

SWOSU Students Participate in New Sales Shadow Program

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During the 2016 summer session, 32 graduate and undergraduate students had the opportunity to gain hands-on, real-world experience in their Sales Skills and Management course at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford.

In addition to typical textbook readings, PowerPoints and discussions, the students earned points for shadowing sales experts in their fields. The students came from a variety of academic backgrounds and included majors in marketing, health care administration, management, pharmacy, psychology and organizational leadership.

Each student was encouraged to identify a sales mentor who could guide them through gaining a better understanding of the sales aspects of their industry. Students identified mentors from a broad set of career fields ranging from real estate and banking; pharmaceutical sales and physical therapy; restaurants and food manufacturers; retail clothing and fashion design; as well as interior design and new home construction.

“In our first year it was great to have a diverse group of students working together in the sales shadow program,” said SWOSU Marketing Professor Dr. Amanda Evert. “They brought a wealth of industry specific knowledge to each discussion, which enabled students to deeply consider the sales concepts in a variety of fields.”

Evert said the format of the course was online and had students selecting mentors from a wide geographic area including California, Nevada, Kansas, Texas, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland and of course Oklahoma. The program empowered students to work together to see the real-world implications of the sales concepts and prepare for their future careers.

SWOSU MBA student Gentry Rogers said studied the restaurant business.

“This experience was eye opening and confirmed even more to myself that I have a passion for this type of work and want to pursue this type of industry in my career,” Rogers said.

Evert’s focus on the real-world utility of the course concepts included encouraging the students to focus on key concepts of sales including developing a selling philosophy as well as relationship, product, customer and presentation strategies and finally the impact of management in sales.

The SWOSU Summer Sales Shadow program is currently scheduled again for 2017 for both graduate and undergraduate students from all academic majors.

“It is very rewarding to have completed our first summer with so many success stories,” Evert said. “I am hopeful the program will continue to grow as students seek out opportunities for real-world learning. I want students to leave the course with a competitive advantage that includes a strong understanding of the applications of the lessons they learn at SWOSU.”