

PG course in public health launched

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: Sri Ramachandra University, in association with University of California, Berkeley, launched a master's programme in public health (occupational and environmental health) on Tuesday.

The two-year programme (four semesters) is being offered by the Department of Environmental Health Engineering of SRU in collaboration with the School of Public Health, UCB.

The formal MoU was signed on Friday by S.P.Thyagarajan, pro-chancellor (research), representing SRU, and Stephen M.Shortell, dean, School of Public Health, representing UCB.

The organisers are looking at applicants with a basic medical or engineering degree or a master of science

post-graduate degree. The course will seek to train students in public health, with emphasis on occupational and environmental aspects, allowing the graduands to be recruited as environmental and health safety experts and consultants for the organised and unorganised sectors, said Kalpana Balakrishnan, head, department of environmental health engineering.

She said that the SRU-UCB collaborative venture was being supported by the International Training and Research Program in Environmental and Occupational Health Program of the Fogarty International Center, National Institutes of Health, U.S. This venture will also be bolstered by several inter-institutional partnerships within the country and collaborations with various government departments and industry asso-



Stephen M. Shortell, dean of School of Public Health, UCB, the U.S., and S.P. Thyagarajan, pro-chancellor (research) of Sri Ramachandra University, exchanging documents of an MoU at a function in Chennai on Tuesday. V.R.Venkataachalam, chancellor of the university is in the picture.— PHOTO: S. S. KUMAR

ciations, she added.

SRU already offers two courses — a Master of Science in Industrial Health and Safety and a PG certificate course

in Industrial Health.

R.Balakrishnan, chairman, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, said the Board would consider a proposal to

fund two students to the programme on a continuous basis every year.

Dr. Shortell listed the key challenges of the future — pandemics that are speedily transmitted across the world because of global travellers and migrants; the double burden of chronic and infectious diseases; climate change and its ramifications; the ability to access healthcare; and a need to restructure the healthcare delivery systems.

Professor Thyagarajan said faculty and student exchanges were included in the memorandum.

SRU Chancellor V.R.Venkataachalam offered a letter of invitation to Kirk Smith, professor of Global Environmental Health, UCB, who is also on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to serve as visiting professor at SRU.