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North Island College to offer Dual Degree Program with Université Paris 13

Business Students to Benefit from International Opportunities

Beginning September 2010, an innovative new program at North Island College will offer Business Administration students unique educational opportunities in International Business. NIC President, Jan Lindsay and Michel Roux, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business at the Université Paris 13 recently signed an agreement to implement a dual degree program between the two institutions.

“This is an exciting opportunity for our students!” declares Nick Robinson, Business Administration Instructor at NIC. “Students typically come to NIC with a focus on employability. The international experience that this program offers, coupled with the opportunity to study in French, will open many doors for our students.”

Students may choose to study Management Sciences or Banking, Finance and Insurance while in Paris. One of the unique aspects of the dual degree program is the opportunity to study retail banking and insurance, as few Canadian institutions offer this type of program. Students who choose this option at Université Paris 13 will find themselves uniquely qualified in a competitive job market.

In pursuing the dual degree option, NIC students complete three of the four years of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree at NIC. They will take two semesters in either their 3rd or 4th year at the Université Paris 13. Students will graduate with both a BBA degree from NIC and an *Economie et Gestion Licence* from Université Paris 13. As their studies in Paris will be in French, students who pursue this opportunity will require strong French language skills. Some students will already have these skills when they enter the program, while others will acquire them at NIC in the first two or three years of the program.

Richard Stride, NIC's Dean of Academic programs notes, "This is a very innovative program – one of the few dual degree options of its kind in North America. Students who have taken French immersion programs now have the option of extending their high school immersion experience to the academic challenges of a French degree."

The dual degree program arose from a project sponsored by the Government of Canada and the European Union that encouraged Canadian and European colleges and universities to form partnerships and collaborative relationships. NIC joined with St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish NS, and the University of Quebec at Montreal as well as the Université Paris 13, the Warsaw School of Economics and the International School of Management in Dortmund, Germany to exchange students and develop curriculum. These six institutions now jointly run import/export exercises in which teams of students from Canada and Europe work together on real business projects using email, face-to-face meetings, and video-conferences. Based on the relationship that developed over the course of this project, Université Paris 13 approached NIC with the idea of offering a dual degree.

NIC students Michael Hey and Sarah McIlroy have already had the opportunity to study in Paris as part of the import/export project. "A highlight of studying in Paris was getting to know students from many other European countries, each with their own perspective. We also made a friendship with a couple of Francophone Canadians from Montreal; months later we continue to correspond," notes Hey. "The exchange really stretches one's understanding of culture and global trends, and offered me a more worldly view of business," he adds.

While studying in Paris, NIC students will pay tuition to North Island College. Université Paris 13 offers student residences located close to the campus at reasonable rates. NIC students would be responsible for their living expenses while in Europe.

"This is a true exchange model. While NIC students have the opportunity to study in Paris, students from Paris will be coming to study at NIC. This means that all of our students will benefit from the international experience," says Robinson. "North Island College students will gain value from having European students studying alongside them. The opportunity that a program like this creates to share ideas among both students and faculty takes education a whole step further."

Further information about the Business Administration program can be found at www.nic.bc.ca. For more information about the dual degree program, please contact Instructor Nick Robinson in the Comox Valley at 250-334-5000 ext 4125, or in Campbell River at 250-923-9758.

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