



Many of the businessmen-turned-students are finding A. L. Cosgrove's report writing class a practical addition to their everyday business skills.

The Night People

O.U. is providing for those who cannot afford to interrupt their careers to go back to college

By BOB LIPTON

Two nights a week, daily routine experiences a marked change in the lives of 77 geologists, engineers, lawyers, businessmen and military personnel in central Oklahoma. On Monday and Wednesday nights these men become college students again, participants in an after-hours graduate program at the University of Oklahoma.

Most of these new students have been absent from the classroom for several years. Their reasons for returning are as diverse as their backgrounds, but their ultimate goal is the same—to earn a master of business administration degree without interrupting their careers.

Many enrollees in the nighttime MBA program are in the middle echelons of management; naturally they hope to move higher in their professions by increasing

their knowledge and with the prestige that accompanies a master's degree. Theirs is a standard reason—but there are others.

"I just want to diversify my educational background," explains an Oklahoma City accountant who plans to take his certified public accountant examination in the spring.

"I never had time for college before," says the training program manager at the General Motors Training Center in Oklahoma City—a man who received his high school diploma in 1929 and waited more than 30 years to get the bachelor's degree which led him to the MBA program.

"I enrolled partly for the fun of it," admits a Midwest City salesman and judge who already holds a law degree and a bachelor of arts in mathematics and physics.

O.U.'s multi-purpose MBA program is a

direct result of the demands being placed on educational institutions by the increasing complexity of modern business. "The program was designed by a business faculty which recognized these demands," says Dr. Donald R. Childress, associate dean of the O.U. College of Business Administration. Dr. Childress listed as the faculty's chief considerations:

- the need for emphasis on the international importance of continued economic growth,

- the broadening role that science and mathematics play in modern business,

- the increased stature of the administrator as opposed to the technician,

- the influence of social and economic environment on business decisions, and

- the increased awareness of the social

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statistics and advanced report writing have replaced the traditional thesis

responsibility of both the business firm and the business community.

"The broad objective of the program," Dr. Childress explains, "is to help the student develop the mental tools and understanding of business analysis which would be of continuing value throughout his career as a business manager.

"Much less emphasis is placed on the details of business practice and more on the responsibilities of management for formulating and implementing decisions."

A significant feature of the MBA program is elimination of the traditional thesis requirement. In place of the thesis, the College of Business Administration has substituted a brace of tool courses, one in intermediate statistics and one in advanced report writing. The absence of a thesis in the requirements for a master's is in line with a trend which is being followed by such universities as Chicago, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, Northwestern, Stanford and Wisconsin.

Since statistics are the backbone of any business report, the course in statistics is a natural as one of the replacements for the thesis. Businessmen and educators have judged that the ability to assess properly the mass of statistical data available to decision-makers is an essential element of a business manager's repertoire.

To complement the training in statistical analysis a course in advanced report writing was also adopted. Skill in organizing a written report has become a necessity for supplementing data processing material.

Ray L. Smith, Midwest City, a MBA student who is also a salesman in the building products division of the Johns-Manville Corporation, completed the report writing course last semester. "My big regret is that I did not get to take the course 15 or 20 years ago," he comments. "It would have saved me years of floundering." As a salesman, Smith writes from 40 to 50 reports a week, varying in size from the formal, full-length presentation to the shortest of informal reports, the memorandum.

Smith enrolled in the MBA program last fall "partly for the fun of it." Already the possessor of a bachelor of arts degree in mathematics and physics (Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana) and a bachelor of

laws degree from Chicago's Blackstone School of Law, Smith finds the academic life "stimulating" and "fascinating."

"Associating with young folks is very refreshing. You get a younger point of view. At my age (38) we think of ourselves as young people but meanwhile our contemporaries are getting fat and gray."

Smith, who holds down a municipal judgeship in Midwest City in addition to his job with Johns-Manville, was looking into the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program offered by the Oklahoma College for Continuing Education when he discovered the MBA program.

"It's a splendid program," he says. "I've been very much impressed with the caliber of instruction. As a salesman, naturally I'm interested in sales techniques. A good teacher is a good salesman just as a good salesman is a good teacher."

Most of the students in the program agree that their academic undertaking leaves them little leisure time. Smith, for example, has had to give up being an explorer adviser for the Boy Scouts.

John P. Martin, an accountant with Ephrim and Sureck, Oklahoma City accounting firm, works two nights a week during the tax season. Going to school two nights and studying the rest of the time

keeps him busy. Martin, who started graduate study at O.U. last fall "to diversify my educational background," received his bachelor of science degree in business from Oklahoma State University in 1961.

Another MBA candidate is Col. Ollen Turner, comptroller for the 32nd Air Division of the Air Defense Command in Oklahoma City. Now in his fourth semester at O.U., Colonel Turner expects to complete his degree requirements in August.

Colonel Turner started graduate work at George Washington University in 1955 while stationed at the Pentagon. Interrupted by a tour of duty in Turkey, Colonel Turner could not resume his studies until 1960 when the Air Force transferred him to Kansas City. At Kansas City University he had to switch from engineering administration to business management.

Before entering the comptroller field in 1955, Colonel Turner had been in the planning and operations branch of the Air Force. He holds a B.S. in industrial engineering from Texas Technological College.

A late starter in higher education is Vernon Childers, who began work on his MBA in September, 1961. Childers, training program manager at the General Motors Training Center in Oklahoma City, received his bachelor of science degree in business administration and bachelor of industrial arts degree from Oklahoma City University in 1960. Childers was graduated from high school in 1929 when a high school diploma meant what a bachelor's degree means today.

Evening classes in the MBA program are also open to the regular fulltime students at O.U.

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Students with practical experience can make valuable contributions to discussions, especially in the smaller, seminar-style classes such as one in accounting taught by Dr. O. D. Westfall.

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For the part-time students, completion of the MBA program generally takes three years. A total of 36 hours of course work is required for the degree, with at least one course in each of the six major departments of the College of Business Administration—accounting, economics, business management, finance, marketing and statistics.

"The presence of professional people in

Scholar-Athletes

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wrestling champion and recent winner of the Big Eight tournament's outstanding wrestler award, led the wrestlers in grades and again made the dean's honor roll. Center Harvey Chaffin was high grade point man for Coach Bob Stevens' basketball team with a 3.20 average.

First baseman Don Finkenbinder and pitcher Doyle Tunnell led the baseball squad with honor roll caliber grade averages.

The track team, last year's Big Eight outdoor champions, consistently brings in high grade averages and now has thirteen men with B averages or better. Noteworthy scholastic performances came from shot-putter Mike Miers, 3.80 in history; hurdler Steve Morelock, 3.29 in journalism; middle distance runner Walt Mizell, 3.19 in government, and co-captain Dick Neff, 3.0 in engineering physics.

Combining athletics and academics in an exemplary fashion is nothing new. Just go down the list of Sooner alumni who excelled on the playing field as well as in the classroom. To name a very few, they are men like former basketball stars William F. Martin, '38bus, secretary-treasurer of Phillips Petroleum, and Victor Holt Jr., '28bus, vice president of Goodyear Tire and Rubber; trackman Dillon Anderson, '28bus, prominent Houston attorney; footballer Hal L. Muldrow Jr., '27bs, former 45th division commander and now state senator; polo player Marion W. Hefley, '27eng, a chief engineer with the state highway department; tennis stalwarts J. Claude Monnet, '20ba, '22Law, and Paul G. Darrough Sr., '13ba, '15Law, both Oklahoma City attorneys, and the late geologist Pollok (Polly) Wallace, '27ba, '35ms, who earned his letters in football and wrestling and a Phi Beta Kappa key.

These Sooners must have broken the "big, dumb athlete" mold years ago—when no one was looking.

our classes enriches and enlivens the discussions considerably," says Dr. Dennis M. Crites, professor of marketing who teaches a night course in sales management. Other instructors in the MBA program hold similar views.

Dr. O. D. Westfall, David Ross Boyd professor of accounting, feels that "it definitely tones up the class to have people with practical experience making contributions to the discussion. Since my class is small (10 students), it can be conducted in seminar style, where everyone can talk freely."

James M. Murphy, professor of finance, has 60 students in his section, but he is still keenly aware of the presence of career men in the classroom. "There are several geologists and engineers in my class. As a whole, students in the class have had more undergraduate training in mathematics than the average group. The diversity of backgrounds makes the class more interesting."

Professor of business communications A. L. Cosgrove, who teaches advanced report writing, explains, "The part-time students can associate what they learn in class with their daily experiences in the business world. Because the material is so meaningful to them, they are apt to be very attentive. On the other hand, full-time students are in a position to see the same instructional material from a broader perspective, since they are planning for the future rather than the present."

The evening program was instituted in 1961, after a period of intensive study by

the College of Business Administration's long-range planning committee. The result was an answer to six years of requests from business firms and military establishments throughout Oklahoma for a night-time MBA program at O.U.

Committee members, all still at O.U., were Dr. William H. Keown, David Ross Boyd professor of business management; Dr. Jim E. Reese, David Ross Boyd professor of economics; Dr. Ronald B. Shuman, research professor of business management, and Westfall.

But even while establishing the MBA program to meet the needs of professional management people, the business college has been quick to point out that graduate schooling does not assure administrative competence, just as business employment itself does not necessarily result in personal development and preparation for executive leadership.

"It is apparent, however," Associate Dean Childress contends, "that through business study a qualified college or university graduate can become more knowledgeable in the disciplines underlying business operations and considerably more skillful in facing complex administrative situations and making decisions about them. He has genuinely more understanding of both the internal, human and social environment of the business firm and the economic, political and international forces shaping the external environment in which it must operate."

The Headhunters on the Campus

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difficulty finding applicants for "problem jobs"—such as a recent inquiry for a business manager for the state mental hospital at Taft. The applicant had to be a Negro with a business degree.

Mrs. Barbara Ballentine, who is in charge of teacher placement, finds a similar problem in finding teachers who wish to interview for teaching positions on Indian reservations in Arizona and New Mexico. The teacher employment situation in general is a very good one for the graduates. In some fields—home economics, women's physical education, library science—the teachers can pretty well have their pick of jobs, and only social science teachers seem plentiful.

Engineers also have a wide choice. Dr. William E. Carson, dean emeritus of the College of Engineering and director of engineering placement, reports that this year's engineering graduate will be able to choose from six or seven job offers. The demand for accountants is second only to that for

engineers. Geologists, alternately sought after and ignored as petroleum industry fluctuates, are once again being courted by the oil companies.

It seems unlikely that supply and demand in employment will ever come out even. Business, industry and government will continue the endless search for quality in the right quantity, and the institutions that do the best job of keeping pace educationally with the employers' needs will also do the best job of placing their graduates. But part of the responsibility for seeing that the colleges and universities keep pace will rest even more heavily with the employers themselves. Many of them recognize this fact.

"Too often business and industry ignore the colleges," a representative of a large industry contends. "We don't care what they are doing or what they need until we need something from them—then we can't understand why the colleges can't give us exactly what we want."