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BWISE

University of Dayton

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First-year business students at the University of Dayton face a new set of graduation requirements that challenge them to volunteer, study abroad, launch a business or engage in other experiences to help them become well-rounded professionals.

This year’s 450 incoming business students are learning by doing through the new Business Wisdom Through International, Service and Experiential Education (BWISE), which requires they complete two of three requirements: service, international or experiential.

“We really started to talk about this as a faculty a couple of years ago, and started to grapple with: How can we encourage or require our students to do things that we think are critical to them being
successful in business, beyond the classroom?” said Janet Leonard, assistant dean.

The service option asks student to volunteer at least 50 hours during their undergraduate career, in alignment with the University's Marianist identity, Leonard said.

The international requirement is aimed at preparing students for the global business environment. They can study abroad, complete an international internship or enroll in the University’s international business or language courses.

Experiential will give them real achievements to put on their resumes. Beyond traditional internships, some students may have the opportunity to serve as an officer with the University's Flyer Enterprises, one of the largest student-run businesses in the country. Or help manage $20 million of the University's endowment through Flyer Investments.

Students will write a plan during their first year to outline how they will meet the requirements by the time they graduate, said Terence Lau, associate dean of undergraduate programs.

“We're starting them early to think about what it is they want to do to enhance their education,” Lau said.

The new opportunities come at a good time for the School of Business Administration with success in several key areas. Enrollment has increased from nearly 1,700 undergraduates in 2012 to more than 2,000 this fall. Approximately 97 percent of 2013-14 business graduates found jobs or engaged in service opportunities or post-graduate internships. Their average starting salaries were as high as $55,000, depending on major.

Still, the faculty wanted to ensure students are prepared to compete for the best jobs after graduation and wanted to help them see business as a calling, not just a series of jobs.

“Business is more than just making a lot of money,” Leonard said. “These kinds of things make students well-rounded and give them a broader perspective on the good that they can do in their community — and that brings more meaning into their lives.”

First-year accounting and finance major Brandon Cusick, of Riverside, Ohio, is already working on the experiential requirement with an internship. He is an accounting/human resources assistant with Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley.

“This is something that will set University of Dayton students apart from college students from other schools,” he said. “Many students miss out on doing a lot of this mainly because they don't have to.”
With positive feedback so far from students and their families, Leonard said BWISE will be evaluated at the end of the year and may be expanded for the incoming class next fall.

For more information, contact Meagan Pant, assistant director of media relations, at 937-229-3256 or mpant1@udayton.edu.

Entrepreneurship in China

Two undergraduates from a university in China will travel to campus and compete for $65,000 in cash prizes in the final round of the University of Dayton's 10th annual Business Plan Competition on March 5.

KEEN Mindset

The Kern Family Foundation honored Eddy Rojas, dean of the University of Dayton School of