SMU school to undergo reorganisation

By DANIEL BUENAS

THE Singapore Management University (SMU) is reorganising its School of Economics and Social Sciences (SESS) into two separate schools — the School of Economics and the School of Social Sciences — in a bid to focus its curricula at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

"The restructuring will allow both schools, which have been "rapidly growing" in student enrolment and faculty numbers, to have greater focus on their individual strengths and develop distinctive curricula," the university said in a release.

Established in 2002, the SESS currently has about 560 economics undergraduates, and 300 social sciences undergraduates.

"This is a timely reorganisation that recognises the rapid growth and development of SMU," said SMU president Professor Howard Hunter. "The realignment will provide greater autonomy and room for growth for the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of both schools."

With the reorganisation, SMU said the school of economics will launch new specialisations in business statistics, actuarial science and other areas, while the School of Social Sciences will play a substantial role in the teaching of non-law courses as part of the new law curriculum in SMU.

"There will be no changes to the programme structure of both degree programmes," SMU said of the reorganisation. "Undergraduates will continue to be able to take courses from across other schools in SMU to form a second major or second degree in business management, accountancy, law, economics, social science or information systems management."

The university added that it doesn’t plan to increase the faculty size for either school nor does it expect an increase in intake size for either degree programme due to the reorganisation.

SMU will see its first batch of social science graduates in May 2008. The first batch of SMU economics graduates was in 2006.

Professor of Economics and Statistics Roberto Mariano, current dean of the SESS, will assume the position of Dean of the School of Economics. Professor of Psychology David Chan will be appointed interim dean of the School of Social Sciences.