

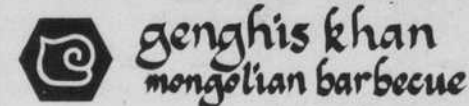


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Business school ups GPA standard

By ANN PORTAL
Of the Emerald

Business students beware: The grade point average required for entry into the business school is going up. The GPA requirement, set at 2.5 this year, will increase to 2.75 next fall.

Fewer faculty, increased program demand and a lack of pre-registration information all have contributed to a need to limit enrollment, says business undergraduate director Paul Swadener.

The requirement will apply only to fall freshmen because students must meet only the catalog requirements in effect at the time they enroll.

Swadener predicts the higher GPA will reduce enrollment 10 percent when it takes effect, — but that will be two years from now, when next fall's freshmen become juniors.

In the meantime, the number of total credit hours offered has increased 71 percent over the past nine years, no new faculty positions have been added to the business school since 1977 and more than one-third of the business courses offered this spring were closed before the end of registration.

Without some type of tracking system, Swadener says the business school isn't sure how many students are being turned away, including non-business majors.

"We don't know if we're not meeting the demand because we're not offering the classes," he says.

Business school dean Del Hawkins is unsure how the new requirement will affect enrollment.

Hawkins says the school currently rejects few students who apply, but he says he has no idea how many students don't apply because they are below the GPA requirement.

"There's just no doubt it'll cost the University some students," although some students will be channeled into other areas of study, he says.

Most major universities have gone to a higher GPA requirement to limit business enrollment, Hawkins says. But at Oregon State University, the only GPA

requirement is the 2.0 basic requirement for admission. OSU has not yet decided whether the requirement will go up next year, according to the business school representative.

Hawkins says he has two enrollment objectives for next year — fewer students in some class sections and a smaller number of courses taught by graduate teaching fellows.

"Business students are getting screwed as students by taking larger classes than any other department on

campus," he says.

According to second-week registration figures, the average class size has increased from 43 to 48 since last spring quarter. Many courses intended for 40 students currently are being taught to 60-100 students. But when classes get that large, it doesn't matter how many students there are, he says.

"If my class is over 60, I can't interact with them."

Hawkins says the school "desperately needs" new faculty positions. Only four

positions have been added since 1974, but filling existing positions also is a problem.

Salaries that can't keep up with inflation or compete with private sector salaries hurt recruiting and retention of faculty, he says. After a national search for an accounting professor, Hawkins has received only four applications. Brand new, "green pea" accountants earn more than the majority of the business school's assistant professors, he says.

Adding to the staff problem, seven faculty have been hired away from the school in the past two years — many of whom Hawkins says he was sorry to lose.

But Hawkins is cautious about requesting additional faculty and funds in view of next year's tight budget situation.

"Now, for us to get something may mean some department needs to be dissolved."

Swadener is quick to point out the new GPA requirement may not be permanent. If the program turns around to the point where demand can be met, the requirement would be lowered automatically. All students in pre-business at that time could enter the school under the lowered requirement, he says.

But Hawkins is not as optimistic.

To enable the school to lower the requirement, the school would need either a dramatic influx of resources or a slackening of demand, Hawkins says.

"I don't think it'll ever be lowered again."

School mulls business 'minor' to help relieve overcrowding

Students may not need to be business majors to get a business education next year.

Business dean Del Hawkins says his school is working on a "major restructuring" that would allow students to take only those business courses that fit their needs.

The restructuring would create a "business minor" that would provide a minimum level of education and could help relieve overcrowding in the school, Hawkins says.

Many business majors may have stronger interests in other academic areas, he says.

"We have a lot of kids in here who are business majors because they think it's the only way to get a job," he says.

Under the new program, students

could earn a degree in a program they are more interested in, but still receive marketable business skills, Hawkins says.

Business employers may not require

Business dean Del Hawkins says his school is working on a "major restructuring" that would allow students to take only those business courses that fit their needs.

an extensive business background — they may prefer to train the new employee to their corporation's ways, he says.

However, several situations still would require a business degree, Hawkins

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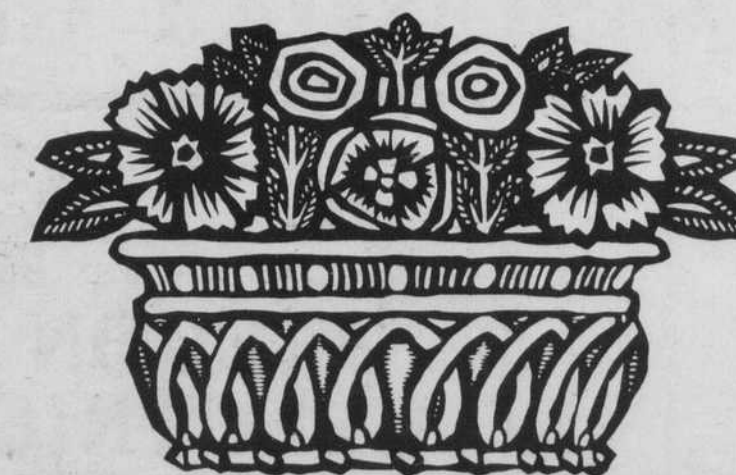
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