The MBA Program: 2004 in Review

2004 was a busy year for the MBA Program at Eastern Washington University. Numbers for incoming students and MBA graduates were rising and continue to do so. In 2004 alone, we gave our sincere congratulations to 35 students, all of whom graduated with excellent results. Overall, the number of students in the MBA and pre-MBA programs has almost doubled in the last couple of years.

Students in our program not only learn from their professors and from the community but also have the opportunity to broaden their world views from the perspective brought by our international students. Currently, there are 27 international students in the pre-MBA and MBA. Many of them are from Asia, but other continents such as Africa and Europe are also represented. And the numbers continue to grow. Just recently, Dave Gorton, MBA Director at EWU, traveled to Taiwan with hopes of establishing partnerships with major universities for student as well as faculty exchanges.

2004 also represents a year of transition. With the start of the summer quarter, the improved MBA Program was introduced. Students are able to choose from new core classes such as Corporate Finance, Marketing Management, and Information Technology and the Organization to better prepare them for the work environment. These courses teach the qualities and characteristics needed to be the manager of tomorrow as reflected by the requirements of the AACSB Board of Accreditation. In addition, the College of Business and Public Administration started offering an emphasis in entrepreneurship as part of the Master of Business Administration—providing students with the skills to turn a market opportunity into an enterprise advantage or an existing business into an intrapreneurial development. Presently, the Entrepreneurship Seminar featuring weekly speakers is offered (Please refer to Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember, page 4, for the seminar schedule and topics). The seminar portion is open to the public and represents a great opportunity to get to know entrepreneurs in our community. Other classes included in the program are Entrepreneurship & Small Business Finance, Entrepreneurship & Small Business Marketing, and Entrepreneurship: Journey or Destination.

The MBA Program: An Outlook for 2005

In the past year we redefined and adopted a new curriculum in order to provide our students with a more practical and challenging MBA Program. In this process we are enhancing our feedback collection through critical student input, e.g., exit interviews, MFAT testing, and future surveys. This coming year we will continue to refine our new curriculum and we will increase resources allocated to the program to better serve our students. By Summer quarter 2005, the MBA Program will operate under a self-support model. As you read this we should have the final approvals needed to proceed with this process.

The kinds of additional resources that a self-support program can provide include hiring additional faculty and giving graduate faculty assistance in a number of other ways to support their efforts in the classroom. It also means that we can provide more opportunities for students such as additional graduate assistantships, internships, study abroad opportunities, etc. As part of the process, Cy and I will devote our time exclusively to the MBA Program starting this quarter.

In the coming year we will increase our student recruiting efforts both domestically and internationally. We will devote part of this effort to developing opportunities with our many sister universities all over the world.

The number of students who enter the Program continues to be very healthy. However, the most important measure of our success is that this academic year we will have over 40 students graduate. This is the largest number we have had annually in the past ten years. We congratulate you on your spectacular accomplishments and look forward to seeing you in coming years.

Dave Gorton, MBA Director, Eastern Washington University
What About … EWU MBA Alumni Report

Business firms, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations need managers who can get things done. They need managers who can adapt to rapid changes in the environment, appreciate and work with diversity, work well in group situations, foster creativity and innovation, have an entrepreneurial spirit, and provide practical solutions to real world problems. The MBA program at Eastern Washington University is designed to provide you with skills to fulfill those needs. In this newsletter, you can read about the experience of EWU MBA Alumni and how the program helped them to compete in today’s job market.

Brenda Bindschatel, Winter 2003 Graduate

Brenda had worked in the corporate world as well as owned a business before starting her MBA. She is currently living in Auburn, WA teaching Accounting at Green River Community College.

Earning my MBA from Eastern was very important for helping me obtain the position I have today. I am currently teaching accounting full-time in the Business Division at Green River Community College in Auburn, WA. After many years in corporate accounting and a few years owning my own business, I discovered that I really enjoy teaching and decided to get a Masters degree, which most community colleges require for tenured faculty. Not only did completing the program help me fulfill the requirements necessary to be considered for this job, it also sharpened my critical thinking and analytical skills. The core courses challenged me in areas like research methodology and decision-making that I had only touched on when earning my undergraduate business degree. I was also able to customize the program somewhat by taking electives suited to my specific purposes - advanced accounting topics and adult education. I’m very glad I decided to take the time to complete the program.

Strider Denison, Summer 2004 Graduate

Strider owned and operated his own business for over two years before and during the MBA process. He is currently the sales manager for one of the leading telecom firms in the Seattle area.

After graduating from EWU with an MBA, I felt that the sky was the limit and that no career/job could hold me back. My first position was with a consulting firm in the Spokane area. The knowledge that I gained in the program was a direct reason for me obtaining the VP position for the Danzig Group. After four months with this organization my desire to spread my wings continued to burn. I began the process of looking for a position in the Seattle area. After a few weeks of interviews and meetings, I landed a very prestigious position with Integra Telecom as a Sales Manager. I know that my previous experience got me in the door; however, it was the MBA that sealed the deal. In the month that I have been with the organization I have made numerous improvements to the hiring procedures, pricing models/promotions, motivated a team of mediocre sales individuals and turned them into a selling machine. The MBA process allowed me to refine my skills and equipped me with new methods and perspectives.

Christine Doe, Spring 2004 Graduate

Christine was the Director of Training & Development for a national nursing home company. She is currently living in Roy, WA and looking for an executive position in a national company.

I gained confidence, perspective, and polish from the MBA program! When I entered the program, I knew I had holes in my business knowledge. The content of the program helped me fill those holes. With over thirty years of work experience, my view of the business environment had narrowed to my field and industry. The instructors and students in the program helped me expand my perspective to consider broader issues and their strategic implications. From all the presentations, written reports, and, in particular, the class activities in Managerial Communications, I learned how to be a more polished writer and presenter. Consequently, my job search is going much more smoothly because I am more confident of my business acumen, am able to address interview questions with a more global perspective, and can make more polished professional presentations.

Chi Hsien (Alex) Lai, Spring 2004 Graduate

After graduating from the MBA program, Alex went back to his home country to find a job. Currently, he is a sales engineer of the export department at an IT company in Taiwan.

The MBA program has brought my perspective of business to a different level. Class participation, presentations, and assignment projects provided me opportunities to apply up-to-date business theory to real world company operations. What an exceptional experience! I have increased my analysis and presentation skills, and gained confidence, which is the reason why I got my job fairly easily. Now, with knowledge and working experience, I can really put myself out there to contact customers and negotiate deals with confidence in myself. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the MBA faculty.
Eric Pirttima

With a background in engineering, my knowledge of business and marketing was learned on-the-job. I have truly enjoyed expanding my business education in Eastern’s MBA program. Many of the courses related directly to my work experiences and I found the material to be challenging, relevant, and applicable. My business analytical skills have greatly improved through the accounting and finance courses. On the other hand, some of the most enjoyable classes for me covered topics I hadn’t studied before as in Leadership & Ethics and Entrepreneurship.

I found that Eastern has a friendly, cooperative personality and the university makes an earnest effort to provide personal attention to students. In addition to the program course content, my MBA experience was significantly enhanced by the students, professors, and EWU staff members. Sharing in the ideas and experiences of fellow students from diverse international cultures and backgrounds reinforced the global nature of business today and enhanced the program as a whole. While working on many group projects outside of the classroom, I enjoyed developing new friendships that I hope will continue well into the future.

And when it comes to logistics, let Cy Parker be your guide!

Margi Hollifield

I always knew I would continue education beyond my undergraduate degree, but I didn’t know when and where. When my job led me to Spokane, there were several choices of schools in the area to attend for my Masters. However, there was only one that met my criteria and Eastern’s MBA program exceeded all expectations.

Each of the professors is here to help the students excel and the professors go above and beyond to ensure the students do well in the program. I have met such wonderful people through the program, and I continue to keep in contact with those who have graduated. I have grown personally and professionally through my schooling and truly value the degree. Thank you for a great experience.

Dean Kimoto

When I first started the MBA program I was happy with how most of what we learned seemed like common sense. I soon realized, however, there was much more to the world of business than I had ever considered. Although not completely sure of what’s in store for me, I do know the knowledge I’ve gained from my professors, peers, and my experiences in Eastern’s MBA program have made me into a more well-rounded person and undoubtedly into a more prepared potential business professional. Although now an elective, I highly recommend Managerial Communications to all students in (or entering) the program. The information gained in that class will be beneficial no matter what direction you are heading.

The relatively small class sizes help develop much closer relationships with classmates and professors than I would imagine possible at most other schools. I believe taking the program through Eastern was one of the best moves I could have made for my future. Thanks to all who helped make this such a great experience!

The faculty, students, and administration offer our sincere congratulations to all of the MBA students graduating this Winter quarter: Nick Brumback, Mark Grover, Margi Hollifield, Hui-Yao (Victor) Huang, Chunpen Jindapradist, Dong-Hoen Jong, Dean Kimoto, Ji-Yong Lee, Eric Ouedraogo, Eric Pirttima, Kiyoshi Sakai, Ryan Stemkoski, Andy Williams, Kenji Yamada

Spring 2005 MBA Classes

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<th>Class</th>
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<td>MGMT 326-40</td>
<td>Organizational Theory and Behavior</td>
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<td>Micro &amp; Macro Economics</td>
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<td>The MBA Experience</td>
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<td>Decision Making &amp; Accounting Information</td>
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<td>Business Stra/Vis/Policy Implementation</td>
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Business Plan Competition—Who is competing?

The Business Plan Competition is in its second year and team entries more than tripled compared to the first year of the competition! “It was our goal to market this university-wide event to allow all of our students to participate in this opportunity” said Terry Sanchez, Director of the Business Resource Center. Throughout Fall quarter, Terry emphasized extensive marketing efforts to generate interest outside of the College of Business and Public Administration.

Thirteen EWU teams signed up for the largest business plan competition in the Inland Northwest. This year’s competition marks a regional event that represents collaborative efforts between Gonzaga University, Eastern Washington University, and Whitworth College. Teams will compete for a record prize fund of $42,500 with business plan topics ranging from food/restaurant ideas such as a winery and a deli to service companies in transportation, dental hygiene, and the entertainment sector.

OPINION—MBA Students Speak UP!

Anonymous

Each class of the MBA curriculum will help you to develop the business skills you need to be successful in your chosen profession. Managerial Communication is one of the classes that I would like to recommend to everyone that plans to be in any kind of business. Even though the class is not part of the core courses anymore, every student should consider it a necessity to take. Yes, sometimes it will seem you are back in grade school, but maybe that is what it takes to be successful in business.

Angie Grunte (2nd Quarter)

So far I am really enjoying the MBA program. The workload, although intense, has been very applicable to the field in which I work. It has given me new insight and an edge I would not have had without this formal education. I have met people I would have never bumped into outside this program and learned so much both from them and about them. The diversity in the MBA program is definitely its biggest strength; it is so refreshing to get new perspectives and different opinions from such a diverse group of individuals. The only drawback to the program is, of course, the arduous workload. Fortunately, I was able to find this out in advance from seasoned students who advised me to reduce my work schedule prior to entering the program. I went to part-time and believe it is the best advice one could receive prior to beginning the MBA program at Eastern.

Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember

♦ Application for Candidacy—All MBA students

Advancement to candidacy must take place after completion of 16 credits and before completion of 24 credits. If you wait and earn more than 24 credits, you must file additional paperwork. You received the form in your MBA 500 class or you can pick up a new one from Cy in Room 363 or get it online at http://www.ewu.edu/x12976.xml.

♦ Graduation Application

Graduation Applications have to be handed in the second Friday of the quarter preceding the quarter of graduation. Forms are available at http://www.ewu.edu/x12976.xml.

♦ Spring Quarter Academic Calendar

* Instruction Begins: Monday, March 28
* Memorial Day: Monday, May 30
* Spring Priority Registration: Monday, February 22
* Last Day of Instruction: Friday, June 3
* Final Exams Week: Monday—Thursday, June 6-9

♦ Entrepreneurship Seminars (for more info please contact Terry Sanchez @ 358-2208)

The CPBA’s Business Resource Center will deliver a series of monthly seminars addressing the business planning needs of entrepreneurs and small firms which will focus on topics such as accounting, legal issues, and marketing. Dates of seminars are:

* March 5, 2005
* June 18, 2005
* August 20, 2005

♦ Winter Speaker Seminar Series (for more info please contact Bob Schwartz @ 358-2254)

EWU offers an MBA course laid out as a seminar series in which senior level Spokane professionals cover diverse small business and entrepreneurship topics. Feel free to visit any of the following remaining seminars:

* Feb 9, 2005 “Human Capital: How to manage” (Gonzaga at EWU Rpt Auditorium)
* Feb 16, 2005 “Debt and Equity Capital: How to get it” (same as Feb. 9)