing sophisticated and flexible IT graduates who can work at the interface between business and technology. Possible jobs include business analysts, product managers and planners, consultants, business systems architects, chief information officers, knowledge managers, and policy analysts.

"We've worked with fellow academics and senior executives of leading technology companies like Compaq, HP, IBM, Microsoft and Motorola to identify the academic competencies and experience that future business graduates will need to succeed in the new economy. The changing face of commerce in the region and the dynamism of the technology industry demand a new set of capabilities and skills," said SMU President, Professor Ron Frank.

The SIS will be strongly supported by SMU's three other schools, the School of Business, the School of Economics & Social Sciences and the School of Accountancy, to provide depth, breadth and context to the program. This will provide graduates with a unique combination of technical IT skills, business knowledge and broad systems skills, including fresh social science and industry-level perspectives on technology. Graduates will have a greater range of analytical "tools" and perspectives; and have the ability to frame problems, exploit new opportunities and build integrated solutions.

The information communication technology (ICT) labour pool in Singapore is currently estimated at 105,600 or 5% of the total labour force. The majority of functions, such as ICT Management (15.5% of the ICT labour pool) and ICT sales and marketing (17.5%) already require business administration skills+. The Government's manpower and

educational projects indicate that the ICT industry is going to have ever-increasing human resource requirements.

The industry and government Focus Groups advising SMU on the SIS curriculum have indicated that these changing human resource requirements will demand diverse IT-business management and thinking skills. They clearly identified a need for increased problem-solving ability, integration skills, regional and global knowledge, self-reliance and innovation.

Professor Ron Frank comments, "The SMU curriculum combines practical industry experience with a rigorous academic grounding and we expect students to be able to innovate while working independently or as part of a team. The total experience is designed to provide a foundation for further learning after graduation, which is critical in ever-changing IT professions. We are looking for students who can excel within a holistic learning environment. At SMU, our international faculty has created an improved learning experience with a move from the passive learning of content to action-orientated, team-based and integrated work. The SIS faculty will include recognized experts from a variety of IT disciplines and they will be deeply involved in the course design, delivery and research."

In line with SMU's rigorous research culture, the SIS academic staff will be conducting research in areas that match SMU's business orientation and Singapore's needs. Anticipated research areas include applied technologies and systems for various industries, Asia-Pacific IT industry and policy analysis, and management studies on new business-technology models.

The SIS will be admitting 50-100 undergraduates in its first year of operation and by 2006 it is expected to hold a total of 550 undergraduate students, in addition to the planned postgraduate programs. Admission criteria for the new school will follow the current academic and SAT requirements for SMU. As at all of SMU's schools, students who display varied interests, excellence in other non-academic areas or have demonstrated exceptional leadership or entrepreneurial skills will also be considered by the SMU Admissions Committee.

+ Survey on Infocomm Manpower 2000, Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, September 2001.