Singapore University of Technology and Design

Openings: Next April
Where: Classes will be held at an interim campus in Dover but a permanent home in Changi will be ready in 2014.
Enrollment: The first batch will have up to 500 students. But after the permanent campus opens, the university will have about 4,000 undergraduate and 2,000 postgraduate students.
Fees: Singaporeans pay $44,000 for an eight-semester bachelor's course – which is about 1½ times the cost of a similar course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) – but the ratio is much more favorable for others: $95,000 for a 10-semester master's of architecture course and $170,000 for a master’s in architecture and sustainable design, over four years.

How it sets itself apart:
- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is helping SUTD build its curriculum from scratch. This is MIT’s largest collaboration in the world.
- The top 5 per cent of the students in each cohort will spend a semester taking classes at MIT. Others will get to go to MIT through competitions and research projects. Another 20 per cent of the students will go to Zhejiang University for lessons on entrepreneurship.
- A broad-based education where a quarter of the course work will be in humanities and social sciences. It will be taught by subjects such as history and economics.
- A first-of-its-kind design course which teaches students how to use tools and high-level architectural and engineering designs. Exposure to such a course is currently banned in university engineering courses.
- To foster camaraderie, students will be split into classes of 50 and will attend all lessons for the first 3½ years with that same class.
- Lessons will be held in large classrooms – each the size of two five-room HDB flats – where students can work in small groups. There will be a 1:1 lecturer-to-student ratio for classes.

Denver economist Irvin Seah said a focus on entrepreneurship and innovation is important for Singapore, as its economic progress will no longer be generated by just capital investment or labour injection.

Boston University president Robert Brown, a member of the first class at the new university, said he hoped to help students understand the importance of patient-centric approaches. To further set itself apart, it will also feature an extensive use of simulation and e-learning so students can gain confidence and competence, said senior vice-dean Martin Partidge.

SUTD, which started taking in 500 students last year, prides itself on its strong partnership with overseas partners like the California Institute of Technology. For its second academic year, student intake has doubled to 1,000 and seven programmes have been added.

The institutions new breed of education has gained traction with students. Ms Ng, who scored straight As in A levels and hopes to work as a Web developer or software engineer, said she was drawn by SUTD’s broad-based and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) styled education.

"We always think of high-tech solutions to solve problems. But by using simple materials and human ingenuity, we can create solutions that can make a difference in people’s lives. I think SUTD can prepare me to do this," said the daughter of two doctors.

JC 1 student Sarah Toh, 17, at Hwa Chong Institution, said SUTD is an attractive proposition because it allows students to study in different academic fields in the first three years.

Experts welcomed the opening of the institutions.

**Spoil for choice**

Students can take their pick of universities with the opening of several schools offering different curriculums and teaching methods.

_By Amelia Tan & Lin Zhouwei_

STUDENT Lisa Ng, 20, had a hard time earlier this year deciding which university to choose. The Hwa Chong Institution student had been accepted at Brown University in the US, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) to study engineering.

After weighing tuition fees and education quality at the schools, she chose SUTD, which opens next year and focuses specifically on engineering and design.

Like Ms Ng, junior college and polytechnic students will have a wealth of choices for university education in Singapore because of the opening of several higher education institutions.

Last year, the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), which provides industry-focused degree programmes primarily for poly graduates, started operations.

In 2015, the Yale–NUS College and the Nanyang Technological University’s (NTU’s) Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine will start classes.

These new offerings will create 2,000 more university places for citizens by 2015. Students will also be able to choose what they want out of university education.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien said in 2013 that Singapore needed to build a “mountain range of excellence” so students can specialise and explore their interests and strengths.

Since then, efforts have been made in that direction, like the setting up of the School of the Arts. The new school said they will deliver exciting new educational experiences with cutting-edge curricula as well as teaching and learning methods not found in the current three public universities – namely NUS, NTU and the Singapore Management University.

They promise to produce creative graduates, able to think independently and with the spirit of entrepreneurship. They believe these qualities are essential for the progress of a knowledge-based economy like Singapore’s.

SIT’s goal is to produce “technically grounded leaders” who can excel in engineering and architecture but are also equally well-prepared for jobs in business, finance, institutions and consultancies because of their broad-based education.

They will be exposed to humanities subjects and interactive learning, in which they work in small groups and take part in class discussions. For the first 1½ years, students will take the same classes in subjects like physics and design before choosing a major. The Yale–NUS liberal arts college, which opens in 2013, is an attractive proposition because it will allow students to study in different academic fields in the first three years.