



Debra Hartman and the global MBA online

Distance learning is growing because of both need and convenience. In Debra Hartman's case, SOM's Global MBA Online Program made pursuing an MBA possible — and practical.

After graduating from high school in Jamestown, North Dakota, Ms. Hartman married, started a family and moved to Wyoming. After several years of real-world work experience, the family moved to College Station, Texas, so that she could pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering from Texas A&M University. Upon graduating, she joined a multinational chemical company and worked there for the next 12 years, in process engineering, production engineering, energy management and operations management.

"When I finally decided to pursue my MBA, I was living in a rural area and the nearest university was more than an hour away," the 43-year-old mother of two grown children explains. She currently lives in McLean, Texas, in the Texas Panhandle, 75 miles east of Amarillo.

Rather than spending time traveling to classes, she started asking about online MBA programs. Several people at the chemical company she worked for were familiar with the UT Dallas Global MBA Online Program, which offers SOM's Professional MBA totally online.

In January 2005, Ms. Hartman enrolled. In August of that year, she joined DuPont as a Six Sigma black belt. By February of this year, she was promoted to operations area manager while continuing her MBA with a concentration in international business.

"If this program did not exist, I would not be pursuing my MBA at this time," she says. "I am able to travel with work, participate in the class asynchronously with my classmates and fit it into real life. And I still learn as much as I would in a classroom environment."

Ms. Hartman notes that she finds a similar camaraderie to that found in the classroom.

"I've corresponded quite frequently with various classmates even though I've never met them," she says. Several students in her international marketing and cross-cultural management course, for example, are living or have lived outside the United States, and their personal perspectives on the topics bring a lot to the courses.

"I work in global corporations, and I need to understand and recognize the value of diversity," she explains, adding that she is gaining the broad knowledge base in business practices across the globe she needs for her career through her MBA studies. ⚙️



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