



NELSON RUSCHE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

# RUSCHE REVIEW

## » HIGHLIGHTS



Ribbon-cutting ceremony



Phi Beta Lambda sweeps state conference



School of Accountancy scholarship awards



2015-16 Faculty Awards

## INAUGURAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES TO FEATURE JEB BUSH AS SPEAKER



A. Nelson Rusche

SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business recently announced the establishment of a new lecture series.

In 2002, SFA's College of Business was named in honor of A. Nelson Rusche, who endowed the college with a generous gift, which provides scholarships to students majoring in business and also supports other programs, including a distinguished lecture series.

The Nelson Rusche Distinguished Lecture Series is scheduled to premiere Nov. 3, and according to Dr. Tim Bisping, dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business, the series will provide opportunities to bring scholars and business leaders to the SFA campus to discuss relevant issues.

"The series will convey to our students and other members of the SFA and Nacogdoches communities ideas, insights

and knowledge they might otherwise be unable to obtain without considerable expense," Bisping said. "It also is a wonderful way to highlight the Nelson Rusche College of Business and our exceptional programs, students, and faculty and staff members."

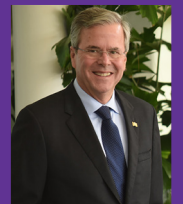
Bisping said Rusche, who graduated from SFA in 1949 with a bachelor's degree in business administration and served on the university's Board of Regents for three years, had a clear vision for the series.

"Although I never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Rusche, I have learned a great deal from others about his integrity and desire to help SFA students succeed, and I am honored to have the privilege of bringing his vision to life," Bisping said.

Bisping added the impact of Rusche's generosity and guidance cannot be understated.

"The resources he made available to help attract and retain top students, provide special student-learning opportunities and pursue other crucial initiatives have allowed us to build upon the excellent programs already in place within the Nelson Rusche College of Business," Bisping said.

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush will serve as the guest speaker for the Nelson Rusche Distinguished Lecture Series. Bush will discuss various topics focusing on leadership and business issues. Bush was elected the 43rd governor of Florida in November 1998 and re-elected in 2002 to become the state's first two-term Republican governor. He is the son of former U.S. President George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush and the brother of the 43rd U.S. President George W. Bush.



"Mr. Bush's business acumen combined with his extensive policy experience should yield a unique perspective attendees will find both interesting and useful," said Dr. Tim Bisping, Dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business. "His substantial and varied leadership background will be especially beneficial to SFA students as they work toward achieving their academic and professional goals."

Born in Appleby, Texas, Rusche served in the U.S. Army during World War II and received a Purple Heart for his service with the 43rd Infantry Division in New Guinea and the Philippines.

In 1951, Rusche purchased his first Gulf Oil service station and later became a commissioned agent. The A.N. Rusche

Distributing Co. grew to be a 250-million-gallon-a-year distributor—Gulf Oil's largest customer. Rusche later expanded his business to include automated car washes and convenience stores.

His distributing company received numerous awards and honors from the Texas Oil Marketers Association, now

known as the Texas Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association. He served as president of the association and was active in the Past Presidents' Association. He was honored with the E.K. Bennett Award in 1996, making him the association's "Man of the Year."

Rusche passed away Sept. 17, 2013.

## ONLINE BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE PROGRAM RANKED AS ONE OF NATION'S TOP 50

The online Bachelor of Business Administration degree program within SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business is ranked among the top 50 best online undergraduate business programs in the nation, according to College Choice, an independent online publication dedicated to helping students discover the right college.

The publication recognized SFA as the 28th best program in the nation based on the university's reputation and affordability.

The online degree program began at SFA in fall 2011 after several years of working to create the courses, said Dr. Susan Jennings, online program coordinator and adviser at SFA. Jennings said she is pleased with the recognition and proud of the program.

SFA's online Bachelor of Business Administration degree program allows students who have completed required courses to finish their general business degree through web-based classes.

The general business major includes courses selected from various academic disciplines within the Nelson Rusche College of Business. The program provides students who are limited by time and distance with an option to complete their degrees.

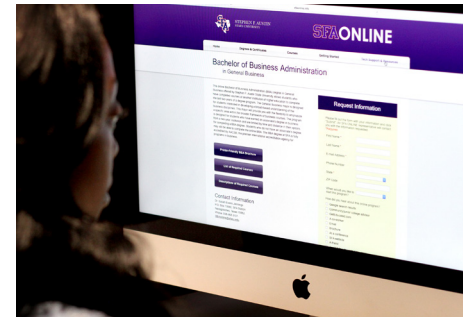
"This program is designed to help students complete their degree in a non-traditional setting," Jennings said. "Having been a non-traditional student myself in obtaining my undergraduate

degree, I am an advocate for this type of program."

SFA senior Morgan Toney, who is currently enrolled in the online program, also praised its benefits.

"This program has not only saved me money and time, but it also allowed me to stay home and take care of my kids before they started school," Toney said. "I wouldn't have been able to attend college for years had this program not been available to me. It offers people the opportunity to get a good degree from a respected business school, and it allows them to work around their schedules, families and jobs. It's a gift because not everyone can drop everything and drive to a campus."

The degree is fully accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, the longest-serving global association dedicated to advancing management education worldwide.



## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Greetings, and welcome to the summer edition of the Rusche Review! We had an outstanding spring semester in the Nelson Rusche College of Business, and I appreciate your interest in taking time to catch up on the latest happenings.

In this edition of the Rusche Review, you will find information on the many recent accomplishments of our students and

faculty members who continue to stand out at state, national and international levels. You also will read about the progress of various initiatives designed to further advance our Learn, Launch, Lead strategic focus, including the very successful conclusion to the first year of our Student Success Passport Program.

We also are pleased to announce we will be launching the Nelson Rusche Distinguished Lecture Series in the fall with Former Florida

Gov. Jeb Bush as our inaugural speaker. This lecture series will be a great asset to our students, and we are excited to have set Nov. 3 as its official launch.

While I have mentioned a few examples of the progress being made within the college, I am confident that as you read more about these and other accomplishments of our students and faculty and staff members, you will be as pleased as I am with all that is happening in the Nelson Rusche College of Business. I also believe you will see exactly why we are so excited for the year ahead. Good things are happening, and so much of it is only possible due to the generous support of our alumni and friends.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best Regards, and Axe 'Em, Jacks!

**Tim Bisping, Dean**

## STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAS SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

Hundreds of students in SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business are taking part in a unique program designed to help them sharpen their professional skills while competing for scholarships.

Since its launch in October 2015, the Student Success Passport Program has hosted events ranging from career fairs to etiquette workshops aimed at introducing students to varying aspects of the professional business world. Dr. Tim Bisping, dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business, said he's pleased to report the program is proving successful.

"I am proud of the effort put forth by our students, student-services staff members and faculty members," Bisping said. "The program was little more than an idea last summer, and in just one year, it has become an integral part of the college and an important means by which we can advance our mission."

The Student Success Passport Program provides a formalized strategy for student leadership development and career launch. Bisping notes helping students graduate and transition into successful careers is central to the college's mission.

"Everything we do is focused on academic excellence and ensuring that our students are ready to launch successful careers," Bisping said. "It is important graduates of the Nelson Rusche College of Business are not only knowledgeable in their academic areas, but also possess additional skills that position them to become leaders within their chosen fields."

The Student Success Passport Program provides students with opportunities to enhance their skills and develop personal and professional branding, experiential learning, leadership development, and engage in college activities and events.

Students who have declared majors within the Nelson Rusche College of Business are automatically enrolled in the program but participation is voluntary. The program works on a point system where students create portfolios of activities in Desire 2 Learn, the university's online course-delivery system, and accumulate points for participation in projects and event attendance.

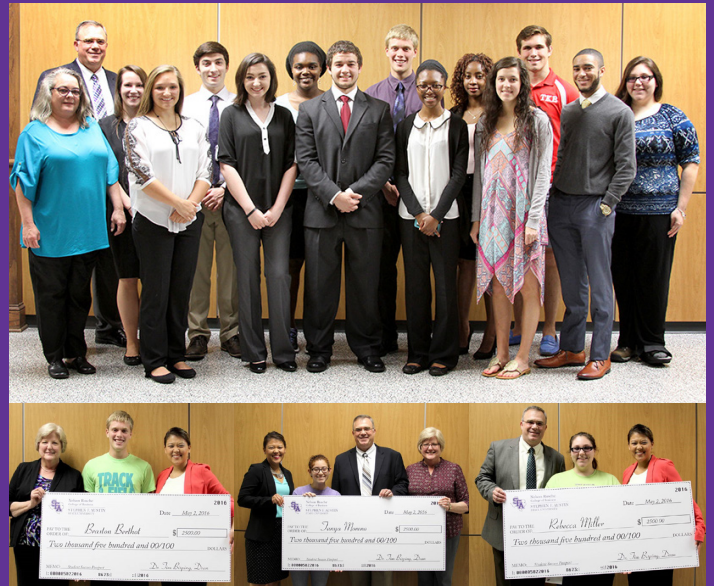
For example, in February, the Student Advisory Council organized a mock career fair where students earned points for practicing 30-second elevator speeches and having their résumés critiqued by professors in preparation for a career exposition.

Additionally, the college organized the College-to-Career Conference, which featured sessions and speakers from across the state representing companies such as Southwest Airlines, Mattress Firm, Edward Jones and Wells Fargo, and students earned points for each session they attended.

At the end of each semester, scholarships are awarded to students with the most points. During the 2015-16 academic year, the Student Success Passport Program awarded \$50,000 to top program participants.

"A generous gift the college received has allowed deserving, hardworking students the opportunity to earn tuition money," said Dr. Ann Wilson, associate dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business. "The program allows students to participate in experiential learning activities in the classroom that help them apply theory to practice. The scholarship funds also provide students the opportunity to compete in business subjects against other business students in state and national conferences."

In the fall, the Nelson Rusche College of Business awarded a \$2,500 scholarship to Ana Romero, an international business major from Nacogdoches, and 10 seniors each received \$1,000 as runner-ups.



*Clockwise from top:*

During the 2015-16 academic year, SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business awarded \$50,000 in scholarships to top performing students in the Student Success Passport Program. In the spring, the college awarded 30 runner-up scholarships for \$1,000 each to 10 freshmen, 10 sophomores and 10 juniors. Also, the college awarded three top scholars \$2,500 each: Rebeca Miller, a junior international business major from Houston; Tayna Moreno, a sophomore international business major from Houston; and Braxton Berthot, a freshman general business major from Douglass.

In the spring, the college awarded \$2,500 to three top scholars: Braxton Berthot, a freshman general business major from Douglass; Tanya Moreno, a sophomore international business major from Houston; and Rebecca Miller, a junior international business and economics major from Houston.

The college also awarded 30 runner-up scholarships in the spring for \$1,000 each to 10 freshmen, 10 sophomore and 10 junior business students.

"It was definitely a surprise, and I'm very honored to receive this," Berthot said. "Whenever I had free time, I would go online and complete small-point projects, such as building a résumé, submitting a cover letter and completing sessions."

This fall will mark the first time the college will be able to introduce the program to freshmen at orientation.

"I am looking forward to integrating the program into the orientation process so professional development and career success become integral to the goals and aspirations of all of our students, starting from the first moment they arrive on campus," Bisping said.

# SFA HONORS DONORS DURING RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY

Three ribbon-cuttings held in SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business made history in January. According to President Baker Pattillo, it was the first time three ribbon-cuttings had been held in one day at the university.

The ceremony marked the official opening of three new features within the college—the Mattress Firm Commons, the Marleta Chadwick Student Financial Advisors Suite and the Mark T. Layton Lobby.

Donors and representatives from each group were in attendance, and Pattillo credited each group with making the renovations possible.

"These renovations have been a dream for many people for many years," Pattillo said. "Because of the generosity of some of our alumni and friends of the university, we were able to move forward with this project."

The renovations on the first and second floors of the building began in summer 2015 and align with the college's strategic focus, said Dr. Tim Bisping, dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business.

"One of the wonderful things about SFA and the Nelson Rusche College of Business is everything we do is about the success of our students," Bisping said. "We have a new mission with a strategic focus within the college—Learn, Launch, Lead. We want our students to learn the material they need to be successful. We want to help them launch successful careers, and we want them to become leaders in their fields."

The Mattress Firm Commons creates an environment that fosters collaboration and teamwork. Amanda Robbins, director of talent acquisition and retention for Mattress Firm, spoke on behalf of company CEO Steve Stagner, a 1991 SFA marketing graduate who was instrumental in creating the commons area.

"This building is very near and dear to my heart. I've spent many hours on this campus, not only as a student, but also here attracting and acquiring top talent," said Robbins, who also is an SFA graduate. "SFA has really been one of the main pillars of success in our company."

Robbins said during her time as an employee, Mattress Firm has grown from 300 stores to 3,500 stores nationwide.

"SFA is one of the universities that helps us achieve that success and growth," Robbins said. "The Mattress Firm Commons supports the learning environment and collaborative space we have at Mattress Firm. It's very exciting to see and be a part of. We hope the building will foster a lot of learning and hopefully more Lumberjacks will join Mattress Firm."

The Marleta Chadwick Student Financial Advisors Suite honors the late Marleta Chadwick of Center and houses space



*The Mattress Firm Commons serves as a meeting area for students in the Nelson Rusche College of Business and was supported through funding by Mattress Firm CEO Steve Stagner, a 1991 marketing graduate of SFA.*

*The Marleta Chadwick Student Financial Advisors Suite is home to SFA's Student Financial Advisors, who provide free financial advice and money management tips to students and community members.*



*The Mark T. Layton Lobby honors a 1974 SFA graduate. During his career at Deloitte's North Texas office, Layton developed expertise in corporate governance, risk management, regulatory compliance and financial reporting, and led an initiative in recruiting other SFA graduates to join the firm.*

for a student group dedicated to providing free financial advice and money management tips to SFA students and Nacogdoches community members. Marleta Chadwick's children, David Chadwick, Carleta Sandeen and Martha Lou Scott, were in attendance for the ceremony.

"Mother was one who never wanted the limelight or spotlight. We walked into the lobby and the suite is exactly where mother would be—in the corner," David Chadwick said. "There is no mistake of its simplicity, and there is no mistaking that Marleta Chadwick is in the building. We are so grateful that you acknowledged her, and for what you are doing to prepare East Texas and our whole country for the future."

The final ribbon-cutting of the day honored Mark T. Layton, who earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1974 from SFA. A letterman on the Lumberjack football team, Layton is a licensed Certified Public Accountant and joined Deloitte, where he developed financial expertise with significant experience in corporate governance, risk management, regulatory compliance and financial reporting.

"Mark Layton served in many senior leadership roles at Deloitte, including his role as

managing partner of Deloitte's North Texas office," said Jason Downing, Deloitte North Texas managing partner and also an SFA alumnus. "As a fellow SFA graduate, it gives me a great sense of pride to see Mark's legacy celebrated in the university that prepared both of us for our business careers at Deloitte. We commemorate Mark's retirement by dedicating the Mark T. Layton Lobby to the students who will walk these halls for generations to come."

Layton led an initiative at Deloitte to recruit and hire SFA business graduates. Many of his friends and colleagues, in honor of his loyalty and dedication to his profession, made contributions that allowed the lobby to be named in his honor.

"When you walk into the Mark T. Layton Lobby and throughout these renovated areas, you see professionalism," Bisping said. "When our students walk out as graduates, land their first job and walk into a professional environment, it will not be foreign to them."

Bisping said the college will continue the renovation project on the third and fourth floors of the McGee Building. He described these areas as blank canvases that can be utilized to further the college's mission.

## RECENT GRADUATE PASSES ALL SECTIONS OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING EXAM

Staring at the computer screen, her pulse quickens, and her nerves jolt with anxious excitement. The countdown has begun, and in a matter of seconds, she will know her results. Three ... two ... one—numbers appear on the screen, and she's in disbelief—she passed.

A recent SFA graduate, Tiffany Craven, is the first student in the Gerald W. Schlief School of Accountancy's Master of Professional Accountancy program to pass all four sections of the Certified Public Accountant licensing exam while still an SFA student. The School of Accountancy is housed in SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business.

"Passing all sections of the CPA exam is a major accomplishment. However, Tiffany passing all sections prior to graduation is phenomenal," said Dr. Treba Marsh, interim director of the School of Accountancy. "Tiffany can begin her professional career with this major goal accomplished. She sets a new standard of excellence for our current and future accounting students."

Craven, a native of Santa Fe, Texas, participated in SFA's five-year accounting program, which awards the Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Professional Accountancy simultaneously. She said waiting a month for her test results was a nerve-wracking experience, but seeing her passing scores made it worthwhile.

"When I saw my results, I really didn't



believe it, especially since I wasn't sure about one of the sections," Craven said. "I had to double-check the numbers for my test score."

The Texas State Board of Public Accountancy oversees the CPA exam. The exam is divided into four sections: financial accounting and reporting; regulation; auditing and attestation; and business environment and concepts.

"Tiffany is a rare jewel of a student who will experience great success in life," said Dr. Kelly Noe, assistant professor in the School of Accountancy.

In order to be an exam candidate, one must have completed 150 college hours, including 30 advanced hours in accounting. After passing all exam

sections, candidates also must take and pass an exam on the TSBPA rules of professional conduct followed by a TSBPA-approved ethics continuing education course.

Additionally, candidates must have worked under the supervision of a licensed CPA for a period of one year with a 2,000-hour minimum. After all the requirements are met, candidates take the oath of office.

Craven worked as a graduate assistant for SFA's audit services since August 2014 under the supervision of Gina Oglesbee, SFA's chief audit executive.

"Tiffany has a strong work ethic. She comes to work every day with the intention to add value to our department," Oglesbee said. "Her dedication and diligence is inspirational and evidenced by her passing all parts of the CPA exam as an SFA student."

During her time working with Oglesbee, Craven assisted with and performed compliance, financial, operational and other audits.

"Tiffany was held to the same high standard as other SFA audit staff members for performing work in compliance with auditing standards," Oglesbee said. "She leaves us as a fully trained staff auditor."

Craven is working as a tax associate with Weaver, an assurance, tax and advisory firm in Houston.

## PHI BETA LAMBDA SWEEPS STATE CONFERENCE, 13 STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR NATIONALS

Members of SFA's professional business student organization, Phi Beta Lambda, won 13 first-place awards in various competitions during the 2016 PBL State Leadership Conference in Dallas.

In addition to their record-breaking number of awards, 13 students qualified for the annual National Leadership Conference in multiple events, which Henry Dunn, PBL faculty adviser and lecturer of general business at SFA, said is the university's largest qualifying group in the organization's history.

"This accomplishment is phenomenal. Each year we have competed, we have qualified for nationals. And, every year we have attended nationals, we have brought home at least one top-10 award," Dunn said.

During the State Leadership Conference, students compete in events that test their business knowledge and skills. These



Members of SFA's professional business student organization, Phi Beta Lambda, won 13 first-place awards in various competitions at the 2016 PBL State Leadership Conference in Dallas, and 13 students qualified for the annual National Leadership Conference.

competitive events include objective tests and/or performance-based activities.

Kristi Clifford, SFA junior business communications and corporate education major with a minor in economics, placed first in organizational behavior and leadership at the state conference.

“I was so happy to place,” Clifford said. “Going to nationals is such a fun experience for the chapter. We had 13 first-place awards, so it really shows that when you attend SFA, you’re getting a quality education, and that means so much.”

During the conference, Clifford also was elected Texas PBL president for the 2016-17 academic year.

“This organization has given so much to me, and I can’t wait to give back,” she said.

The SFA PBL chapter also was awarded the President’s Volunteer Service Award, which recognizes individuals and organizations for outstanding community service. The SFA chapter performed more than 500 hours of community service last year.

Additionally, the chapter received the 2015-16 National Action Awareness Award.

Dunn also was named the Texas PBL Adviser of the Year.

“I was totally surprised because I don’t do this for personal accolades. To me, this recognition is a testament not of my abilities or work, but to the accomplishments of this chapter and its members,” Dunn said.

To date, organization members have qualified for 66 events at the national level.

“This is one reason we are affiliated with Phi Beta Lambda. It gives students an opportunity to not only showcase their talents on a national scale, but also to travel,” Dunn said. “Many of these students have never been on an airplane or traveled to locations like Anaheim, California; Nashville, Tennessee; or Chicago, Illinois.”

The national conference has an average of 1,500 to 2,000 students compete from schools throughout the U.S.

## MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL ORGANIZE MOCK CAREER FAIR



Members of the Student Advisory Council, a student ambassador group, organized a mock career fair in February to help SFA students prepare for the actual career and internship expo, which was held later in February on campus. Several consultation

booths were available giving students opportunities to have their résumés reviewed in one-on-one sessions with faculty members, discuss appropriate professional dress and practice their 30-second elevator pitches.

## STUDENTS CREATE ANIMATED CHARACTER FOR AMERICAN FUEL AND PETROCHEMICAL MANUFACTURERS

He’s green. He’s lovable. He’s Oil Drop Oliver, and he’s helping more than 20 undergraduate SFA students increase awareness about the fuel, petrochemical and natural gas industries and the jobs and products associated with them.

Oil Drop Oliver was born at 8 a.m. on a Friday during a marketing, advertising and promotion class in SFA’s Nelson Rusche College of Business. Made of felt and polyester stuffing, Oil Drop Oliver serves as a lovable character that is clean and green.

Dr. Marlene Kahla, SFA professor of management, marketing and international business, explained how Oil Drop Oliver is part of a student-led project for the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers Recruitment Challenge. The students’ efforts resulted in the team placing fourth in the competition and receiving a \$500 grant that SFA’s American Marketing Association chapter will put to good use. The fourth-place finish also contributed to SFA’s AMA chapter receiving the Outstanding Chapter Plan Award.

In an effort to enhance its workforce development outreach activities and focus on attracting and preparing potential employees for the refining and petrochemical industry, AFPM collaborated with EdVenture Partners—an organization dedicated

to developing innovative industry-education partnership programs—on a national college-student-based recruitment challenge.

While conducting primary and secondary research through focus groups and interviewing millennials from science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs, SFA students and community college students, the data suggested people have a negative perception of the fuel, petrochemical and natural gas industries and viewed these industries as dirty.

The students created Oil Drop Oliver with the help of Dr. Mary Olle, an assistant professor in SFA’s School of Human Sciences, who sewed him together, to help alleviate the negative perceptions that often exist with the industry.

According to the students, Oil Drop Oliver helps cut through conversations to get to the call to action: “What’s so crude about oil and natural gas?”

The students’ idea for the project is to shed a positive light on the petrochemical and natural gas industries through

communication with millennials using the animated character and social media.

“This project taught us how to work together as a class while under deadlines and pressure and how to create an effective advertising campaign that will hopefully help how people perceive the fuel, natural gas and petrochemical industries,” said Shakiria Wheat, junior strategic communication major at SFA.

In addition, the class created two promotional videos for the project and designed T-shirts.



More than 20 undergraduate students enrolled in a marketing course taught by Dr. Marlene Kahla, professor of management, marketing and international business at SFA, competed in the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers Recruitment Challenge.

## SFA ALUMNUS MEETS WITH HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CLASSES

Trevor Smith, an SFA alumnus and benefits implementation manager at Aon Hewitt—a leading global provider of risk management, insurance and reinsurance brokerage, and human resources solutions and outsourcing services—visited SFA to meet with human resource management classes within the Nelson Rusche College of Business.

“We are very grateful when alumni such as Trevor return to SFA to hire fellow Lumberjacks,” said Dr. Marcus Cox, SFA assistant professor in management, marketing and international business. “Aon Hewitt is a global leader in human resource management, and in recent years, they have hired some of our top



Trevor Smith

business graduates.”

During a lecture and Q&A session, Smith, who has worked for Aon Hewitt for approximately 16 years, presented an overview of the company, discussed the company’s work culture and internship opportunities, and advised students on résumé writing.

“As the Nelson Rusche College of Business grows its new human resource management major, we anticipate building on this important relationship with one of the top firms in the industry,” Cox said.

SFA’s Nelson Rusche College of Business began offering its new human resource management major in fall 2015.

## MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM VALUABLE, AFFORDABLE

The Master of Business Administration program at SFA is ranked in the top 50 most affordable M.B.A. programs in the nation, according to Top Management Degrees, an online business education career guide.

“The M.B.A. program at SFA is very affordable, especially compared to many of our competitors around Texas and the U.S.,” said Dr. Mikhail Kouliavtsev, Master of Business Administration program director. “We aim to serve business professionals in the East Texas region, providing them with the tools, knowledge and credentials to either jumpstart or advance their careers.”

Dr. Tim Bisping, dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business, agrees the program is not only affordable, but also has great value for students.

“I am happy to see that our M.B.A. program has received this important recognition,” Bisping said. “The excellent curriculum, combined with top faculty members and affordable tuition, certainly makes our program an excellent value.”

Top Management Degrees analyzed more than 500 schools accredited in the U.S. by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, according to PR Newswire.

Kouliavtsev explained this accreditation is the most prestigious international accreditation organization and it is a distinction shared by about 700 universities worldwide. In order to receive the accreditation, faculty members, curriculum and other academic aspects of the business programs must maintain a high standard.

Currently, there are approximately 40 students enrolled in SFA’s Master of Business Administration program in the Nelson Rusche College of Business. While many of the courses are offered online, the majority of the program is delivered in the traditional classroom format, Kouliavtsev said.

“We find our current students prefer the in-class interaction with classmates and faculty members to the strictly online format, but online delivery of our program is something we continue to explore for the future,” Kouliavtsev said.

Most of the M.B.A. classes are offered in the evening, allowing professionals to continue to work while pursuing their education. The degree is flexible, meaning students can choose the pace at which they want to complete their degree. Applicants who hold a bachelor’s degree and meet admission standards

are accepted into the program regardless of their undergraduate major.

Also, each student’s degree plan is customized to his or her background. Students are required to take 30 semester hours of core courses. Electives can be tailored to meet the student’s interests or career. Kouliavtsev said many students have opted for a study abroad experience to fulfill elective requirements. Students also can branch out and enroll in courses outside of the Nelson Rusche College of Business that will complement their skillset.

“Our M.B.A. program reflects the Nelson Rusche College of Business’ student-centered mission with the program’s flexible course offerings and customized degree plans,” Bisping said. “Our goal is to equip students to become leaders in their chosen careers, and this program is one of the tools we are utilizing to help our students be successful.”

## GERALD W. SCHLIEF SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY AWARDS APPROXIMATELY \$250,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

SFA’s Gerald W. Schlief School of Accountancy presented more than 100 awards and scholarships totaling approximately \$250,000 to students during its Accounting Awards Banquet in April.

“We are fortunate to have so many supporters of the accounting students in the Gerald W. Schlief School of Accountancy. Each year, supporters enable us to award a larger number of scholarships and a greater dollar amount to the students,” said Dr. Treba Marsh, interim director of the Gerald W. Schlief School of Accountancy. “The scholarships allow many of our students to graduate without taking on student loans.”

Scholarships awarded included those from SFA’s Office of Development, the SFA Alumni Association, accounting firms, industry, faculty members, friends, Texas State Board of Public Accountancy, Texas Society of Public Accountants, Financial Executives International, Petroleum Accounting Society of Houston and more.



# EXCELLENT EDUCATORS: 2015-16 FACULTY AWARDS

Congratulations to our 2015-16 faculty members who were recently recognized for their commitment to students.



**DR. JUSTIN BLOUNT**

**Assistant professor of business law**  
Distinguished Faculty Award



**DR. MARCUS COX**

**Assistant professor of management**  
Marlin C. Young Teaching Excellence Award



**JAMIE DERRICK**

**Assistant director of human resources and adjunct professor of management**  
Outstanding Adjunct Teaching Award



**DR. MIKHAIL KOULIAVTSEV**

**Professor of economics and chair of the Department of Economics and Finance**  
Teaching Innovation Award



**DR. TREBA MARSH**

**Professor of accounting and interim director of the Gerald W. Schlieff School of Accountancy**  
Distinguished Service Award



**DR. RYAN PHELPS**

**Associate professor of economics**  
Outstanding Intellectual Contribution Award



**DR. MARK SCHAUB**

**Associate professor of finance**  
Outstanding Researcher Award



**DR. NIKKI SHOEMAKER**

**Assistant professor of accounting**  
Outstanding Service/Experiential Learning Award



## RECORD NUMBER OF MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANCY STUDENTS RECEIVE PINS DURING CEREMONY

SFA's Gerald W. Schlieff School of Accountancy held its largest Master of Professional Accountancy Pinning Ceremony in May with approximately 30 students receiving pins.

The pinning ceremony, which originated in May 2015, honors the school's graduate students. This semester's event, coordinated by Dr. Nikki Shoemaker, assistant professor of accounting, recognized May and August M.P.A. graduates.

"The pinning ceremony honors our students and their accomplishments while also giving the faculty and staff members an opportunity to meet the students' families and friends," Shoemaker said.

Dr. Kelly Noe, assistant professor of accounting, served as the master of ceremonies. Dr. Tim Bisping, dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business, and Dr. Treba Marsh, interim director of the Gerald W. Schlieff School of Accountancy, both addressed attendees.

A presentation featuring photographs and short biographies of each graduate highlighted the student's individual accomplishments as they received their pins.



## REESE INVOLVED IN NACOGDOCHES COMMUNITY

Dr. Jason Reese, SFA assistant professor of marketing, is involved in serving the Nacogdoches community. His work is an excellent example of Nelson Rusche College of Business faculty members engaging the local community to the benefit of all.

Reese is completing his first term on the Nacogdoches Convention & Visitors Bureau board of directors. As a board member, Reese has worked alongside city officials and community members to help restructure the CVB to focus more on sales and marketing. In addition, Reese serves as the chair of the board's marketing committee, which recently coordinated two large-scale projects: coordination of a website's redesign and a branding initiative. He also is a member of the newly formed Nacogdoches Sports Advisory Council. He was heavily involved in the conceptualization and formation of the council that will work to attract overnight sporting events to Nacogdoches.

Reese also is the vice president of individual development for the Nacogdoches Jaycees. The Jaycees are a group of leaders who work on projects to benefit the community. Reese has volunteered for events such as the Red Dirt Mud Run, Freedom Fest, Turkey Smoke, Haunted House and the Nacogdoches Professional Rodeo. In addition, he is chair of the Boots and Brew Organizing Committee, which will be held Sept. 17 in downtown Nacogdoches.



## MARKETING PROFESSOR'S STUDENTS COMPETE IN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Several students received awards for their research efforts during the Undergraduate Research Competition.

Held annually, the campuswide competition encourages professors to submit projects completed during the academic year by one or more current students.

Dr. Joe Ballenger, SFA assistant professor of marketing, teaches marketing research and regularly submits projects to the competition, which become a major part of students' final grades. He also serves as an adviser to student groups entering the competition.

"Generally, clients from on campus or the local community are involved in the projects," Ballenger said. "The clients usually want to know more about their target markets, current and future customers. This query fits into our class requirements quite nicely. After the research is completed, the clients are invited to class to hear the student's oral reports about their research. Client feedback has been extremely positive about the quality of the projects."

More than 100 submissions were entered in the spring competition. Four of Ballenger's student groups received awards.



### Project names, clients and students

- ❖ The Nacogdoches Senior Citizen Center: What do patrons think of it?
  - Client: Tammy Blank
  - Students: Emily Poris, Marisa Salazar and Josh Shoulders
- ❖ Image of Brick Oven Pizza according to the customers and other students on the SFA campus
  - Client: Candace Hartsell
  - Students: Nemanja Bilc, Cary Ray and Brandi Mathis
- ❖ Image of the Health Center on the SFA campus according to SFA seniors
  - Client: Dr. Penny Jeffery
  - Students: Brandon Gray and Justin Seitz
- ❖ Image of the Grove Apartments according to those who currently live there
  - Client: Maurice Ruth
  - Students: James Davoli, Andrew Krenek and Jeremy Pounds