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Headline: Two degrees from two varsities for select few

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Only 30 out of 500 applicants picked for first such course at SMU, SUTD

By AMELIA TENG

A DUAL-DEGREE programme offered by two local universities – the first of its kind here – has taken in its first batch of 30 students.

The four-year course in technology and management offered by Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) and Singapore Management University (SMU), which started in May last year, attracted more than 500 applicants.

Just a small fraction was picked because the universities wanted the “cream of the crop” for this course, said Mr Tom Estad, associate dean (undergraduate matters) at SMU’s Lee Kong Chian School of Business.

Students went through written tests and interviews with both SMU and SUTD faculty members.

“Quality is a concern to us.

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INTENSIVE BUT WORTH IT

It’s quite intensive, but it’s worth it because, in the same time, you get two degrees. It opens up more opportunities, because I’m not sure what I want to do yet.

– Mr Clement Chua, 22, who is in the dual-degree programme

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We’d like to maintain the capacity at 45, so that we can get the best of each cohort,” said Mr Estad.

“This course has a rigorous curriculum, so students need to be strong in their academic performance. They also need to have a passion for design and management.”

The course will take in a second cohort in May.

Its students now stay on SUTD’s Changi campus. But they will, in the four years, take modules at both universities that are taught by faculty from both sides.

All are given scholarships to cover their tuition fees, which are \$11,650 for each academic year.

At the end of the course, they will graduate with two degrees – a bachelor of business management from SMU and a bachelor of engineering from SUTD, with a specialisation in areas such as engineering product development.

They will take 50 to 53 courses, including up to six co-developed by the universities. They will also be required to do a four-month internship and 80 hours of community service.

Their breaks will be shorter – eight weeks in a year, compared to 13 for SUTD students and 17 to 19 for SMU students.

Mr Clement Chua, 22, who is in the pioneer batch, said: “It’s quite intensive, but it’s worth it because, in the same time, you get two degrees. It opens up more opportunities, because I’m not sure



Among the pioneer batch are students Clement Chua (left), 22, and Yeo Pei Shan, 20. At the end of the course, they will graduate with a bachelor of business management from SMU and a bachelor of engineering from SUTD. ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

what I want to do yet.

“Each school also has its strengths. SMU students are known to be more eloquent and confident in speaking, while

SUTD grooms us to be more technically grounded and hands-on.”

Another student, Ms Yeo Pei Shan, 20, said: “I’m interested in both engineering and business

and I want to start a social enterprise after I graduate.

“So it’ll be good to learn soft skills and management.”

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