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Office of Marketing and Communications

January 06, 2010

2010-01-06: CBA is on the move

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### Recommended Citation

Kornwitz, Jason, "2010-01-06: CBA is on the move" (2010). News@Northeastern. Paper 484. http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20001727

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#### CBA is on the move



Thomas Moore, dean of the College of Business Administration *Photo by Lauren McFalls* 

#### January 6, 2010

Thomas Moore, dean of the College of Business Administration (CBA) at Northeastern University, sat down recently for a look at his college's successes, including the rise of the international business program and the recruitment of top faculty, and its goals, such as exploring the efficacy of online education for undergraduates.

Northeastern's international business program is one of the best in the nation, according to last year's U.S. News and World Report ranking of top colleges. What makes the program so strong?

The Bachelor of Science in international business is a unique program that combines business and language courses at the university with at least one year of experience in a foreign country. If students choose, they can spend a second year abroad, earning a dual degree from both Northeastern and one of our partner institutions.

Students who graduate from the program are very attractive candidates for international companies looking for employees who bring cultural awareness and language skills along with their business degree.

Will Northeastern's move to a new four-year co-op model prompt the development of online courses for CBA undergraduates?

With the four-year model accelerating the time to degree, we are examining our entire curriculum for innovative ways to improve the delivery of our courses and give students more flexibility in their choices.

We are currently developing an optional freshman study-abroad program that will run for four to five weeks during the first summer session. It will allow students to earn eight credits and still get home by mid-June.

Another new program in development, Field Research Studies, will allow students to take one course during the year, and do field research here or abroad during the summer.

We are also looking at online courses and hybrid courses to see if the delivery of information can be improved. For undergraduate business minors, we have already begun to design our first fully online course.

Through the college's Social Enterprise Institute, business students have traveled to impoverished regions of South Africa and the Dominican Republic, overseeing micro-loans and working with locals on small business ventures. How has this experience changed students' perspectives on the role of business in an increasingly global marketplace?

Students have gained a greater understanding of how business can be a force for eliminating poverty and creating social good. Within a few years, we hope to expand our experiential-learning opportunities to include such places as Thailand, Vietnam, and Belize, where we could work with locals to generate green business opportunities.

Should all undergraduates have an international experience—whether it's on co-op, through study abroad, or as part of the international business program—before they enter the job market?

Most companies see international work experience as a plus. Even if graduates aren't hired for international assignments, many will work on global teams. Having had global experience gives them a leg up on the competition. Employers often see that our students have a high level of maturity and a global perspective, and students with international business experience are particularly attractive to multinational companies.

How has business education changed over the past few years?

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It's changed in a number of ways. Last year, for example, we added an undergraduate course on international business and ethics. We also introduced a core undergraduate requirement in supply-chain management and operations, because of the importance of the supply chain in today's business environment.

In addition, we've added an elective course on innovation. We plan to introduce more courses that focus on sustainability and the business of health care. And we're set to begin an extensive review of our curriculum, with an eye toward developing innovative, effective and efficient ways of delivering our courses.

# Entrepreneurship is a signature strength of the Northeastern business student. How are students honing their entrepreneurial skills?

For the past 50 years, entrepreneurship has been both a theme and an attitude that has run deeply through the college. The undergraduate entrepreneurship major continues to grow, and students are showing an increased desire to be more active in their education.

Both the Entrepreneurship Club and a new program called IDEA—which helps undergraduates launch their own businesses—are great illustrations of how innovation and entrepreneurship permeate the college, not only through the courses we teach, but also through student-run initiatives.

#### Recruiting top faculty is a university-wide initiative. How is CBA responding?

Over the past five years, we've recruited more than 35 new faculty members, attracting faculty from top doctoral programs as well as from other top business schools.

Like Northeastern, CBA is on the move: Faculty members are engaged in a wide range of research projects, and take the lead on curriculum development and innovation. They're constantly looking for ways to improve the academic experience. And they work with senior managers of companies to remain on the cutting edge of what's going on in the business community.

To learn more about the College of Business Administration at Northeastern University, visit: http://cba.neu.edu/

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