Iowa State University offers new degree in seed technology and business

Edmund David Adcock  
Iowa State University, edadcock@iastate.edu

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Abstract
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Iowa State University offers new degree in seed technology and business

by Ed Adcock, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

This past week Iowa State University began offering the first class in its new global master's degree in seed technology and business. The interdisciplinary degree is a cooperative effort between the colleges of Business and Agriculture and Life Sciences. It combines business courses similar to those in the first year of a master's of business administration program with classes relating to scientific and technical subjects in seed and genetic improvement. Classes are offered through the Internet.

"We are excited to have this new multi-college interdepartmental program under way," said Manjit Misra, director of the Seed Science Center. "This program integrates technical and business subjects into a single graduate program for seed that does not exist anywhere else. Such integration will contribute to students' ability to make decisions in the real world."

The program has attracted 23 students from the United States and four other continents, and from a variety of seed organizations. "The students are attracted to a program that is focused on seed and seed-related science and technology, that's available over the Internet and paced so that they can continue to work at their regular jobs," said Mike Crum, associate dean of the College of Business. "Many of the students have been sponsored by their employers. Employers are interested in new educational approaches that will prepare students to undertake innovative roles in their organizations and in the seed sector."

The program's scope is global in keeping with changes in the marketplace for seed. "All around the world the seed industry is in transition," said Paul Christensen, program manager. "In the developing world, the roles of governments in seed are changing, and that's changing the roles of others involved. Everywhere, technology is changing seed opportunities for all those involved in the seed sector. These changes are increasing the need for well-prepared, informed decision-makers."

Students participating in the master's program are required to complete 36 credits of coursework, including three credits for the creative component. Two graduate certificates, one in seed science and technology and one in seed business management, also are being offered as part of the program. The certificates are designed to enhance students' existing experience and training. Additional information is available at www.seeds.iastate.edu/class.
Ed Adcock is a communications specialist with the Agriculture and Life Sciences Communication Service.

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