

UWF MBA Students Master Business Abroad

By Jaimie Woodard '02

Imagine the day in the not so distant future that the University of West Florida “ranks in the top 10 comprehensive universities in the percentage of students who study abroad,” said President Cavanaugh in his inaugural address. Well, if it’s up to the College of Business that day may come sooner than anyone could have ever imagined.

Besides offering study abroad programs at the undergraduate level, the College of Business also offers a dual degree master’s program through which graduate students spend two semesters at UWF earning a master of business administration and one year at Nyenrode University, The Netherlands Business School, earning a master of science in management. The program involves the bilateral exchange of faculty and students between Nyenrode and UWF. So far, two UWF students have completed their studies at Nyenrode and currently a Nyenrode student is studying at UWF.

“My motivation was the international degree,” said Alan Royston, UWF alumnus who traveled to Nyenrode in January 2002. “Having studied in the U.S. and worked in Japan, I wanted to study in the next business center of the world. As Americans we tend to be very ethnocentric, and I wanted to learn about the European perspective on business.”

Nyenrode is one of the top ten business schools in Europe. The university was modeled after American Ivy League schools and is the only private university in the Netherlands.

“Students coming out of this program are very marketable,” said Ed Ranelli, dean of the College of Business. “They will be tremendously successful because they have an American MBA and a master’s in management from a top European school.”

Robert Briese, UWF graduate student who is currently finishing the UWF portion of the dual degree program, studied for a year at Nyenrode beginning in Jan. 2002. “At

Nyenrode, students take four to five classes for six weeks, then have a week to study and a week for exams,” said Briese. “The study regimen is very tough and students must be ready.”

A close-knit community, Briese said he made “more good friends in two weeks at Nyenrode than he made in two years at UWF.” He also explained that at Nyenrode students spend about 50 percent of their time working in groups. Briese felt comfortable with the European scholars because he and they shared many ambitions and personality traits. “Everyone at Nyenrode was dedicated, friendly, outgoing, confident and desiring success in life,” said Briese. “I definitely recommend the program to all like minded individuals.”

The partnership between UWF and Nyenrode was initiated by Timothy O’Keefe, director of the UWF MBA program and former director of the Executive MBA program at Nyenrode. “We’ve arranged a great deal with Nyenrode for our students,” says O’Keefe, who is currently a visiting professor at INSEAD, another top European business school near Paris. “Our students can get a master of science in management from a top European business school while paying slightly more than Florida in-state tuition. There is no better graduate education deal than this anywhere in the world.”

For more information, contact Melissa Padden, UWF MBA coordinator, at (850) 474-2352. To learn more about Nyenrode visit the university’s Web site at <http://www.nyenrode.nl>.