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South Florida schools offer courses in entrepreneurship

BY MARILYN BOWDEN

Schools of business at some South Florida's public and private universities offer programs in entrepreneurship for students in a variety of disciplines, and a few cater to business owners as well.

The 30-year-old H. Wayne Huzenga School of Business & Entrepreneurship at Nova Southeastern University uses active business owners as faculty, said Tom Tworoger, who runs the program.

In addition, he said, many permanent faculty members have private-sector experience.

"We not only teach how to analyze companies," he said, "but also management skill sets."

Students in the program tend to fall into four categories, Mr. Tworoger said—those who want to be entrepreneurial in a large corporation, those who will one day run a family business, those who want to start a business or those who hope to acquire one.

The Huzenga school runs interdisciplinary programs that teach students in other professional schools how to run their own

businesses.

"To them, we can deliver the basics such as how to buy insurance and what the labor laws are," Mr. Tworoger said.

Within six months, Florida International University's Center for Global Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Innovation plans to introduce courses aimed at businesspeople in conjunction with local chambers of commerce, said Executive Director Alan Carsrud.

FIU offers a concentration in entrepreneurship in its evening master of business administration program, he said. Campus courses are open to students in all disciplines.

The center's offerings, Mr. Carsrud said, include programs about how to go public, how to reach venture capitalists, how to set up boards of directors and corporate governance.

"We plan a series of research studies about improving the environment for entrepreneurial ventures," he said.

Also, Mr. Carsrud said, FIU is involved in ongoing talks with Nova Southeastern and the University of Miami to set up a regional biotechnical business incubator.

The Adams Center for IT Entrepreneurship & Venture Capital at Florida Atlantic University was founded a couple of years ago, said Assistant Director Bob Keltie, with a \$2 million grant from FAU graduate Scott Adams, "who did very well in the dot.com boom."

The center's business curriculum is the same one that has been taught by the business school for years, he said.

"These are senior-level elective courses open to degree-seeking students from any discipline," he said, "but ideally, we would like them to have completed all the core courses—accounting, finance, marketing, international business and management."

Students work with faculty and researchers to become aware of lab-to-market potential, Mr. Keltie said.

Enterprise Development Corp. of South Florida manages a business incubator in a business park next to FAU.

To be eligible to lease a space in the incubator, said Executive Director Jane Teague, businesses must form a relationship with FAU and use students as interns or faculty on their advisory boards.

"There are six companies that physically reside in the incubator," she said, "but we assist close to 200 a year through our mentoring program."

The 15-hour mentoring program, which is free, is structured as a clearinghouse to make introductions between fledgling entrepreneurs and local business leaders, she said, "and then it's up to them."

Ms. Teague said Enterprise Development is a partner in a \$30 million state grant awarded to three Florida universities to develop a "center of excellence" specializing in biomedicine and marine biotechnology.

The University of Miami offers a concentration in entrepreneurship in its School of Business, said Phil Needles, a lecturer of entrepreneurship.

In addition, he said, UM last year inaugurated a competition to give students more practical experience in entrepreneurship. Contestants write and present business plans for actual ventures they hope to pursue. After evaluation by panelists from the business community, he said, three monetary prizes and some honorable mentions are awarded.