

Big Changes for HSU Business School
by Courtney Hunt-Munther, The Eureka Reporter
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Students at Humboldt State University's School of Business may notice something different happening in the department this semester — something that may help boost the school's enrollment and support its programs.

The school is starting a new student-run investment program, and its new partnership with local business plan competition Economic Fuel is spurring developments within the department.

Dr. Saeed Mortazavi, the chair of HSU's business department, said a dream of his is finally being realized with the debut of the school's "Student Managed Investment Fund" this semester. The program will allow students to manage a portfolio and use it for a variety of different investments.

The program will teach students basic portfolio management and selection skills, as well as how to enhance asset development, Mortazavi said.

A sum of \$7,500 has been collected to begin the fund, and students will be responsible for making sure it grows each year. Eventually, Mortazavi hopes the fund will grow to \$50,000 or \$100,000, at which point the department could begin offering undergraduate scholarships.

"My hope is that through fundraising activities, we will be able to get more funds and we will be able to reach that goal much faster," he said.

To help bolster support for both the School of Business and the student-managed investment fund, the department has organized several fundraisers, most notably its first annual golf tournament, which is scheduled for Friday at Baywood Golf & Country Club in Arcata.

Local businesses and former alumni have been invited to participate in the event, which will include golf, dinner and a silent auction, and individuals can contribute by sponsoring a hole for \$100. A foursome of golfers costs \$400 (covering golf and dinner expenses), and those wanting to attend only the dinner can buy a ticket for \$40.

All proceeds will benefit the HSU School of Business and will support student activities like the investment fund program, scholarships and student trips to the international business simulation competition in San Diego.

Another significant development for the business department is its recent partnership with College of the Redwoods and Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge. Both schools are now active partners in the competition, serving as hosts to many of its "Entrepreneurial Tuesday" events and providing support for students interested in entering a business plan.

For its part, the department is adding new branches to its core tracks of study, including small business management and sustainable business management, in addition to focusing on entrepreneurship in its Master of Business Administration program.

"We know that most of the businesses that start here are small businesses, and it will help individuals that are trying to start small businesses. As a result, this community will experience a much higher rate of economic growth," Mortazavi said.

Mortazavi expects enrollment in the department to increase with a greater variety of programs available for students.

For more information about developments at the HSU School of Business or Friday's golf tournament, phone Mortazavi at 707-826-3846 or Gina Pierce at 707-826-3224.