

TODAY • MONDAY • JULY 15, 2002

LIVING LEARNING

Biomedical Challenge

With industry-relevant programmes

A not-for-profit professional institute for lifelong learning has taken up the challenge of supporting Singapore's biomedical science initiative through the provision of industry-relevant biomedical science programmes. The Economic Development Board and the Agency for Science Technology and Research (A*Star) have identified the biomedical sciences as one of the key areas critical to Singapore's development of industries.

With this in mind, Dr John Tholen, Director of Biomedical Sciences in collaboration with Macquarie University (Home for Proteomics introduced undergraduate degree programmes in biotechnology and medical sciences (medicinal chemistry) that emphasize a training in functional genomics (Proteomics). While it is considered a challenging programme, with stringent admission criteria, successful students will receive training in state-of-art technology concerned with drug discovery. Hence it is not surprising that the biotechnology/ medical sciences graduates from Macquarie University are highly sought after by the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries in Australia.

Equally important for Singapore's status as a regional biomedical science hub is the need for graduates with the skills to take up scientifically aware managerial positions within pharmaceutical or related industries, said Dr John Tholen. In collaboration with the University of Bradford the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Management will commence in October 2002 and provide progressive training emphasis on core concepts in chemical, biological and pharmaceutical sciences together with management principles. The course will encompass pharmacology, pathological basis of medicine, strategic marketing management and production operations management. The course's final year focuses on training in drug regulations, quality control, clinical data management and pharmaceutical development.

On completion, students will gain sufficient skills in science and management and this will help them to pursue a wide range of career paths including marketing, healthcare, retail management and operations management.

Dr Tholen aims to implement programmes relevant to the life sciences industry and to provide comprehensive training that meets students' aspirations of being internationally competitive in the Biomedical Sciences.

Those who lack the necessary qualifications for direct entry into the biomedical science degree programmes should consider the Foundation Certificate in Biomedical Science (FCBS), which has been developed by Dr John Tholen and offered for the first time in Singapore. This unique programme provides a high standard of training that is recognized by top universities in the United Kingdom and in Australia. It also meets the admission requirements for entry into biomedical degree programmes such as the BSc (Hons) in Pharmaceutical Management.

The FCBS is a 10-month laboratory based evening programme that has been very effective in improving the students' performance in the biomedical science degrees as compared to those from mainstream school programme, said Dr Tholen

