

ISU begins MBA for Boone, Hendricks

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education on Friday approved a request from Indiana State University to begin offering a professional master's of business administration degree in the Indianapolis area.

ISU will begin offering the degree program in the fall semester of 2011. It's geared toward underemployed individuals, junior professionals who aspire to rise within their companies to executive ranks, and those looking to return to the workforce after an absence or layoff.

Students will complete their studies in six consecutive 10-week semesters. Courses will require students to meet in face-to-face sessions five to six times throughout the semester and classes will be taught by full-time, Terre Haute-based, tenured or tenure-track faculty.

C. Jack Maynard, ISU's provost and vice president for academic affairs, told commissioners earlier this month the

university has chosen to offer the program in the vicinity of Hendricks and Boone counties because of the interest expressed by potential students and business leaders located in the area just west of Indianapolis.

"Employers have told us their employees are not being served," Maynard said. "There are no programs like this in the region, and our College of Business is a premiere college that is well positioned to do this."

ISU officials are considering one of two possible locations to house on-site classes - the Plainfield Community School Corporation's Transportation Facility in the Plainfield Industrial Park, and the Fire Territory Building in Brownsburg.

Now that ISU can officially begin to market the program, Jeff Harper, interim associate dean for graduate programs in the Donald W. Scott College of Business,

said there's much work to be done.

"We'll begin now the process of recruiting and marketing to make it known that we are available to working professionals in Hendricks and Boone counties," he said.

Despite the distance between the Terre Haute campus and the Indianapolis area where courses will be taught, Harper said faculty are interested in the idea of teaching the sorts of students this program is likely to draw.

"We did a very similar program in the late 90s and early 2000s, and it was an exhilarating thing for our faculty to be involved with," Harper said. "They will have the opportunity to engage with professionals and they are very excited about that prospect."

Harper insists the learning environment will be equally beneficial for students.