

Media Relations

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UNH's Paul College one of top 100 best undergraduate business schools

Student-centered initiatives focused on real-world experience are drawing students

DURHAM, N.H. -- Bloomberg Businessweek released its 2016 rankings of the best undergraduate business schools in the U.S. and the University of New Hampshire's Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics has been named among the top 100. Overall, Paul College ranked 57 among business schools in student satisfaction.

Paul College placed 81 among all ranked business schools and 38 among public universities. It is the only business school ranked from New Hampshire.

"Being ranked as a top business school is a testament to the hard work and excellent performance of our students, and our faculty and staff," said Deborah Merrill-Sands, dean of Paul College. "Our academic programs are stellar and we have been growing our experiential and career preparation programs, which really makes us stand out. The ability to put what is learned in the classroom to practice in real-world settings is what students desire and what sets them apart with employers. We are particularly proud of our high ranking in student satisfaction."

Bloomberg this year updated how it ranks undergraduate programs to put a bigger focus on "the outcome most students want from B-School: the brightest possible career path." It collected data from nearly 30,000 students and recruiters at close to 600 companies.

Rankings were based on feedback from recruiters on how well schools prepared students for jobs at their companies; students' ratings of their campus, career services department, and faculty and administrators; the base compensation of students who had jobs lined up; and the percentage of a school's graduates who had at least one internship at any time during college.

A significant way to make connections and gain experience is through internships and 92 percent of Paul College students complete one, with 40 percent of these leading to employment. Moreover 96 percent of graduates seeking employment have jobs six months after graduation; 88 percent directly related to their major.

Paul College has increasingly become the school of choice for students in New Hampshire and the Northeast. Over the past five years undergraduate enrollment has increased by 37 percent from 1,878 to 2,572 students. The number of degrees granted also grew from 408 to 567, a 39 percent increase.

As part of its effort to provide the highest quality business education to its students, Paul College has introduced several new initiatives over the past few years and strengthened others. These include:

- The Peter T. Paul Scholars program, created with a \$5 million gift from Peter Paul, which provides merit scholarships to high-performing students.
- A new year-long Freshman Innovation Research Experience (FIRE) program helps first-year students develop skills and strategies for success, while also getting them involved in broader university life through an integrated, team-based and game-like experience.
- An Internship Opportunity Fund, supported by the Dean's Advisory Board, alumni and friends, which awards \$2,500 stipends to students who secure top-notch internships in expensive metropolitan areas or at non-profit, social enterprises or start-ups that may not be able to provide a stipend.
- Growing areas of emphasis in business analytics, digital marketing, real estate finance and social innovation.
- Expanding the staff and programs of Paul Career Services to strengthen the career readiness of its students.

Justin Lappin, who was one of the first recipients of the Internship Opportunity Fund, completed an internship as an equity research summer analyst at SunTrust Robinson Humphrey in Atlanta and has been hired there upon graduation in May as an investment banking analyst.

“For every undergraduate student, college is a time to learn about yourself, develop a set of unique skills, and make friends that will last a lifetime. My experience at Paul College blew my expectations out of the water,” said Lappin, a senior finance major with a minor in economics. “Through my involvement in such organizations as the Atkins Investment Group, Alpha Kappa Psi and the Dean's Ambassador Program, I was not only able to develop professional skills such as resume building, networking and career development, but also skills such as financial analysis, business valuation and financial modeling that are directly aligned with my career interests.”

For more on the rankings, see Bloomberg's website: <http://www.bloomberg.com/features/2016-best-undergrad-business-schools>.

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