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Professor Gerard George, the incoming dean of the Singapore Management University (SMU) Lee Kong Chian School of Business, has a grand plan: to make his business school one of the top 20 in the world. -- PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

BY TJOA SHZE HUI

SINGAPORE - The incoming dean of the Singapore Management University (SMU) Lee Kong Chian School of Business has a grand plan: to make his business school one of the top 20 in the world.

It is now ranked at 52 in the UT Dallas Top 100 league table.

"The better your ranking, the better the opportunities your students get," said Professor Gerard George, whose five-year term as dean will begin on Jan 1. Nevertheless, he added that this drive for success cannot come at the expense of student satisfaction. "We cannot sacrifice student experience for anything."

Currently, Prof George is deputy dean of Imperial College Business School in London, and international dean of BML Munjal University near New Delhi. He is also the editor of the *Academy of Management Journal*, one of the world's most prestigious empirical management journals.

He will replace current dean Professor Howard Thomas, who has completed his tenure and is staying on in the business school as a Distinguished Professor.

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SMU President Professor Arnoud De Meyer said that he recommended Prof George to the Board of Trustees because of his ability to translate research into practical programmes, his talents as an editor, and his experience in leading education institutes.

He also highlighted Prof George's expertise in growing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) - something of especial relevance to Singapore, where scores of small businesses have sprung up in the past 10 years but then struggled to expand.

Indeed, Prof George confirmed that he will be looking for new ways to help the business school leverage on research and talent to deliver a practical boost to the local business community.

"Here in the business school, we are surrounded by a hot bed of regional activity and economic resources," he said.

"All that's missing is a platform to tie it all together- and hopefully we can use the school's position as an education leader to become that platform."