University of Bridgeport Offers New Degree In IDEAL Program

FAIRFIELD COUNTY, Conn. – The University of Bridgeport has developed a new Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies for its IDEAL Program, and is offering an online option.

The Professional Studies degree provides students with organizational leadership, technical and analytical skills and communication and professional development skills. Students can concentrate in Healthcare Administration, Human Resource Administration or Organizational Leadership and Change.

“We contacted a lot of different corporations and talked with Human Resource managers,” said Michael Giampaoli, Dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. “They gave us feedback on the skills and requirements they were looking for in a bachelor’s degree. They were looking for people with writing and communication skills and quantitative skills. We wanted a degree program that addressed those. It will help students get a leg up on their profession.”

Career opportunities for students who earn the degree include medical and health services manager, health care project manager, nursing home manager, human resources associate, human resources coordinator, retirement plan manager, operations manager and administrative services manager.

“It’s attractive for students because we’re able to transfer in a lot of credits from previous colleges,” Giampaoli said. “We have a liberal transfer policy. We also have personalized academic advisors. They stay with the student through the whole program. The faculty members we employ are pros in the field. They’ve seen their theory applied in the workplace.”

The University of Bridgeport’s IDEAL program is an accelerated degree completion program for students ages 23-and-up. Students can choose from evening, weekend and online accelerated courses.

“I think the online option appeals to some students because it allows them flexibility,” Giampaoli said. “They don’t have to travel in winter, or if they’re distant from campus. They can complete a degree and still engage with faculty and get peer to peer learning.”

The new degree program will be offered at the UB’s campuses in Bridgeport, Stamford and Waterbury. The degree requires 120 credits, including 21 in the Areas of Concentration.

A faculty advisory board created the curriculum for the new program, which is also offered at some other colleges around the state.

“They gave us feedback on what would round out a particular concentration and helped us construct a rounded out curriculum that would satisfy a general area of administration,” Giampaoli said. “Someone who completes that concentration will relate directly to those certifications that exist in the marketplace.”

Giampaoli said when new degree programs are created, the school writes up the curriculum and submits it to university leaders for approval. The state also approves it before it is offered to students.

All of the concentration areas are in growing fields, which should help students who invest feel more confident that they will land jobs associated with their new skills.

“These are areas that are emerging,” Giampaoli said. “For workers who are practicing as counselors or social workers, they find that they want to move up and manage. This will give them an opportunity to do that.”