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Ouachita News Bureau

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OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS



For immediate release

Ouachita's Hickingbotham School of Business extends global AACSB accreditation

By Julia Shands

June 30, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—The Hickingbotham School of Business at Ouachita Baptist University has extended its global accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The accreditation was ratified by the AACSB international board of directors in February after a peer review process that took place during the fall semester.

The Hickingbotham School was originally accredited by AACSB in 2002. The program requires accredited universities to undergo a continuous improvement review every five years.

“AACSB accredits business programs that are committed to continuous improvement, and they want to see innovation, engagement and impact,” said Bryan McKinney, dean of the Hickingbotham School of Business and university counsel at Ouachita. “So, we must demonstrate to AACSB those things—that we are in a process of continuous improvement. And we demonstrate a variety of ways that our program is innovating, as well as engaging and impacting the world around us.”

Ouachita is among the smallest business schools in the world to have earned AACSB accreditation and remains the only private college or university in Arkansas with this distinction, according to McKinney.

“It’s always rewarding to be affirmed by peers for excellent work,” said McKinney. “Our peer review team was composed of deans of other AACSB-accredited schools. They reviewed our program very thoroughly and gave us some helpful suggestions to work toward during our next five-year continuous improvement review cycle.”

He added that the AACSB global accreditation benefits both faculty and students, because “The best business school faculty members want to work in AACSB accredited programs, so it’s a significant recruiting and retention issue for faculty members. Additionally, the AACSB stamp of approval puts Ouachita’s business school on a level playing field in comparison to other top programs. So, as a student applies for graduate schools, their undergraduate degree will be immediately respected. It’s just the hallmark of excellence in the industry.”

The accreditation would not be made possible without the work and determination of the Hickingbotham School of Business faculty and staff.

“Achieving and maintaining AACSB accreditation is no easy task,” McKinney said. “Our team has worked phenomenally hard to do the things necessary to maintain this accreditation.”

The executive advisory board has also played a major role in sustaining the accreditation.

“They have supported the school in phenomenal ways, beginning decades ago when a group of business leaders came together to dream about the possibility of a school of business existing on Ouachita’s campus,” McKinney said. “This accreditation is due in large part to their vision casting and support along the way.”

To learn more about the Hickingbotham School of Business, contact Bryan McKinney at mckinneyb@obu.edu or at (870) 245-5513.