October 10, 1989

SVSU To Go High Tech
with MBA

SVSU initiated an MBA program a dozen years ago and has enrolled nearly 1,500 area students in MBA courses to date. Since most students were employed, classes are scheduled evenings and occasionally weekends to accommodate the typical work schedule.

This fall SVSU is offering an alternate way to participate in the program, according to Dr. James L. Mitchell, dean of the College of Business and Management. He says the new option will make it possible for people whose working hours or location make it impossible for them to attend classes at SVSU, or for that matter, any college or university, to secure the coveted degree.

"We have contracted with the Electronic University Network (EUN) of California to offer three MBA classes this fall, three in the winter of 1990 and two in the spring/summer session," Mitchell said. The program makes coursework available on a self-paced basis to students who have access to a personal computer.

While the concept may conjure up images of the old correspondence school system, Mitchell is quick to point out that the modern version is much different. Computer technology allows for much greater interaction between student and professor, and may in fact allow students taking a course to communicate directly and quickly with each other. Furthermore, students can be electronically linked to libraries and other learning resources.

"Distance learning utilizing telecommunications is an emerging technology," Mitchell says. "It will be commonplace by the year 2000. Computers provide another mode of transferring knowledge -- education -- from professor to student."

The cost of delivering the traditional mode of education is becoming too high, Mitchell believes, adding impetus to the move toward alternate "classrooms." He expects computer networked learning situations to become common "five or ten years down the line."

EUN has been delivering college courses to distant learners for some six years, Mitchell says. Instructors and students are linked together by modem to EUN's main frame computer. EUN has the software and support personnel to make the system operate successfully. Potential students need only to

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have access to a personal computer at home or at work. And EUN isn't fussy about what computer -- IBMs, compatibles, Macintoshes or Commodores can be accommodated.

The cost of tuition ($270 per semester credit hour -- usually supported by employer) allows the students and professors to use the network without paying phone toll charges. Lessons can be picked up from the network and completed at the student's convenience. If there is a question about assigned material, help is as close as the keyboard. Questions can be entered into the system, and the instructor will post the answer. Frequently asked questions become part of a "bank" available to all students.

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Once a completed assignment has been electronically transmitted, the instructor will correct, edit and grade the student's work and notify the student when he or she can move to the next lesson.

Final exams will take place in a controlled environment, Mitchell says, with exact details yet to be worked out. He notes that, while EUN is responsible for providing software and technical advice for operating the program, SVSU faculty are responsible for course content and design. "The intent is to maintain the same high standards we have set for our traditional MBA students," he says.

In fact, criteria for admission to the electronic version of the MBA program are identical to those for the more traditional on-campus program: prospective students must have completed an undergraduate degree with a grade point average of 2.5 or above and must have a satisfactory score on the Graduate Management Admission Test.

Goals will be the same for both traditional and EUN students, Mitchell states. "We are offering EUN as an extension of our current program."

Mitchell and EUN officials anticipate that students signing up for the electronic classes will come from all across the U.S. -- and perhaps from other nations. To date, General Motors, Ford, AT&T and many other corporations have endorsed the concept for employee education and offer tuition reimbursement. Other employers are expected to follow suit.

Enrollment for the first year of the program will be limited to 60 students, Mitchell says. Not to worry that fall semester already is under way, he points out. The technology allows students to begin and end classes on a flexible basis, so fall applications still are being accepted. Students are limited to six months maximum to complete each course, but may move faster if they wish.

Even before the Oct. 27 "EUN Showcase" that publicly announces the program, SVSU/EUN boasts its first enrollee. "I suppose you could describe her as our typical student at this point," Mitchell jokes. "She is an AT&T employee who lives in Apopka, Florida. She had started work toward an MBA several other times and could not finish her degree because of transfers.

"She is fully credentialed, with a 3.5 undergraduate GPA and a score of 694 on the GMAT, which places her in the 99th percentile." If her experience with the computer-supported plan of study is successful, she will be proof that electronic learning at the graduate level is an idea whose time has come.

**College of Education Steps Up Accreditation Efforts**

The College of Education's national accreditation project is moving ahead as scheduled, according to Dr. Ervin Sparapani, accreditation coordinator and associate professor of education. On Sept. 28, the Preconditions Documentation (consisting of seven separate volumes) left the University for the accreditation office in Washington, D.C. The 10 preconditions must be met before the college can apply for accreditation and a site visit.

Sparapani said that due to the efforts of many people throughout the University, the College is confident it will successfully meet the preconditions and be approved for a site visit, possibly in spring 1991.

"The faculty in biology, chemistry, English, history, mathematics, physical education, physics and reading education worked especially hard during the 1988/89 academic year to write and develop their teacher education curricula," Sparapani said. "Now, each has a program consistent with expectations of each discipline's national association.

"The College of Education appreciates the participation of those faculty and looks forward to working with other faculty colleagues in the next phase of the accreditation process," he added.

This academic year the College is writing its institutional report. To begin that process, a workshop took place on Sept. 22. The workshop, conducted by Sparapani and Dr. Robert Roth, accreditation consultant, focused on development of program models for teacher education and educational leadership and the knowledge base that supports the models. The workshop was well received.
Honorary Degree Nominees Sought

Each year at Commencement, SVSU awards honorary degrees to individuals of particular distinction. President Eric R. Gilbertson is seeking nominations from the campus community for people deserving of an honorary degree. Nominations will be taken to the Board of Control in December and recipients will be announced in April. All nominations should include supporting documentation.

Honorary degrees are awarded to individuals who exhibit one or more of the following characteristics: a record of outstanding achievement in one's vocation or avocation; strong support for higher education; special distinction in activities designed to improve the quality of life; philanthropic support for education and, in particular, for SVSU.

Nominations should be sent to the President's Office.

Nominations Being Accepted for Who's Who

Nominations for students for Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges will be accepted from SVSU faculty and staff until 4:30 p.m., Oct. 27 in the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs.

A screening and selection committee, chaired by Richard P. Thompson, dean of student affairs, and including members of the faculty, staff and student body, will make the selections from nominations to be forwarded to Who's Who.

Each year, SVSU's representatives to the Michigan Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities' Outstanding Student/Faculty Award ceremony are selected from Who's Who recipients.

In order for a student to be considered, he/she must have a grade point average of at least 2.5; have obtained junior, senior or graduate level status; and have curricular and extracurricular achievement.

Briefly Speaking

-- Program Board will host educator and high school principal Joe Clark for a lecture to begin at 8 p.m., Oct. 10 in the Ryder Center.

Clark recently was featured in the film Lean on Me.

-- The Saginaw County College Day/Night Program, featuring representatives from more than 40 institutions, will take place from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 6:30 to 9 p.m., Oct. 11 in the Ryder Center.

-- Two discussions will take place Oct. 11 in Lower Level Doan in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. Beginning at noon, a panel of area business people will discuss *Hispanic Entrepreneurship in Saginaw.* At 12:45 p.m., a discussion of *El Zocalo,* Saginaw's new enrichment center, will begin.

-- The Entrepreneurs Club will discuss *Pitfalls to Avoid in Running a Family Business* at 6 p.m., Oct. 11 in Lower Level Doan.

-- Alma sculptor Carrie Parks-Kirby will discuss and show slides of her work during a reception at 6 p.m., Oct. 18 in Room 112 of the Arbury Fine Arts Center. Parks-Kirby's works include life-sized ceramic figures depicting situations between people.

Across Campus

-- The campus community extends its condolences to Mrs. Sharon Carlin on the death of her brother, Robert "Bobby" Sequin on Sept. 29. He was 23.

DOWNFIELD -- Freshman quarterback Sean McEvoy tosses the ball during SVSU's Homecoming contest against St. Joseph's College (Ind.) Saturday. McEvoy successfully completed four of five passes for 45 yards and had a three-yard touchdown run in the Cards' 55-47 loss.
Faculty/Staff Directories Available

Included in today’s issue of The Interior is the Faculty/Staff Directory. Faculty and staff members who did not receive a copy of the directory or desire additional copies should contact the Mail Room at ext. 4278.

Incorrect or outdated information should be reported to the Personnel Office, ext. 4112.

Professional Profile

-- Dr. Jennifer Bridges, assistant professor of physical education, recently participated in the Midwest American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Leadership conference at Pokagon State Park in Angola, Ind. Bridges served as a representative of Michigan on the legislation committee.

-- An article by Dr. Jean Brown, professor of teacher education, appeared as the lead article of "Books for the Junior High Years," in Vol. XV, No. 2 of Focus: Teaching English Language Arts. Brown's article was titled "Literature for Middle School Students: Meeting the Needs of Students in Transition." The National Council of Teachers of English has accepted the Focus issue for national distribution through its publications. The issue also will be included with books distributed to all participants in the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents workshop in Baltimore at the annual fall NCTE conference.

-- Dr. Susie Emond, professor of teacher education, has been selected as the University representative on the 35-person task force appointed by the Board of Education of the Midland Public Schools. The task force will meet twice a month for the next two years to study elementary instruction and make recommendations for program change or modification. The task force will discuss "The Elementary Curriculum: Focus 1991."

-- Dr. Douglas Hansen and Dr. Elaine Stephens, both professors of education, conducted a workshop for Carrollton Public School teachers on problem-solving through cooperative learning groups.

-- Ms. Barbara Quirk, certification officer for the College of Education, has been appointed as a research fellow at the Michigan State University Institute for Research in Teaching.

-- Dr. Carol Ellis, assistant professor of English, recently had a collection of poems accepted by the Dominion Review and the Connecticut River Review. In addition, she presented a poetry reading recently at the University of Louisville, Kentucky.

High Five

-- The football team dropped a 55-47 homecoming decision to St. Joseph's College (Ind.) on Saturday, setting the Cardinal record at 1-3 overall. The Cards will play at Northwood Institute Oct. 14 for the 14th annual Axe Bowl.

-- The men's cross country squad finished second in the Road Runner Invitational in Dowagiac on Friday.

-- The women's cross country team finished fifth in the same invitational. The Lady Cards' Becky Duda was first overall with an 18:15 clocking. The men and women will compete at Grand Valley on Oct. 14.

-- The volleyball squad on Friday won at Northern Michigan, but lost to Michigan Tech on Saturday. The team hosts Wayne State tonight.

-- The tennis team beat Grand Valley, 7-2, on Friday then lost to Ferris State, 9-0, on Saturday.
Monday the SVSU Board of Control conducted its first regular meeting since newly appointed President Eric Gilbertson took office. It was also the first meeting at which Dr. Basil Clark represented the SVSU Faculty Association. The meeting was conducted by Board Vice Chairperson Joyce Woods, the first occasion she had led the group in a full business session.

In a relatively brief action session, board members approved the annual financial audit for the 1988-89 fiscal year. The financial statements by Ernst & Whinney, CPA, will be placed on reserve in the library.

Renewal of a $2,500,000 line of credit with Michigan National Bank for a two-year period also garnered Board approval. The line of credit has been in place for several years, according to Vice President for Administration and Business Affairs Jerry A. Woodcock, but only has been used on one occasion. He said the purpose of the instrument is to handle temporary cash flow problems, such as the situation several years ago when state payments were deferred. The credit line will not be used to fund deficits, Woodcock said.

The Board granted an easement to Consumers Power Company to continue its work of moving electrical towers located at the north end of the football field to an area farther north. Woodcock said the document granting the easement had been reviewed by Director of Engineering Services Robert Hanes and by SVSU's general legal counsel.

Completing its action agenda, the Board adopted a modification clarifying the University's financial conflict of interest policy. The new statement specifies that "no company or firm in which an employee of Saginaw Valley State University or any member of such employee's immediate family holds an ownership interest of five percent or more shall be considered a vendor eligible to do business with the University." The interpretation was needed to avoid "even the appearance" of impropriety, President Gilbertson said. He noted that the eligibility limit is consistent with policies at Michigan's other public universities.

President Gilbertson informed board members that an N.C.A. team will be on campus for a focused visit in February 1990. The visit was recommended in 1987 by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, a sub-unit of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In February 1987 the Commission approved SVSU's continuing accreditation for a seven-year period, with the recommendation that a focused evaluation be made of the relationship between faculty and administration in the 1989-90 academic year.

President Gilbertson noted that he has begun a series of monthly meetings, which will continue throughout the year, with the faculty. He said the meetings have no set agenda, but are generally aimed at heading off potential problems.

In addition, he said that the Faculty Association executive committee will be part of an Oct. 20 retreat including many of the University's administrative staff. The retreat, he said, is for the purpose of plotting an agenda to address major issues.

Another retreat in the planning stages will involve the Board and top administrators in a goal-setting session. President Gilbertson suggested that an outside facilitator may be utilized to conduct the retreat. He is exploring that possibility with Dr. Joseph Kaufman of the University of Wisconsin, who frequently monitors such planning sessions.

Dr. Albert Beutler, chairman of the inaugural committee, reported that inauguration ceremonies for President Gilbertson are scheduled for 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 28. Classes will be dismissed from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. and students will be encouraged to attend. Invitations to the event, scheduled in the Ryder Center, will be mailed to campus and external groups in the near future.

At Dr. Gilbertson's request, the ceremonies will not be lavish and will be supported by a very modest budget. Mrs. Woods commended the president for his fiscal restraint, but urged that all activities be presented in a manner that upheld the dignity of the institution.

Board members briefly discussed plans for the annual joint meeting with Delta College's Board of Trustees and for a possible off-campus meeting. For the past several years, the October meeting has been conducted at an off-campus site in SVSU's service region. Because this month marked the first meeting during President Gilbertson's tenure, the group elected to stay on campus. Midland was suggested as a possible site for a winter-month meeting.

President Gilbertson briefly updated board members on the status of
various on-going fund-raising efforts. There were a series of special projects that began in the mid-80s. At this point, approximately $200,000 has been raised toward a goal of $550,000 for library books and materials; $356,000 of a desired $550,000 for student financial aid (total includes endowed scholarship funds); $371,000 toward a goal of $800,000 for engineering program operations and equipment; and $1.2 million toward a goal of $3 million for athletic awards and a new sports stadium. In addition, $284,000 in unrestricted funds have been contributed. Dr. Gilbertson said he had been meeting with directors of the Foundation to discuss the next steps in the fund-raising efforts.

Registrar Paul Saft reported fall enrollment figures showing 5,915 students registered for fall classes. That represents slightly less than one percent increase over fall 1988 enrollment. Credit hours are up by 1.1 percent to 56,615 semester hours. Saft noted that there was a significant increase in the percentage of students coming from Midland County. He pointed out that slightly fewer men signed up for fall classes, but that decrease was more than offset by the larger number of female students. Likewise, there were more students under age 25 and slightly fewer who were age 25 or older.

President Gilbertson pointed out that, while enrollment patterns were generally healthy, the number of "first-time-in-college" (FTIC) students was down somewhat from last year, even though the number of admitted students was up. Dean of Student Affairs Richard P. Thompson said a phone survey would be conducted in an effort to determine why persons who had been admitted chose not to attend. The information is expected to be useful in making decisions about when or if to close admissions, or whether any other modifications might be needed.

President Gilbertson remarked that he has experienced a "whirlwind six weeks" at the SVSU helm. He said he was pleased at the warmth of campus and community response and the "reservoir of goodwill" he had experienced. While his initial expectation was to employ a six-month study period before making major decisions, he found it impossible to delay some decisions for that time period. It was necessary to address the budget situation almost immediately, he said, and he has taken several steps to reduce expenditures. The situation will be reviewed in March, with a possible "defrosting" if revenues permit.

He also has worked with SVSU administrators to set priorities for the capital outlay request, which must be presented to state officials this fall. The Business Innovation and Professional Development Center will again be listed as SVSU's top priority, but plans for the center are being modified. The request initially included space for a bookstore and a student union, but these will be deleted because they must be self-liquidating and would create an unacceptable debt assumption at present. Instead, a revised proposal calls for a theater-auditorium which can serve as a teaching facility replacing the old theatre. That structure, originally an outdoor summer theater converted for year-round use, is in need of costly repairs.

Note: This is an unofficial report of Board activities. Official minutes are on file in the library.