

# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Contact:**

Kevin Sightler, Director Illinois Professional Science Master's, [sightler@illinois.edu](mailto:sightler@illinois.edu)  
Charlotte Bauer, Communications Specialist [bauersmi@illinois.edu](mailto:bauersmi@illinois.edu)

## **Illinois Professional Science Master's programs approved by the IBHE**

Tuesday, August 11, 2008, the Illinois Board of Higher Education approved the first Professional Science Master's (PSM) programs to be offered at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. PSMs are new, innovative advanced degree programs designed to prepare graduates for careers in business, government, or non-profit sectors. Illinois PSM programs uniquely integrate advanced study in science or mathematics with specialized coursework in business. Students earn an M.S. in a chosen field, but also gain additional practical knowledge and applied skills appropriate to industry and management careers. The three programs at Illinois—Agricultural Production, Bioenergy, and Food Science and Human Nutrition—will begin admitting students for Fall 2009.

Intended as a response to regional workforce needs and the demand for well-trained science and technology professionals able to compete in today's global marketplace, PSMs are rapidly emerging at institutions across the nation. In January 2006, the Council of Graduate Schools assumed primary responsibility from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for supporting and expanding the Professional Science Master's. The Council of Graduate School has been instrumental in the PSM initiative with the goal of making the PSM a regular part of U.S. graduate education. Over 120 PSM programs at more than 60 institutions have been established with more than 2,500 students enrolled in PSM programs nationwide and over 2100 alumni.

In 2007, the University of Illinois received funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to develop PSM programs at the Urbana-Champaign campus. More information is available online at [psm.illinois.edu](http://psm.illinois.edu).

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Graduate College  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
204 Coble Hall  
801 S. Wright Street  
Champaign, IL 61820