SMU rolls out master's degree programme for financial services industry
By Lee U-Wen, TODAY | Posted: 17 September 2007 1242 hrs

SINGAPORE: The Singapore Management University (SMU) this month became the first local university to roll out a new master's degree programme to groom talent for the growing financial services industry.

A fortnight ago, the pioneer batch of 22 postgraduate students began classes for the inaugural Master of IT in Business (Financial Services) course. Launched earlier this year by the university's School of Information Systems (SIS), the aim of the course is to equip technology and operations professionals to take up leadership roles in the sector.

Most of the students are from the financial services industry or the technology and solutions sector, with each having at least five years' experience in various fields such as consultancy, engineering, energy and marine transportation.

In a statement, the SMU said the strength of the part-time programme leveraged on the school's business-IT approach in integrating applied technology, IT-related management analysis and a strong knowledge of industry sectors and business functions. For the initial launch, the focus will be on retail and wholesale banking.

"Banks and financial services, more than any other sector of the economy, invest generous resources and money in IT. A significant number of local, regional and international banks and financial institutions have also located major technology and operations resources in Singapore, fuelling a demand for a talent pool of trained IT professionals who are able to relate technology to business," the statement said.

The intensive programme, taught over six academic terms spanning two years, includes three courses in general business management, four in IT and process management, and another four in banking processes, solutions and technology. Students must also complete a capstone project done in conjunction with an employer or a sponsoring company in the financial services sector.

In his introductory message, SIS dean Professor Steven Miller said: "A unique aspect of this programme is that it is co-designed and co-delivered with financial services organizations and the supporting vendor community. These deep connections with the industry mean that the curriculum will always be relevant and responsive to emerging trends." - TODAY/ym