

... Dear Friends, continued

Program. This program is directed by Finance professor Chan Lee and is run in conjunction with MSU's Extended Campus. The program represents the only university-based Certified Financial Planner curriculum approved and registered by the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards in Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota and North Dakota. In response to market demand, this program is offered in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

An important link to our external stakeholders is the presence of a strong and active Business Advisory Council. Under the visionary leadership of Council Chair Greg Lea, the Council will be undertaking a number of new initiatives. For example, the Executive Committee of the Council plans to propose that the Council support awards for: outstanding alumni; outstanding student leaders; and for outstanding faculty members. The Executive Committee will also be recommending that the Council play a more active role in College fund raising activities. On a more personal note, as a new Dean, I have made it a high priority to visit one-on-one with as many Advisory Council members as possible. This has been a tremendously enriching experience for me and I am very grateful for the support given to me by members of the Council. A complete list of the members of the Advisory Council is provided elsewhere in this issue.

A key College academic initiative that has caught the imagination and support of the Advisory Council, faculty and students is the Information Technology Initiative. This project is a specific response to that part of our Mission Statement requiring the College to "provide...programs in a technologically advanced, active learning environment." The College plan will immediately improve the on-the-job effectiveness of our graduates. We propose to: 1) equip faculty with laptop computers for Fall semester 1999; 2) begin conversion of current classrooms into laptop-ready classrooms during the 1999-2000 academic year; 3) establish programs during the 1999-2000 academic year to train faculty and to support the use of laptops in their courses; and 4) require College of

Business students to lease laptop computers and to commence use of laptops in the classroom beginning in Fall 2000. Infrastructure support needs — such as enhanced classrooms — will be met via external fund raising to the maximum extent possible. This initiative is discussed in more detail on this page.

The ability of the College to provide the finest education possible is, of course, dependent on having first-class faculty and staff. I am pleased to report that in 1998-1999 the College was able to hire four such individuals: Scott Choi, Assistant Professor of Management Information Systems; William Brown, Assistant Professor of Management

Information Systems; Dr. Corinne Dickey, Assistant to the Dean; and Tonia Stoffregen, Director of Development. Professor Choi joins us from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he is completing his doctoral degree. Bill Brown has an MBA as well as a Master's degree in Software Design and Development and comes to us with a wealth of industrial experience. Both Professors Choi and Brown will play an important role in further enhancing our very popular Management Information Systems program. Dr. Dickey has worked in higher education for over 23 years including 12 years at the Carlson School of Management. Dr. Dickey brings with her specific experience in enrollment management issues and in new program development. Ms. Stoffregen has had experience as a development officer at Valparaiso University in Indiana and at the

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Ms. Stoffregen brings with her experience in proposal development and in stewardship. We are fortunate indeed to have hired such well-qualified colleagues!

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will read about additional College achievements and initiatives. We are proud of everything that the College is doing and invite you to become even more involved in College activities. Please contact me directly if you would like to know more about our "march" to the next level of excellence!

NORM SOLOMON
Dean, College of Business

... New Initiatives, continued

acronym. MSU students visiting the Finnish College of Business SME Business Administration will have the opportunity to participate in the College's Gateway academic program. The Gateway program, equivalent to one semester of study at MSU has as its emphasis doing business in the Baltic States and in Russia. Included in this program are a 5-7 day study tour to Estonia and a 5-7 day study tour to Russia. The language of instruction is English. Students visiting the Finnish College of Business SME Business Administration have the opportunity of staying in the school's modern dormitory or securing an apartment on their own. Kauhava is located approximately 1.5 hours by car from the historic city of Vaasa and 4.5 hours by rail from Helsinki.

Information Technology Initiative

As indicated in the Dean's Message, the College of Business designed the Information Technology Initiative to fulfill its mission "...to educate undergraduate students to be successful and responsible business leaders dedicated to pursuing excellence...in a technologically-advanced, active learning environment." The Initiative will equip College of Business faculty and students with laptop computers and will provide students with current industry applications of information technology.

The impetus for this initiative came as a result of the College's Comprehensive Assessment program. Both the College's business partners and alumni concluded that student technology skills required enhancement. The College's immediate response was to encourage faculty to incorporate more technology in to their classes. While this appeared to be a reasonable alternative, the number of labs and/or laptops and portable projectors was not sufficient to meet student technology needs.

The Information Technology Initiative is designed to provide students with 24-hour access to worldwide information services from any location. Industry applications of information technology will be incorporated into the curriculum, thus making students more marketable to prospective employers.

As with any project, a major concern is the cost of implementation. The preliminary estimate for the period from Fall 1999 through Spring 2003 is over \$1 million. This estimate includes conversion of 15 classrooms, purchasing a server, leasing faculty laptops, and hiring technical assistants. This estimate also includes dollars allocated for laptop scholarships to help students defray the cost of their leases. Included in the lease agreement will be provision for a state-of-the-art laptop (equivalent to that of the faculty), internet service, warranty and replacement service, and technical assistance via College of Business laptop administrators.

The College of Business views the Initiative as a necessity. Technology has changed the way companies do business and it is our responsibility to prepare our graduates for the dynamic marketplace created by information technology. The College will be working closely with University Advancement to secure external funding for this initiative.



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Minnesota collegiate
schools of business to
be accredited by AACSB —
The International
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Management Education.
Approximately
25% of all business
schools nationwide are
so recognized.*

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