

Business class projects provide faculty, students with an international perspective

Just as commerce has spilled across continents and defied arbitrary divides, some Boise State business students and faculty have helped to erase borders for a handful of Idaho-based businesses.

Nancy Napier, a professor of international business, and Nina Ray, a professor of marketing, coordinated the efforts.

Through a project with a university in Germany and the two units within Boise State that support small firms, four Idaho firms now have links with more than 60 German students who conducted research on potential markets near Heidelberg and beyond for their products. The Boise-Heidelberg marketing project involved four clients at Boise State's TECenter business incubator and the Idaho Small Business Development Center.

Last fall a class of international marketing students from the Applied Sciences University at Heidelberg conducted market research for the companies. They talked by video conference and e-mail, the firms shipped product samples, and the students wrestled with how to find information, figure out what it meant for the firms, and present their recommendations in English to the American managers.

"The project is a perfect example of the ways that international relationships among universities can have benefits far beyond student or faculty exchanges," Napier says. Students administered surveys, interviewed potential buyers for the products and collected information on local trade fairs and other marketing avenues.

"Much of the information is not Internet-accessible so having their on-the-ground expertise, language skills and energy was invaluable for the firms," Napier says. "Idaho may win by having firms that grow, employ more people, and become known far beyond the U.S."

The relationship began in July 2004 when professors from Boise State and Heidelberg

met in the German town and sealed plans to collaborate. Since then, a Heidelberg student has joined Boise State's MBA program, Napier coached a student marketing course in Heidelberg, a Boise State student signed on for an internship in Germany, a Heidelberg professor gave a guest lecture in Boise about Wal-Mart's problems in Germany, and a Heidelberg professor will teach a summer school course in Boise on "Doing Business in Europe."



Boise State international business professor Nancy Napier, on the screen, and her students communicated with their German counterparts in this Heidelberg classroom via teleconference.

In a separate effort, Ray's class got involved in finding ways to market Idaho's products in Chile. Her international marketing class worked jointly with students at a university in Temuco, Chile, who also were charged with finding ways to market Chilean products in Idaho and the Pacific Northwest.

A Boise State alum, Patrick Dungan, now teaches at the university in his native country and worked with Ray to develop the idea. The students worked in teams and shared knowledge via e-mail to devise business plans.

"In some instances the preliminary parts of the BSU students' plans are so good that their companies really could use them to begin the decision of marketing a product in Chile," Ray says. She adds that future class projects may include working with faculty and students in Northern Ireland.

— Sherry Squires

STATE BOARD APPROVES TWO NEW MASTER'S PROGRAMS

Two new master's degree programs at Boise State were recently approved by the State Board of Education, and both programs will begin enrolling students this fall.

The programs include a master of science in hydrologic sciences and a master of education in educational leadership. The university now offers 70 master's degree programs, three Ph.D. programs, one Ed.D. program, 11 graduate certificate programs and 97 baccalaureate degrees.

The MS in hydrologic sciences formalizes a research focus and set of electives that have long been part of the university's existing MS program in geology.

The new master of education in educational leadership will graduate candidates who qualify for certification as school principals by the state of Idaho and who will be highly qualified to perform new leadership functions required in today's educational systems.

DONATION ADDS TO COLLECTION

Recently discovered documents that chronicle the life of Idaho adventurer Robert Limbert have been donated in Limbert's name to the Special Collections division of Boise State's Albertsons Library.

The donation is the byproduct of *Among the Craters of the Moon, the Life and Adventures of Robert W. Limbert*, a documentary by photographer/filmmaker Steve Wursta that premiered earlier this year.

The 60-minute film features never-before-seen photographs and documents that highlight Limbert's adventures and the impact he made on Idaho.

In 2004, Wursta began conducting research on Limbert for a short film on his life. His work filled in many missing aspects of Limbert's life and it greatly expanded the scope of the film. Wursta donated the new documents to the Albertsons Library, which are now housed with the rest of its Limbert collection.