

# OPTIONS

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**McCombs Rankings**

Did you know...? McCombs School of Business and its various undergraduate and graduate programs are ranked in the top 25 of all business schools, as noted in the following polls:

**BBA**

#5 U.S. News (8/05)

**MBA**

#16 Worldwide, The Wall Street Journal (9/04)

#19 Business Week (9/05)

#11 Forbes (9/05)

#15 America Economia (9/05)

**Executive MBA (f.k.a. Option II)**

#12 Worldwide, Business Week (10/05)

#12 U.S. News (4/05)

#11 Nationally, #25 Worldwide, Financial Times (10/05)

#4 Executive MBA for Ethics, Business Week (10/03)

**Executive MBA in Mexico City**

#12 Top MBA Programs in Latin America, America Economia (09/04)

**Part-Time MBA**

#13 U.S. News (4/04)

## Letter From the Director, Dave Jemison

Dear Alumni,

It's been more than a year since I became Director and I'm enjoying the challenge! I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you who called, visited, or emailed me with words of support in my new role. It's been a great experience so far and I'm looking forward to the future with great anticipation.

Our entering Class of 2008 is almost completed and they are a class with great potential. They embody the same high admissions standards that are representative of our program and are a diverse group on many dimensions (industry, job responsibilities, ethnicity, and gender) and average 12 years' work experience. Barton Creek begins in mid-August and the new students are already studying their preliminary readings packets. Thanks to those of you who were able to attend our receptions in Austin, Houston and San Antonio for the new class.

The Class of 2006 completed their program with the London Seminar. Bob Mettlen was able to join us for a few days, and the class enjoyed the perspective brought by our speakers as well as the chance to reconnect one final time before joining the alumni ranks.

The Class of 2007 had a great first year and is entering their second year with renewed energy and determination (remember fall semester?). We had more than 30 members of the Class of 2007 participate in the Washington Campus Program this summer. They will have their Seminar in Beijing. We made the venue change to represent the shift in competition to Asia that most of our students' companies are experiencing. Our week long Seminar will have three primary components: the economic, social, and philosophical context of doing business in China; experiences of companies (global and local firms) operating in China; and aspects of China's cultural history.

After our experience with the Class of 2007 I'd like to put together a seminar in China for our alumni.

The class of 2008 will be the first to study under our revised curriculum. Recall that the faculty reviewed the curriculum in spring 2005 with input from outside experts, students, alumni, and faculty. The result was to add several courses (negotiations, global management, and financial statements analysis), combine several courses (e.g., macro and micro economics, and shift the sequencing of some courses to allow for electives, balance workload, and better frame concepts.

**In the future we will refer to our program as the Texas Executive MBA Program.** While the name Option II means a great deal to alumni and faculty (yours truly included), the new name represents to the marketplace much more effectively what our program is intended to accomplish for our students. Rest assured that the academic quality, rigor, and intensity which you remember will not change.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,  
Dave Jemison

## Save the Date!

**Next Executive MBA Business Seminar: February 9, 2007**

The traditional September timing of the Business Seminar is a challenging time of year for several reasons: children returning to school, business planning and budgeting cycles, and the immediacy of Q4 business demands. So we will shift the Business Seminar to the spring semester.

Mark your calendars now for the next Business Seminar presented by the UT Executive MBA Association on February 9, 2007. Planning for the 2007 Seminar is in progress, and alumni who wish to help should send an email to [optionii@gmail.com](mailto:optionii@gmail.com), attention: Andrea Scott.

## A Rose By Any Other Name...

As Dr. Jemison points out on page one, the McCombs School has decided to change the name of our program from "Option II" to "Texas Executive MBA Program". This new name will replace "Option II" in everything from marketing materials published by UT, McCombs and its Communications Department, to daily conversation in the classroom. Several alumni share their thoughts below. What are yours? Email them to [optionii@gmail.com](mailto:optionii@gmail.com).

### Andrea Scott, '03

"Option II" will always have special meaning for us, but I am looking forward to branding our program in a meaningful way that will foster greater recognition in the business community. Graduates of our program are highly intelligent, motivated, and successful people who apply the knowledge gained from the program to career and everyday life. Changing the name

does not change who we are or our collective identity, but it has the potential to drive greater awareness in the business community of the caliber of the UT Executive MBA program and its graduates."

### Vid Desibhatla, '05

"Life is all about choosing options; we chose one that blossomed into the UT Executive MBA program, which will continue to make inroads in developing a positive presence around the globe on a bigger bandwidth."

### David Taylor, '99

"Just because the name Option II works for me doesn't mean that it is a meaningful brand for all our stakeholders. As Court might say, "This just in: change happens." Our community is now faced with a change and a choice: how shall I respond? My universal preference is to be an agent of value vs. a critic. I look

forward to participating in and benefiting from the promise that our new name - and the immense innovation that is in process at our alma mater - has to offer. Welcome to the new era! Be well!"

### Heather Bailey, '91

"Changing the name from Option II to Texas Executive MBA better communicates the caliber of our program and who we want to recruit. It is a more up-to-date title for Option II and reflects very positively on the quality of our graduates."

### William Shakespeare, 1564-1616

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Thanks to Raj Menon, '00 & David Taylor, '99 for pointing out this classic quote. Dost thou know the work from whence it comes?

for more information about upcoming events. In the end, the success of the UTEMBAA is as much in your hands as in those of the Board members. I thank you in advance for your participation and look forward

to seeing you at the next opportunity.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Andrews ('03)  
President, EMBA Board

## Invitation for Participation

Colleagues,  
I would like to take this opportunity to invite your participation in the Executive MBA Association. As a graduate of the Option II (now Texas Executive MBA) program, you have automatic membership in the University of Texas Executive MBA Association (UTEMBAA). Membership, like many endeavors, is what you make of it.

EMBA offers opportunities for professional networking, continuing education and connectivity to the University and MSB. Regional organizations in Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio host book reviews, guest speakers, and networking socials and host welcome parties for incoming students. The annual business seminar is a major event held on campus for all graduates and features recognized speaker series and networking opportunities.

But all of these events and opportunities are successful only with your participation. You are invited to get involved both through your time and through your dues. Please join us for events and communicate about what is important and of interest to you. Contact a board member or a regional representative for more information about events. Your voluntary dues contribution is also a key enabler of our success as an organization. Visit [www.optionii.com](http://www.optionii.com) for electronic payment of dues (just \$25 per year) and

**Austin:** Saturday, June 24th, Austin alumni hosted the Welcome Party for the Class of 2008 at the UT Club. The Class of 1991 was well represented with Kandace Tornquist, Heather Bailey, George Hare, and Tricia Green Anglea sharing experiences with the current and incoming classes. As was expected, some things are still the same and some are different. Alumni recalled what it was like not to have email or cell phones! Hard to believe that was only 15 years ago. Rumor has it that now there are class fines if a cell phone rings. It was a great time and many thanks to all the alumni who attended! Watch your emails for upcoming events, for example, the Austin Chapter is planning a get together in the August/ September timeframe. If you are not on the email list, contact the Texas Executive MBA office so you can receive notices, or contact Heather Bailey at [hbailey2@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hbailey2@austin.utexas.edu) or (512) 461-4518 (mobile).

**San Antonio:** Alumni meet periodically for lunch at Zio's on IH-

10 to network and stay in touch. Contact Vid Desibhatla ([vid.desibhatla@gmail.com](mailto:vid.desibhatla@gmail.com)) for more info.

**Dallas, Houston, & Other Regions:** Contact Jake Gray at [jake@BalanceVentures.com](mailto:jake@BalanceVentures.com) with any info or updates for your region for inclusion in the next newsletter.



## McCombs Online Resources (MOR)

Do you need to update your contact information? Are you looking for a classmate? Do you want to find Texas Executive MBA graduates who work in your company?

You can do all this and more at the McCombs Online Resources at <https://www.mcombs.utexas.edu/MOR>. You can access these important tools using your UT Electronic Identification (EID) number. For assistance, please contact Teresa Phillips at (512) 475-6435 or [teresa.phillips@mcombs.utexas.edu](mailto:teresa.phillips@mcombs.utexas.edu).

## Alumni Interview with Sam Peace (class of 1989), VP & CIO, Kinetic Concepts, Inc. (KCI)

*Vid Desibhatla (class of 2005) interviewed Sam Peace recently to ask him about his business experiences, lessons learned in the Option II program, and lessons learned in the business world. KCI has been at the forefront of medical equipment innovation for almost 30 years. Founded by Dr. Jim Leininger, the company has grown tremendously since its inception and still continues to serve mankind in the areas of Medical Care. KCI went public in February 2004 and currently has a market capitalization of \$2.0 billion (ticker: KCI; \$27.80/share as of 08/09/2006).*

It was a quiet Friday afternoon when I arrived at KCI's corporate headquarters eager to talk to Mr. Sam Peace. He met me at the elevators and led me through a huge hallway, which gave me the first impression that this was a people's company built on fundamental core values such as Excellence, Leadership, Vision, Team Work and Communication.

Mr. Peace was very cordial. Throughout the interview, he took care not to allow any interruptions such as phone calls. My first question was about what his post-Option II management experience was like. I wanted to know if having an MBA helped him in his work.

Mr. Peace said that the Option II MBA experience helped him most in aligning information technology with business strategy, and in understanding financial analysis. In particular, his graduate studies helped him understand corporate financial management, capital structure and capital budgeting decisions.

Mr. Peace's Option II experience was invaluable especially since he began his career as an IT professional, moved up to management and then went to get his MBA in the Option II program, as many of you readers did as well.

When I asked him, "How do you deal with stakeholders and management when it comes to software issues?", Mr. Peace indicated it can be difficult to deal with both groups: "Today, there are so many software packages that have so much functionality within the package itself

(Continued on page 4)

## 2006-2007 Alumni Association Board

President	Stephanie Andrews ('03)
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Treasurer	Bill Atwood ('83)
Seminar Director	Andrea Scott ('03)
Membership Director	Mike ThomasClarke ('00)
Marketing Director	Azucena Overman ('01)
Technology Director	David Miller ('00)
Newsletter Editor	Jake Gray ('02)
Records Management	Zoe Griffith ('90)
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Networking Project	Kandace Tornquist ('91)
Program Director	Dave Jemison
Program Staff	Teresa Phillips
Program Staff	Jesse Saunders
Honorary Board Member	Tiana Scruggs
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Dallas Rep	Position Open
Houston Rep	David Taylor ('99)
San Antonio Rep	Lisa Ebrum ('04)
Reunion Rep - 10 year ('96)	Donna Obermaier-Wilkins ('96)
Reunion Rep - 10 year ('97)	Paul Senecal ('97)
Reunion Rep - 20 year ('86)	Position Open
Reunion Rep - 20 year ('87)	Position Open

At Large: Wade Allen ('90), Heather Ball ('04), Vid Desibhatla ('05), Carolyn Faeth ('05), Richard Hansen ('94), Tom Heyer ('02), Raj Menon ('00), Laura Rice ('05), Jerri Saunders ('01), Van Williams ('94)

Contact the Alumni Board at [optionii@gmail.com](mailto:optionii@gmail.com) with suggestions, questions or to volunteer to help build your Alumni Association.

## Class of 1996 – 10 Year Reunion

Save the date for the weekend of February 9th for our ten-year reunion (and the next Business Seminar). We're beginning to plan events for our class to reconnect ten years after spending every other weekend together for two years. If you're interested in being on the planning committee or have ideas to make the event successful, please contact Donna Wilkins [donna@charitydynamics.com](mailto:donna@charitydynamics.com) or (512) 418-9348. We'd like to have one person from each study group to be the contact for distributing information to their study group.

## McCombs Data Theft

Those of you who did NOT receive word should know that McCombs first alerted alumni via email on April 25, 2006 of a security breach in which hackers obtained personal information (including names, addresses and social security numbers) of various McCombs students, faculty and alumni. In the wake of the April data theft, McCombs took vulnerable applications offline, including the popular Alumni/Student Directory and the McCombs Job Board. These important tools are now back online and can be accessed using your UT Electronic Identification (EID) number. Please refer to [www.mccombs.utexas.edu/datatheft](http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/datatheft) for more information and contact Computer Services, (512) 471-5446, for further assistance.

## Serve

Employees at Ticona Engineering Polymers organized themselves recently to contribute to their community of Florence, KY. Tom Heyer, '02, a Ticona employee, joined in the effort. Tom was able to share knowledge he learned while working with Austin's Meals on Wheels and More program when employed at 3M's Austin Center.

Senior Services of Northern Kentucky ("SSNKY") runs a Meals on Wheels program similar to its Austin counterpart. The concept of having company-sponsored employee teams deliver meals on a dedicated route was well established in Austin, and 3M staffed two delivery routes with volunteers successfully.

The Ticona community group - which named itself "Ticona Together" - entertained the idea, and a new route was created by SSNKY specifically for Ticona employees. The route started July 17, 2006 with 16 volunteers enrolled to provide this life giving service to eight elderly Florence residents on the route. SSNKY arranged to deliver the meals to Ticona, where they are kept in temperature controlled insulated containers until employees on their lunch hour can deliver them to clients. With 16 volunteers, each volunteer delivers meals one day every other week during lunch.

Delivering meals to home-

bound elderly is one of the most satisfying volunteer experiences. The Austin and Northern Kentucky programs have high volunteer retention rates, with many delivering meals for years and developing caring relationships with the clients on their route.

Starting an employee delivery route makes good business sense on several levels and is well received by employees.

The Austin program's website address is [mealsonwheelsandmore.org/](http://mealsonwheelsandmore.org/), and the Northern Kentucky program's site is [seniorservicesnky.org/Company.htm](http://seniorservicesnky.org/Company.htm).

Programs exist in most metropolitan areas and many rural areas, so it should be easy to stand up a similar program in your area in no time at all.

If you are interested in exploring this opportunity for your company, you can contact your local Meals on Wheels program or fellow alumnus Tom Heyer at [tjheyer@alumni.utexas.net](mailto:tjheyer@alumni.utexas.net).

### Alumni & Student News

Please send an email to: [Jake@BalanceVentures.com](mailto:Jake@BalanceVentures.com) if you have an article to contribute to the Newsletter, a suggestion for improvement, or a personal update to share with the Texas Executive MBA Community.

**All Alumni Are Welcome at UT Executive MBA Association Board Meetings.** We meet at UT, in the McCombs Bldg Conference Room CBA 6.420. We welcome your contribution to our deliberations and planning! Call the Executive MBA Office at (512) 475-6436 for the next meeting date and time.

## Alumni Interview with Sam Peace, cont'd.

*(Continued from page 2)*

that the users of those packages are the ones that should be most educated". He added "IT people are technical so we must work with key individuals to negotiate and understand their responsibilities when it comes to the system and to make sure that their staff is trained. We pay for training so that they can take ownership of the issue." He added that they have a steering committee which makes decisions and helps resolve any conflicts in relationships. Building and maintaining relationships is the key and it helps to keep constantly meeting with people and discussing strategies to make systems work.

Later I asked "How do you deal with something that is strategically a wrong step? How do you correct it?" Mr. Peace said that though there are



several layers within his organization, being in IT gives him the opportunity to view the organization as a whole. IT is about getting everyone to work together, and the IT department often knows where the expertise lies for a certain project. A classic example was a new project initiative begun in a sales department when the project should have been in the marketing department. Since IT is a silent observer for both departments, they could recommend and suggest the correction immediately. Such recommendations from IT have a lot of credibility at KCI, he said.

My next question was about leadership. "What does it take to be good leader, especially being an Option II alumnus?" Mr. Peace said that it takes a lot of hard work to be a good leader. He warned that one has to remember that everybody works to make a living and wants to have a life after work, so be honest with them and realize that people want to make things better. First and foremost is to develop a good relationship with staff.

He added, "Let them know that if they do a good job, you will promote them. If they do an okay job, they will [remain] where they are and there is nothing wrong with it. It is their

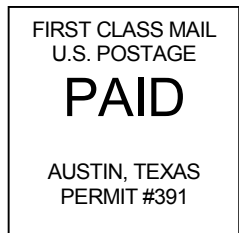
choice." He further added that hard work, focus, knowing what is important and knowing what and when to delegate are absolutely essential for a good leader. It is important to have reliable people on your team to whom you can delegate tasks and not worry about having them accomplished. This can be achieved by developing a trust relationship. He emphasized that a great leader is one who is constantly motivating people.

I then asked him if we should think of mentoring the current students, if requested by the school. He agreed that mentoring students is a good concept, however, he emphasized the need of the school to invest more in alumni relations. He stressed the need and importance of strong local alumni chapters. People should get to know each other and meet regularly, do community projects together and make the alumni presence felt in the community.

To conclude our time together, I asked Mr. Peace for his final thoughts of advice for current students. He said, "Work hard, focus on whatever you do, continue to excel and aspire for continuous improvement." It was a nice interview and I enjoyed talking to Mr. Sam Peace, VP & CIO of Kinetic Concepts, Inc.

**UT Executive MBA Association**  
**P.O. Box 684325**  
**Austin, Texas 78768-4325**

**REMEMBER...Save The Date For The Next Texas Executive MBA Business Seminar & Alumni Class Reunions on: February 9, 2007**



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at [www.optionii.com](http://www.optionii.com)*