Executive education goes global
Some institutions expand online presence
By Paul Michna
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Loyola University’s Quinlan School of Business believes business is global and its studies should be the same.

That’s why it’s offering the Intercontinental MBA program starting in the fall of 2013, when students can study in Asia, Latin America, central or Eastern Europe or South Africa.

“There’s a big demand for it,” said Kathleen Getz, dean of Loyola University’s Quinlan School of Business. “Any number of universities are trying to develop programs that are different from our competitors. It’s our bread and butter and something that serves the students.”

MBA and executive educational programs at universities throughout the area are expanding or initiating programs for global business studies, creating new degrees for accounting or covering other major areas, such as supply chain management to accommodate the needs of both students and future employers.

With numerous global corporations dotting the suburbs, universities see that MBAs can no longer remain traditional, and they need to open up new areas of studies and provide more online opportunities, experts said.

Universities are striving to educate in every way possible, bringing the classroom across the globe or across the Internet, to meet the needs and schedules of students. Such blended learning, a combination of different types of classroom-based and technology-based instruction, is becoming more mainstream in executive education, according to a report released by the International University Consortium for Executive Education, a consortium of 97 business schools worldwide, including Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, Notre Dame, Harvard and others.

“Blended learning has become a valuable and innovative component of executive education that extends the learning experience and moves it closer to the work environment” UNICON Chairman Bill Shedden said in a statement.

The new international Quinlan MBA program is blending many of those elements to expose students to different cultures and races and ways of doing business.

“Some international studies are more tourism than work,” said Getz. “We want these students to work. They’ll develop an affinity for how business is done in different places.”
The program also offers an element of excitement, and a measure of uncertainly, when going into a foreign country. Students will learn how businesses today are manufacturing, selling and sourcing across the globe, she said.

Loyola also is featuring the new supply chain management masters in science degree and already 10 students have enrolled for this fall. The program digs deeply into how companies do business across their supply chains.

“We’re always looking to tweak our curriculum,” Getz said.

At National Louis University, which has campuses in Lisle and Wheeling, the so-called front-end classes on economics and other business-related topics have been added to help students better prepare for the MBA, said Walter Roettger, dean of NLU’s College of Management and Business.

“Some students don’t come from an undergrad degree in business, so they aren’t as fully prepared,” Roettger said.

The basics are offered and provide a more level footing for the MBA student, he said.

In addition, NLU has been mulling the possibility of offering certificate programs in leadership and international studies.

“Employers are interested in folks working internationally or cross-culturally. This could be something we add to the courses,” he said.

Aurora University in Aurora also sees leadership as well as project management human resources management and accounting as major focuses for executive education.

“Students are trying to be as relevant as possible to employers,” said David Diehl, assistant professor of accounting at Aurora University.

AU will start a master of science degree in accountancy in August, where students focus entirely on accounting and prepare to sit for the CPA exam. While the traditional MBA offers some courses in accountancy, this new masters program delves much deeper, Diehl said.

Roosevelt University, which has campuses in Chicago and Schaumburg, is seeing more employed students coming back for graduate work. That practice is either to ensure that they retain their current positions, or make themselves more marketable for better positions, said Brian Walker, assistant dean of graduate studies at Roosevelt’s Walter E. Heller College of Business Administration.

“I have seen more students entering our programs right out of recent undergrad degrees,” said Walker. “As they build their education and hope to enter a job market and better economy in a couple of years.”
Roosevelt also has added some graduate credential options in business analysis, accounting forensics and managerial leadership.

“This is for students to augment their graduate studies and add to their marketability,” said Walker.

At the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in Evanston, the Envision Kellogg strategic plan was recently launched.

As part of its long-term strategic plan for the school, it is extending and growing its One-Year Program to recruit the best and brightest talent from around the world, said Northwestern spokesman Aaron Mays.

“We see this program, the only one offered by a top U.S. business school, as a unique competitive advantage that caters to growing applicant market demands,” Mays said. “We’re happy to report that one-year applicants this year were up 6.5 percent, and are up 24 percent since 2009.” It had about 100 students in June.

Also, the school is expanding its presence overseas through new partnerships with Fundação Dom Cabral in Brazil and the Guanghua School of Management at Peking University in China. Kellogg will also leverage its ties as one of the founding members of the Indian School of Business.

“In these markets, we will design educational opportunities that do not conform to past models, but meet the needs of the modern student and modern organization,” Mays said.