MBA Degree Program Specialization Initiatives

Overview

At the present time, the MBA degree program has one specialization, Information Systems, that students can undertake while completing their MBA degrees. During the Fall 2003 term, the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business expressed interest in the possible creation of a Specialization in Agribusiness. In addition, our efforts to find ways to more actively participate in the CIMBA consortium at the MBA level resulted in the development of interest in the possible creation of a Specialization in International Business.

To evaluate these proposals, along with others that may be brought forward in the future, the MBA Policy Committee has done two things. The first was to develop a general process to be used to review such proposals, and the second was to create a table in which the five most important student learning objectives of each of the 12 courses in the MBA degree program and the various AACSB International knowledge/skills/etc. requirements are matched up (this second activity is expected to be finished within the first two weeks of the Spring 2004 term).

The review process includes the following steps:

- Determine that there would be no significant increase in the demand on CBAE resources beyond those caused by any possible increase in the number of MBA students.
- Develop a basic concept paper on the Specialization that identifies all the parties involved and their various roles.
- Present the concept paper to the MBA Policy Committee for its consideration.
- Present the concept paper to the CEC for its consideration.
- Develop the complete proposal in a format that meets the requirements of the NMSU Graduate Council.
- Present the completed proposal to the CBAE faculty for its consideration.
- Present the completed proposal to the NMSU Graduate Council for its consideration.
- Complete all additional paperwork required by various NMSU office to get the specialization added to the Graduate Catalog.

While Specializations within the MBA degree program may be created by simply adding four or more courses to the basic degree requirements (e.g., the currently offered Information Systems Specialization and the proposed International Business Specialization), it is also possible to create a Specialization by substituting courses for those included in the basic degree requirements. It is this second possibility that has given rise to the table note above. Because AACSB International accreditation of the MBA degree program must not be jeopardized in any way, any courses proposed for substitution would have to address the same important student learning objectives as the original courses and the resultant Specialization would have to fulfill the various knowledge/skill/etc. areas. The table will be used to ensure that students enrolled in such a Specialization would gain the same education as those enrolled in the regular MBA degree program.

January 8, 2004
Specialization in International Business

Partner: CIMBA Consortium

Concept: Students who enroll in this Specialization would be required to take four International Business (IB) courses in addition to the 12 courses required of all MBA students. Because CIMBA offers a number of IB courses in each of two summer sessions on the Asolo, Italy campus, the four required IB courses would be taken in Italy under the NMSU Distance Education umbrella. By using this mechanism, we will be able to provide those students with IB coursework at an international location; and no additional faculty resources would be required.

Status: Specialization proposal is being readied for faculty consideration (vote).

Specialization in Agribusiness

Partner: Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business

Concept: Students who enroll in this Specialization would take four to six (exact number is as yet undermined) AEEC/AG E courses that would be substituted for those included in the 12 courses required of all MBA students. The table discussed above will be used to qualify courses that are being proposed for inclusion.

Status: Basic concept has been approved by the MBA Policy Committee, the CEC and the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business. As soon as the proposed substitutions have been qualified, the basic Specialization proposal will again be reviewed by the MBA Policy Committee and the CEC before the formal proposal is readied for faculty consideration.