Schools’ costs, ratings low

The state’s business schools finish mostly in the lower half of Business Week’s rankings.

BY HELEN HUNTLEY
Personal Finance Editor

The business schools at Florida universities may not rank among the nation’s elite, but at least they’re a bargain.

Only the University of Florida school landed in the top half of Business Week’s latest rankings of 93 undergraduate business programs and the University of South Florida was dead last.

But when it comes to cost, paying about $3,000 in tuition at a Florida public university looks pretty good compared with $30,000-plus at about a third of the ranked programs.

“The good thing about being in a ranking like that is that it tells us many of the dimensions we need to work on,” said Robert Forsythe, dean of the College of Business at USF in Tampa. He said that with 455 accredited business colleges in the country, just being included in the rankings is a plus. “Last year we weren’t even asked for data.”

» See SCHOOLS, 2D

Best in the state

Here’s how Business Week ranks Florida’s undergraduate business programs:

43. University of Florida
47. University of Miami
77. Florida State
80. Florida Int’l University
90. University of Central Florida
93. University of South Florida

The nation’s top 10:

1. University of Pennsylvania
2. University of Virginia
3. University of California, Berkeley
4. Emory University
5. University of Michigan
6. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
7. University of Notre Dame
8. Brigham Young University
9. New York University
10. Cornell University

SCHOOLS from 1D

USF aims to improve with recruiters

One place USF wants to improve: The median starting salary for its business graduates is $35,000, tied for last place with the University of Kentucky. At Florida International University, it’s $45,000. Forsythe said USF also is working on its rankings with recruiters.

“We want to make sure the people who are hiring our students are more satisfied with their new hires,” he said. He said feedback from employers shows graduates need better writing skills.

Forsythe said that starting next fall, business students will get communication grades as well as content grades on some assignments in each course.

The March 19 issue of Business Week gave high marks to strong accounting programs at USF, UF and Florida State. It ranked the University of Pennsylvania as the nation’s best undergraduate business program.

Helen Huntley can be reached at hhuntley@stpetetimes.com or (727) 893-8230.