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Full Time Women MBA Students Outnumber Men For First Time At UNH

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Full-Time Women MBA Students Outnumber Men For First Time At UNH

Whittemore School Bucking National MBA Enrollment Trends

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News Editors: Steve Bolander, dean of the Whittemore School, is available to discuss the Whittemore School's MBA program at 603-862-1983. Lisa MacFarlane, director of the UNH Honors Program, is available to discuss the honors program at 603-862-4728.

DURHAM, N.H. – For the first in the history of the University of New Hampshire, women enrolled in the full-time MBA program at the Whittemore School of Business and Economics outnumber men, a change so significant that it is a reverse of the national trend in MBA enrollments.

This fall, 61 percent of the full-time MBA students are women. In 2004, only 29 percent of full-time MBA students were women, which is consistent with national trends that show women represent 30 to 35 percent of MBA students in all programs (part-time, full-time and executive). In past years, UNH has been consistent with national trends in all MBA programs.

In addition, this year 46 percent of the students in all MBA programs at UNH are women, breaking from national trends. In 2004, women represented just 29 percent of all MBA students at UNH. The change is a direct result of women outnumbering men by 2-to-1 in the full-time program.

“Last spring, the Whittemore School restructured its full-time MBA program from what had been a two-year program to a rigorous, one-year program. When we started recruiting students, we sought out graduating seniors or recent graduates with outstanding academic records – high-potential students who we thought would be successful in this new, accelerated program. The majority of these students were honors students, and it turns out, honors programs traditionally attract more women than men,” said Barry Shore, professor of decision sciences and academic director of the MBA program.

According to Lisa MacFarlane, director of the UNH Honors Program, students admitted to the University Honors Program typically rank in the top 10 percent of their high school class with combined SAT scores of 1300 or higher, and will have excelled in all areas of their secondary school's most challenging academic curriculum.

More than 1,100 students currently participate in the UNH Honors Program, which has a 2-to-1 ratio of female (66.5 percent) to male (33.5 percent) students.

“The University Honors Program challenges students to set high goals for themselves and many do exactly that. Our students win prestigious international awards like Fulbright scholarships. They enter challenging positions upon graduation, such as working as a National Institute of Mental Health researcher, an Air Force intelligence officer, or an English teacher in Japan. And many of our students pursue graduate degrees in high-powered programs like this one,” MacFarlane said.

“Because this accelerated MBA requires just one more year of full-time coursework, it was very appealing to many of our students who followed their intellectual passions as undergraduates and now want to wrap an MBA around that degree. That combination appeals to the business community,” she said.

The new one-year full-time MBA program, which is open to all students with a bachelor’s degree, began in August 2005 and concludes in June 2006. “This is much more intensive than a two-year MBA program. Students will have little time for anything else, but they will earn their degree in a short time, saving more than a year when compared to most other programs,” Shore said.

The intensive one-year MBA program is an innovative MBA program that minimizes career interruptions and reduces tuition expenses, while retaining a strong educational value. It consists of 10 core courses, including economics, accounting, finance, marketing, information systems, quantitative decision making, operations and supply chain management, organizational behavior, organizational design and leadership, and business strategy. Students also choose a business concentration from the following areas: financial management, entrepreneurial venture creation, marketing and supply chain management, and general management.

For several of this year’s class of full-time MBA students, their graduate business degree isn’t the final one they will earn. Four students plan to go to law school and three to medical school following graduation in June 2006. Most have undergraduate degrees in the liberal arts.

“We are meeting the needs of students who have achieved exceptional academic success following the traditional undergraduate path for four years, and who now would like to spend one more year in school adding an MBA to their resumes, and thus, opening up more career choices,” Shore said.

The one-year MBA program is the latest advance in the Whittemore School’s efforts to provide the most relevant and innovative academic programs to business school students. The school’s ongoing efforts have been recognized nationally in the last year: the Whittemore School was named one of the top 100 graduate business schools in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, ranked by *Entrepreneur* magazine in the first tier of the top 50 regionally recognized academic programs in the country, and UNH was named one of the Top 25 Most Entrepreneurial Colleges by *Forbes.com*, ranking 10th in the nation. The ranking was based largely on the Whittemore School’s programs.