

MOTOROLA SPONSORS IPD COURSE

STUDENTS GAIN HANDS-ON PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

Motorola will be the corporate sponsor for the 2006-2007 Interdisciplinary Product Development (IPD) course, a two-semester curriculum that integrates the latest technologies and best practices for innovative product development. The company has committed \$50,000 and could possibly provide additional funds for more research as the class progresses. Ray Roman, a 1988 CBA graduate in Finance, Business Advisory Council member and senior vice president of worldwide sales for Motorola's mobile devices business was instrumental in bringing building the relationship between Motorola and the CBA.

The IPD course combines industrial design, mechanical engineering, and MBA/marketing students from all three colleges to work together in cross-functional teams to research and develop new product concepts. Though the exact project for next year has yet to be chosen, Al Page, professor of marketing, expects the Motorola project will be a mobile communications device.

For students, the IPD experience is invaluable. "They start functioning more effectively as a team and gain a heightened awareness of what it takes to develop a new

product in an interdisciplinary way," comments Page. They also learn to communicate with a common language, employ research methods to identify problems and opportunities for new products, discern ways to screen out the best potential products and then test ideas on consumers. The research eventually leads to the development of a prototype.

The course has been running since 2002 and was developed to allow students

The experience has helped former students launch careers. According to Page, three students have been hired by client companies and about one dozen have gotten jobs in product development. "Their resumes showed interdisciplinary cross-functional teamwork, which is very valuable," he adds.

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to gain experience in the current real-world approach to product development. It's a method in which professionals from multiple disciplines work in concert to design products and bring them to market.

Throughout the course, students also have regular interactions with clients, make presentations to them, and build relationships with them. "With the client involvement, the students have an authoritative source for getting questions answered and get a much richer, more rewarding and realistic experience than they could possibly get if no clients were involved," Page comments.



Al Page
Professor of Marketing

BIZ


SPRING 2006

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS ABOUT WHO'S DOING WHAT, WHEN AND HOW.

this issue

*Alumni Can Be
Tangible Assets for Students*

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A close-up portrait of Velma Butler, a Black woman with dark hair and glasses, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark top and a large hoop earring.

Velma Butler
President, Velma Butler
and Company Ltd.

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