

Campus

Tuesday, October 2, 2001

THE BATTALION

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BUSINESS

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communications coordinator for the dean of business administration.

Graduate students in Mays pay approximately \$4,252 per year for in-state tuition and fees, Gerbig said.

Robertson said he and other administrators agree with this kind of ranking and push for other credible rankings.

"Recruits for our MBA program are not all directly out of undergraduate school," he said. "Most of them have been in full-time jobs an average of five years, so this kind of ranking is a very healthy way to look at the program."

The average salary for students graduating with a MBA from A&M is much higher than the amount of money spent on tuition and fees, on average, Robertson said. He said the gain from salary compensates for a high percentage of the expenses.

Robertson also said that the MBA program at A&M ranked highly because it offers a different approach to the traditional business program. Students are

divided into permanent teams of five for a semester with about seven teams per class, resulting in a small instructor-to-student ratio and allowing for teamwork.

"This allows for healthy competition across teams," Robertson said. "There are several right answers to many business problems or questions, and each team and teammate can present and challenge each other with different alternatives with disadvantages and advantages."

The teams are diverse, with students from 21 different countries, Robertson said.

"This allows students to analyze business decisions from different cultural perspectives, since different countries can have very different business relations and culture," he said.

The team project design allows for an environment more like an actual business environment, he said.

"Business recruiters and students who have worked full time before tell us that the program is very similar to business organizations and prepares them well," Robertson

said.

Joel Oswald, a first-year graduate student in the MBA program at Mays, worked for five years in the business workforce before attending graduate school. He chose A&M's business program because "they seemed to really care about me as an individual student," he said.

"I can say firsthand that [the classes] are very similar to how a lot of workplaces operate," Oswald said. "It's a much richer learning experience; when working with others you can draw on their strengths and work better, together. It's a real life experience."

Rankings like those in Forbes examine what an MBA program does for a student beyond other "beauty contest" blanket ratings that are based on graduate school admission requirements, Robertson said.

"If I could talk to individuals applying to MBA programs, I would encourage students to look at rankings like this that consider the outcome of the program rather than what it takes to get into the program," Robertson said. "It's a means

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