

UTEP degree plan wins praise: Magazine ranks MBA No. 6 in U.S.

By Vic Kolenc / El Paso Times

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UTEP Professor Somnath Mukhopadhyay taught a Quantitative Methods in Business class Saturday morning at the Wells Fargo Bank building Downtown. The class is part of the university's accelerated MBA program. Hispanic Business magazine ranked UTEP No. 6 among MBA programs for Hispanics. (Mark Lambie / El Paso Times)

EL PASO -- The University of Texas at El Paso's business graduate program is ranked as the sixth best in the country for Hispanics in Hispanic Business magazine's latest ranking of those programs. The

University of Texas at Austin ranked first.

This is the first time UTEP made the magazine's list of top business graduate schools, which Hispanic Business magazine has published annually for 11 years. The latest rankings are in its September issue and on its Web site.

This raises the profile of our program nationally and reassures people locally that this is a quality program," said Laura Uribarri, director of MBA programs at UTEP. This also can help recruit more students from outside El Paso, she said. That helps bring more perspectives into the school, which enhances the educational experience, Uribarri said.

Jaime Loya, 41, an MBA student at UTEP and an engineer, said the school deserves the ranking. The UTEP business school has faculty "with experience in both industry and academics that are willing to help you and work with you," Loya said. "What I really like about the school is it involves students in team participation on real-world problem solving." Loya said he decided to get a master's in business administration to learn more about business so he could help his company, Innovei International, an electronics repair service, grow.

Hispanic Business magazine ranked business graduate schools on five criteria: Hispanic enrollment, number of Hispanic faculty, services for Hispanic students, Hispanic graduate student retention rates, and school reputation. UTEP had the second-largest number of Hispanic graduate students among 20 business schools ranked. Florida International University had the largest. UTEP had the highest percentage of Hispanic MBA graduates and the largest number of Hispanic faculty members among the ranked schools.

"We try to look at more than just Hispanic enrollment and faculty. Those are important, but other things go into the rankings," said Michael Caplinger, research supervisor for Hispanic Business magazine in Santa Barbara, Calif. How many students are returning to a program, recruiting efforts toward Hispanics, and the school's overall reputation also are important, he said. "We're trying to showcase schools making an effort to get Hispanic students and keep them there, and provide some guidance for students" looking at where to go to school, Caplinger said.

Uribarri said UTEP has seen its MBA enrollment grow in recent years. Part of that growth has been in an accelerated MBA program, which allows students to attend class twice a week instead of four times a week. "Most of our MBA students are working," and the accelerated program makes it easier to pursue an MBA while maintaining a full-time work schedule, Uribarri said. "About 15 percent of our (MBA) students work part-time and go to school full time. The remainder work full-time and go to school part time."

UTEP had 400 MBA students last year, 320 of them Hispanics. In late 2006, enrollment was around 250 to 300 students, Uribarri said.

Best MBA programs for Hispanics

The best business graduate schools for Hispanics as ranked by Hispanic Business magazine:

Rank	University
1.	Texas
2.	Stanford
3.	Duke
4.	Columbia
5.	Dartmouth
6.	UTEP
7.	California-Berkeley
8.	Florida International
9.	UT-San Antonio
10.	Florida

See the Hispanic Business Article at:

http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/rankings/headlines/2008/8/27/top_10_business_schools_for_hispanic.htm

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