

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



The coolest classroom: world-first Masters of Antarctic Science at UTAS

The University of Tasmania has introduced a Masters of Antarctic Science to begin in the first semester of 2008. The course is a world first and will give some students the opportunity to make Antarctica their classroom.

The new Masters of Antarctic Science will cement UTAS as the major provider of Antarctic - and polar - education in the world and is expected to fill a valuable niche market in line with a demand for high-level training in the area of polar marine biology.

The new Masters is a joint venture between UTAS and the International Antarctic Institute (IAI), which is a consortium of 20 universities – including UTAS - from 12 different countries, that all have a strong polar education program. The IAI falls under the recently awarded UNESCO- Cousteau Chair in Antarctic and Southern Ocean Environmental Sciences at UTAS.

Director of the Institute of Antarctic and Southern Ocean Studies (IASOS), based at UTAS, and director of the IAI and UNESCO-Cousteau Chair, Professor Andrew McMinn said UTAS was one of the most active members of the consortium.

“We got together and decided we were going to offer joint programs and degrees together in polar sciences.”

“We will facilitate students moving between the different universities in the consortium, and also staff teaching in different units: it’s like a virtual university.”

International cooperation is the key to success of large scale programs in Antarctica.

Graduates from this Masters will emerge with an awareness of the global context of their discipline, communication and problem-solving skills, providing a strong basis for employment or further research in the field.

They will also emerge as diplomats experienced in international scientific collaboration and able to make global decisions, ensuring the protection of the Antarctic environment into the future.

Prof McMinn said some students might have the opportunity to visit Antarctica during their studies, but it was not compulsory.

Between five to 10 enrolments are expected for 2008, with this figure increasing to 20 in the future.

Some HECs supported places are available, while overseas students will pay a competitive rate.

For more information and interviews please contact:

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