

The efforts for technology entrepreneurship at Baylor have been approved as a strategic initiative of the University.

The Technology Entrepreneurship Initiative seeks to make a campus-wide and global impact through an international, multi-disciplinary approach. This initiative will further experiential learning for Baylor undergraduate and graduate students by establishing partnerships among schools within Baylor, other universities, companies, and countries around the world.

Greg Leman, director of University Entrepreneurial Initiatives and the Curtis Hankamer Chair in Entrepreneurship, is spearheading Baylor's technology entrepreneurship efforts. Leman said the initiative is a "win-win" situation for students and companies.

"This initiative is driven from the wonderful reality that technology companies – whether Fortune 100 or research-based startups – need the very things our student teams can provide through our hands-on learning approach," Leman said. "More specifically, these firms and entrepreneurs almost always have more opportunities identified than they have resources to validate fully."

Baylor's Immersion Into International Interdisciplinary Innovation (i5) program is one aspect of the initiative that has already proven to be successful. The i5 program is a collaborative effort among universities in China and the United States: Baylor University, American University, Thunderbird University, University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, and Hong Kong Baptist University.

Baylor's Hankamer School of Business and Baylor's School for Engineering and Computer Science hold a bilateral partnership in the program, with students and faculty from both schools

participating. Over the summer, undergraduate and graduate students from all participating universities work in China on project teams for five weeks, interacting and partnering with Chinese companies to provide real business solutions.

Leman said students have a much "richer, more transferable educational experience" by engaging with the firms and completing market research and other investigations. Leman hopes to offer this experience to science students as well, adding them to the mix of business and technology students.



TECHNOLOGY ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE PROMOTES EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



www.baylor.edu/baylori5

Contact Greg Leman at Greg_Leman@baylor.edu



"My goal is to broaden the current scope of the initiative to enable all science, technology and business students who desire it to have experienced the process and excitement of assisting a technology venture in bringing a value-adding innovation to market," Leman said.

MBA candidates have the chance to be selected as an intern in one of the partnering multinational corporations, which sponsor the projects, and then lead an international team to complete that project. Undergraduate students with a business or engineering background have the opportunity to work on one of these international projects, gaining in-depth, cross-cultural experience.

Preston Sneed, a 2009 i5 MBA intern, said the i5 program was an invaluable and unique experience.

"The i5 program provides students with an opportunity to better understand how business works on the global stage, and this is invaluable from the perspective of a MBA candidate," Sneed said. "The opportunity to meet prominent businesspersons, visit various corporations, travel throughout the country, observe the Chinese people, and broaden

one's horizons are just some of the benefits the program provides to students."

With the i5 program established in China, Leman hopes to expand the program to include other regions of the world as well. This global expansion would begin with partner companies in South America and grow to include Europe, Russia, and the Middle East/Africa.

Another effort supporting technology entrepreneurship at Baylor will be the renovation of the former General Tire facility in Waco to house the Baylor Research and Innovation Collaborative (BRIC), the first project of the newly created Central Texas Technology and Research Park. This technology entrepreneurship focus will benefit graduate education at Baylor by creating hands-on learning opportunities for MBA candidates.

"As i5 grows into a global program with parallel offerings all around the world, one of the desired outcomes is to attract a diverse set of entrepreneurial firms to Waco to be incubated in the new BRIC business incubator," Leman said. "Along with many Texas-grown ventures, these firms will not only impact our local economy but also create a learning laboratory for all aspects of technology development and commercialization for our students to experience. We want all our graduates to be globally aware, technology savvy, value creators who have the experiences and accomplishments to prove it."



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