Dean says he has raised standards at FIU’s business graduate school

BY SHERRI C. RANTA

Author, consultant and educator Jose de la Torre hopes to take Florida International University’s Alvah H. Chapman Jr. Graduate School of Business to the top of the business-academy rankings.

Mr. de la Torre, dean of the school since July 2002, said he is using his global contacts and expertise from his 30-year career to reorganize the school and make it more competitive in attracting top students and faculty.

“We want to be recognized as one of the top schools in the country and the region including the whole of the Americas. We feel in order to do that, we need to attract the best-quality students,” he said.

Mr. de la Torre is a former faculty member at the University of California-Los Angeles’ Anderson School of Business, author of more than 40 books and articles on international business and consultant to multinational companies such as Johnson & Johnson, British Petroleum and Heineken.

In one year, he has restructured FIU’s strategy to emphasize marketing, raise admission standards and expand international agreements linking its graduate business programs to other universities. Requiring students to have higher grade-point averages and Graduate Management Admission Test scores as well as previous business expertise were recommended after a year-long study, Mr. de la Torre said.

“We’ll ratchet up gradually standards for admission over the next four to five years. We started in the fall,” he said. “You will see slightly lower enrollment than last year but much higher quality.”

About 1,000 students are expected to attend FIU’s graduate business programs in the fall to study accounting, business administration, international business, finance, human resources, information systems and taxation. The graduate school also offers international, executive,