

SOM Earns Accreditation

AACSB Lauds 'Well-managed Dramatic' Growth and Quality Faculty

By Patricia Schoch

The UTD School of Management (SOM) has been granted full accreditation of its undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs in both business administration and accounting by the board of directors of AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. SOM officials received word of the accreditation April 7 at the annual AACSB International meeting in Chicago.

In announcing the AACSB International Board's action, SOM Dean Hasan Pirkul thanked University and School administrators, faculty, advisory board members, students, and staff who worked together during the five-year accreditation effort. "This is a milestone for our school," he said. "Accreditation is an important aspect as we grow and mature as a business school. It validates our programs, our faculty, our students, our involvement with the business community. It also validates our commitment to work to create a model business school at UTD."

Dean Pirkul cited a letter from Dr. John Kraft, chairman of AACSB International, that commends the SOM, especially its "remarkably well-managed dramatic growth in student credit hours, while, at the same time, upgrading the quality of faculty." SOM enrollments are now at forty-three hundred, and students are served by eighty-four full-time faculty members, a dramatic increase in both numbers in the past five years.

The letter congratulates the SOM for "embracing the technology explosion all around it in Dallas'[s] Telecom Corridor," with the creation of a specialized master's degree with tracks in e-commerce, telecommunications management, and information technology. In addition, the letter lauds the School's interdisciplinary programs, the undergraduate double major in biology and business and the Master of Science degree in Medical Management, offered in conjunction with U.T. Southwestern Medical Center. It also commends the expansion of distance learning programs, including Global MBA Online, the Global Leadership Executive MBA, and Project Management's online programs.

Dr. Varghese Jacob, SOM's associate dean for administration who headed the accreditation project, noted the process was a faculty-driven one. AACSB International's self-study process asks schools to write a formal plan mapping out how they will build on identified strengths while eliminating identified weaknesses.

Succeeding with full accreditation for the SOM "indicates we meet or exceed quality standards established by AACSB International," Dr. Jacobs said. "It's one thing to say we're providing a quality education. This process allows us to get independent verification that we are indeed providing that quality education and that we have much in place to build on."

SOM's Accounting and Information Management Programs also received concurrent independent AACSB International accreditation. The AACSB International review team praised the programs' relevance for Information Age organizations, along with their faculty and curriculums. Dr. Rajiv Banker, Accounting and Information Management Programs director, observed that accreditation will "help us attain our goal of being recognized as a global leader in accounting education, both for the traditional areas of auditing, assurance, financial planning, and taxation services, and for the more contemporary areas of consulting, information technology, and international services."

Headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, AACSB International is a not-for-profit organization consisting of more than eight hundred educational organizations and corporations devoted to the promotion and improvement of higher education in business administration and management. Its mission is

to provide global leadership in advancing management education through accreditation and by fostering international interchanges, key business linkages, sharing of best practice, and professional development.