



Cal State Hayward opens MBA program in Beijing

By David Goll

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When Jay L. Tontz sees a dynamic business environment, he wants to be a part of it. He just happens to bring the entire School of Business and Economics at California State University, Hayward along for the ride.

Beijing is just the latest international location for one of his school's MBA programs, joining courses of study set up previously in Hong Kong, Vienna and Moscow. Cal State Hayward is the first American university to sponsor an executive MBA program in the Chinese capital, though New Jersey-based Rutgers University already sponsors a regular MBA program in the city.

"(Beijing) fits in with our strategic plan of locating our programs in places where the most dramatic economic changes are taking place," said Tontz, dean of the School of Business and Economics since 1973. The school is also considering setting up MBA programs in Singapore and Sao Paulo, Brazil, he said.

Forty students are enrolled in the two-year Beijing program, which got under way earlier this month, and a second group of 40 will begin the program in March. They have to meet the same academic criteria as those enrolled in the program at Hayward, must speak English and have a minimum of seven years in a business leadership position.

They'll study the basics of accounting, marketing and finance during the first year, then move into executive MBA courses the following year, said Tontz, a San Ramon resident.

"Business managers in China have told me they are hungry for an MBA program such as this," said Nancy Mangold, a Cal State Hayward business professor and director of the Beijing program. "This year, more than 30,000 people applied for MBA programs at 56 Chinese universities. The demand for business education is great, particularly so for a U.S. MBA program that offers a specialized option."

Members of the initial Chinese class are indeed an impressive group, holding management positions in such fields as finance, medicine and information technology. They work at domestic companies and at such U.S. and Japanese corporate giants as American Airlines, General Motors, Unisys, Motorola Inc., Toshiba Inc. and Sony Corp. Because there's no government subsidy of the program, as there is in California, all of the university's international programs have to be self-supporting, said Tontz. While a student at the Hayward campus pays about \$2,000 in annual tuition, executive MBA program participants in the Vienna program pay about \$30,000 a year.

All of the faculty members in Beijing are from the Hayward campus, which adds considerably to the expense of running the program, according to Tontz, who just returned from Beijing. He said he and other university officials were surprised when an open house held to promote the Beijing program drew more than 500 prospective students rather than the 200 expected.

"We simply don't have a faculty large enough to support a program of that size," said Tontz.

The regular MBA program started in Moscow six years ago was the first international foray for Cal State Hayward. That program now has about 200 students every year, according to Tontz. The Vienna program draws about 45 top executives from throughout Europe annually. About 80 complete the Hong Kong regular MBA course each year.

"We seem to be well-received in all of these places," said Tontz. "The Russian press has rated our program as the top one in the country."

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