The popular book, *Seven Days in Utopia*, has been made into a new film starring Robert Duvall and Lucas Black. It will change your outlook on golf...and life.
PGA GOLF MANAGEMENT DEGREE WILL SEE MORE EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING TEACHING SKILLS

Like every fall for the past 24 years, roughly 50 new freshmen have just started their path toward a PGA Golf Management degree at New Mexico State University. But, unlike past incoming classes, this year’s freshmen will be the first to study under a new curriculum at NMSU that places an added emphasis on helping the future pros become better golf teachers as well.

What isn’t changing is the program’s connection to the NMSU School of Business and its affiliation with the PGA Management Program. One of only three universities to offer the program, a degree from NMSU has always been well respected in the industry. Students not only benefit from receiving direct experience in golf course operations, but for those who end up leaving the golf industry, their Bachelor’s of Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing and a specializa-
“We have 100-percent placement for internships and 100-percent job placement post graduation as well.”

Program director Pat Gavin personally stays in contact with all of his current and former students. “I’ve been here 18 years,” he says, “and I stay in contact with every one of our alumni. When they are uptrodden and moving across the country years after graduating from the program, we still give them job assistance.”

To prove it, the night before Gavin talked with Texas Golfer, he was sending out job inquiry emails for two alumni moving to new towns and by 6 a.m. he had landed both of them jobs in their new destinations.

“We have 100-percent placement for internships and 100-percent job placement post graduation as well,” Gavin says. The program takes 4.5 years to complete and includes 16 months of internships—one full semester internship and four separate internships spread across each summer. “And the golf course industry supports it as well,” Gavin adds. “We’ve placed interns from Florida to Alaska.”

In fact, hundreds of courses throughout the country are involved with the NMSU internship program and Gavin keeps in touch with them regularly, making sure each student is not just fulfilling his obligations but also representing themselves, the university and the program well. He also checks in with the students to make sure the golf course is furthering their development throughout the summer.

In his 18 years on the job, Gavin says they’ve graduated 600 students...not exactly flooding the market. “Most of them are 18 when they get here,” Gavin notes. “They come in knowing they love golf, and that’s about it. So we spend a lot of time educating them on what being a golf pro really entails.”

That’s where the School of Business comes in. There are the required marketing research, accounting and economics courses in addition to horticulture and behavioral science credits that must be taken. At the end of it all, students in the program must also complete the PGA’s Player Ability Test while enrolled at NMSU.

Fortunately, NMSU is also one of the few universities with a PGA GM program that owns its own golf course. “We view it as a laboratory for the students,” Gavin says of the course. So while those in the program compete in approximately 35 tournaments each semester in addition to their studies, they also benefit from giving range lessons to NMSU faculty and staff, running a real pro shop, operating an on-course food and beverage program and getting to learn and consult with a working agronomy department.

It’s a strong start to what can be a difficult industry to break into. From networking to practical experience, education to job placement, NMSU’s PGA GM program is turning out better golf pros, and that’s something all golfers benefit from.

nmsu.edu/academics/pgagm

OPPOSITE: STUDENTS PRACTICE THE ART OF CLUB REPAIR BELOW: NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY HAS ITS OWN GOLF COURSE