

Executive Education



Herbert M. Chain, C.P.A., Executive Director of the Center for Executive Education of the Tobin College of Business

The Center for Executive Education fills a critical gap between what employees know today and what they need to know tomorrow.

BY SONA PAI

Today, more than ever, even the most talented employees understand that education does not end with a college degree. Trends emerge, businesses pivot, and technology reshapes expectations and possibilities. Employees must find ways to adapt or risk losing opportunities in their field.

For employers across industries, offering professional development as an employee benefit not only helps them recruit and retain top talent—it also sharpens their competitive edge. But with their businesses to focus on, many employers are not equipped to provide that training on their own.

“It is the classic outsourcing conundrum,” said Herbert M. Chain, C.P.A., Executive Director of the Center for Executive Education of The Peter J. Tobin College of Business. “You either build or you buy.”

In 2016, companies around the world spent more than \$359 billion on corporate training, with more than a third going to external providers including consulting firms and universities, according to Training Industry and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The Tobin College of Business is a leader in providing professional development, specifically in the areas of risk management and

accounting. Mr. Chain, who came to the Tobin College as a full-time faculty member after 38 years at Deloitte—the last 27 as an audit partner—was appointed by Norean R. Sharpe, Ph.D., Dean of The Peter J. Tobin College of Business, to be Executive Director of the Center in September 2017, with the charge to grow its programming and client base.

“Our mission is to build on our core strengths and broaden our reach into areas beyond insurance and risk management, whether that is in accounting, finance, leadership, entrepreneurship, or other fields where we can provide significant value and expertise,” Mr. Chain said.

FOCUSED AND FLEXIBLE

Mr. Chain and his team at the Center work with clients to develop training and education programs (see “Custom Training and Education Programs”) that meet their specific needs, customizing everything from subject matter to structure.

“It is an iterative process,” Mr. Chain said. “We work with our clients on timing, faculty, location, specific material, and whether or not the program will result in continuing education credits, a certificate, or a degree.”

To date, the Center’s clients have included Deloitte, KPMG, AIG, HSBC, Arch Insurance, Ernst & Young, Samsung, Ace Limited, and the People’s Insurance Company of China.

DEEPENING CONNECTIONS

Along with helping businesses boost skills among employees, the Center’s programming gives faculty invaluable insights into what is happening in the field.

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—Annette Hofmann, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Risk Management and Insurance

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Assistant Professor of Risk Management and Insurance. “What are their challenges? What problems are they struggling to solve? Having this connection lets us see how we can help.”

Dr. Hofmann is currently working with Octo, an insurance telematics company based in Italy, to gather and analyze data on consumer driving behavior. Mandatory black boxes installed in all cars in Italy provide data on risky behaviors from accelerating and braking to accidents—everything a driver does in the car. Analyzing this data can help insurance companies understand how to price policies more accurately and help consumers reduce their risk by providing them with individual risk information.

Dr. Hofmann’s work with Octo will not only help the Center add value via personalized programming for clients, but it will also give faculty new insights to bring back to the classroom.

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Mr. Chain points to Dr. Hofmann’s work as a perfect example of how the Center’s programming represents a powerful link between the industry and academic communities.

“We have so much talent and expertise right here at Tobin,” said Mr. Chain. “As more and more employees—particularly millennials—are asking, ‘What can you do for me?’ and ‘How can you contribute to my personal and professional development?’ we can help employers respond in a meaningful way. We can be the missing piece of the puzzle, and we can bring insights back to the next generation of employees and leaders.”

Custom Training and Education Programs

The Center for Executive Education of the Tobin College of Business offers a diverse series of education programs, which can be tailored to meet the specific business needs of the client. Examples include

Conferences, seminars, and certificate programs:

Center staff and faculty develop thought leadership and key trend-focused conferences and seminars, as well as professional certificate programs for new employees or employees who want to expand their expertise in a specific area. Current certificate programs include a Certificate in The Business of Insurance and a Certificate in Workers’ Compensation.

Specialized programs designed for individual clients:

The Center collaborates with clients to design programs for employees, drawing from the Tobin College faculty, faculty colleagues from other institutions, and practitioners in the field. These programs range from foundational education to help onboard new employees to advanced training for senior executives.

Online courses for individuals and businesses:

Online courses in insurance, management, and leadership are available for individuals or as part of custom programming for a larger organization. These courses can be led by a team of instructors or be self-directed and scaled to reach thousands of employees across offices.

Customized master’s programs:

Employees can enroll in M.S. or M.B.A. programs, sponsored by and developed in collaboration with their employers. Tobin College faculty deliver courses at St. John’s University’s Queens and Manhattan campuses, at St. John’s Hauppauge location, or at a client’s office.

Collaborative programs with other institutions:

The Center also works with other colleges and universities, creating tailor-made curricula in areas beyond what is available at these partner institutions. This becomes a component of the degree program at the “home institution.”

To learn more about the Center for Executive Education, visit stjohns.edu/tobin.