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Survey shows need for MBA degree program in Billings

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MEDIA RELEASE

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SURVEY SHOWS NEED FOR MBA DEGREE PROGRAM IN BILLINGS

MISSOULA--

If the pieces fall into place as expected, Billings-area residents will be able to earn a master of business administration (MBA) degree from the University of Montana by taking evening classes taught at Eastern Montana College by instructors from UM, EMC and Montana State University.

Interviews conducted in Billings June 21-25 by Richard Withycombe, director of the MBA program at UM, indicate a strong demand in the area for an MBA program--and it could start fall quarter 1983 if the next Montana Legislature provides necessary funds.

Withycombe reports a tremendous response to ads run in the Billings Gazette June 9 and 13 to gauge interest in an MBA program. Of the dozens who called to inquire, 85 actually scheduled interviews. The majority of those Withycombe talked to said they would enroll if the program were offered.

Paul Blomgren, dean of the UM business school, says the survey of the market for an MBA program in the Billings area confirms the need for it.

Blomgren says the MBA curriculum would consist of 16 three-credit courses. Students could enter any quarter. By taking two evening classes each quarter of the regular academic year, a student could complete the degree in less than three years.

A budget modification submitted to the 1981 Legislature to allow the program to be offered in Billings was not adopted. The dean is optimistic, however, about its chances for funding by the 1983 Legislature.

-over-

need for MBA degree--add one

"This time we have impressive figures to document the need for an MBA program in eastern Montana, where so many oil companies and other firms that recruit employees with graduate training in business administration are operating," he said.

He also pointed out that since 1981 the UM business school has joined the comparatively small number of schools with both graduate and undergraduate programs fully accredited by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), making it one of only about a half dozen in the Northwest with such credentials.

Blomgren explained that although the course work would be taken at EMC, the MBA degree would be conferred by UM, the unit of the Montana University System authorized to grant the master's degree in business administration.

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