Lighting the Path to Success
in International Business

IB Case Competition

- IB faculty have published more than 300 peer-reviewed articles
- Over 500 IB students have studied abroad
- Over 36,000 citations in Google Scholar
- UMSL IB Faculty have over 12 years experience in gift-related to UBS students
- In 2020, UMSL IB Faculty have received more than $175,000 in study abroad scholarships to COBA students

Stay Focused!

Aligning naturally with UMSL’s mission of “We Transform Lives,” the International Business Institute continues to be engaged in transforming students to become future global business leaders. In this newsletter, we are excited to share a few important highlights:

- UMSL’s International Business undergraduate program was ranked top 25 for 17 consecutive years in a row in U.S. News and World Report.
- Our IMBA program with Nanjing University was recently ranked top 8 by MBA China and the Manager Magazine.
- IB Fellows published in leading academic journals and received multiple research awards nationally and internationally.
- We celebrated the 7th Annual International Business Case Competition, and this year’s case competition will incorporate an innovative company visit feature.
- We offered more scholarships to help students participate in various study abroad programs, including a trip to Bremen in the summer, IMBAi in Aschaffenburg, and many others.

These achievements are the result of the joint efforts from our world-class faculty, dedicated staff, the highly engaged Advisory Board members, and our talented and motivated students. In the future, we will stay focused with our central mission to further international business education through offering valuable cultural exposure to students, enhancing internationally-oriented research, and strengthening the linkage with the St. Louis business community. We look forward to another remarkable year!
Janet Y. Murray recently had the difficult task of parting with a small fraction of her literary collection. From the floor-to-ceiling shelves located in her University of Missouri–St. Louis office, she pulled and then shipped more than 300 books and journals to researchers in Ghana.

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Thanks, in part, to time invested in reading and reviewing scholarly works, the E. Desmond Lee Professor for Developing Women Leaders and Entrepreneurs in International Business and professor at marketing, received a silver medal from the Journal of International Business Studies. The award honors her contributions to the journal in its first 50 years of circulation. (Photo by August Jonezenweld)

Top international business journal recognizes Professor Janet Y. Murray for substantial research contributions

BY SARA WELZ

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Alexis Bates explores globe while pursuing UMSL degree

By June Akwe

Alexis Bates, a senior majoring in liberal studies, has traveled across the globe on four study abroad trips. (Photo by: August Jennewein)

Before the summer of 2017, Alexis Bates had never boarded a plane. Now, she can’t stop booking tickets to cross the globe.

In just two years, Bates, a senior majoring in liberal studies, has become a seasoned international traveler thanks to her participation in four University of Missouri-St. Louis study abroad programs.

Between the summers of 2017 and 2019, she has traveled to Belgium, China, France, and the Netherlands and United Arab Emirates. You would never know it looking at her passport full of stamps, but there was a time when studying abroad—traveling in general—seemed out of reach to Bates.

To study abroad or not to study abroad

Many schools feature study abroad programs prominently when Bates was vetting colleges. Still, they didn’t seem particularly accessible.

“I thought it was something only a few people would do,” she said. “I didn’t think it was a big thing. I just didn’t think I would have the opportunity to do it.”

Bates thought, maybe, she would do one study abroad program by the time she was set to graduate from UMSL. Little did she know an opportunity would present itself much sooner.

“I was experiencing culture shock. I was forced to learn and navigate the norms of the other countries taught her valuable lessons in mutual respect and empathy.”

Lessons learned

The most valuable lesson study abroad teaches students is that there are some things you can’t learn in a classroom.

UMSL Global offers about 20 faculty-led short-term programs, as well as semester-long programs, on six continents and provides a number of scholarships to make studying abroad financially accessible.

Bates believes taking students out of their element is one of the most impactful aspects of studying abroad. It was true of Bates. Being forced to learn and navigate the norms of the other countries taught her valuable lessons in mutual respect and empathy.

“I definitely learned to be humble about being in others’ presence and learning how to respect their culture, even though mine is different,” she said, admitting it wasn’t easy at first. “It was hard for me because I hadn’t been in so many places outside of my own hometown. Traveling made Bates grateful for the freedoms and opportunities afforded to her back home, as well. She hopes to take these lessons into her future career as a school counselor—a profession she was drawn to by her desire to help others.

Currently, Bates is gaining friends and family interested in seeing the world, something they weren’t much interested in before her trips. “I’ve inspired my family to get passports,” Bates said. “Even my little sister has been to two countries already. She went to Costa Rica last year and Ghana this year.”

Bates is proud of the impact she’s had on her sister, who is in high school. Her sister was able to travel to Costa Rica on a class trip and to Ghana via a scholarship. Having a little guidance from her big sister didn’t hurt, either.

“Even my little sister has been to two countries already. She went to Costa Rica last year and Ghana this year.”

Of all the places she’s been, Strasbourg still holds a special place. Bates remains in contact with the international students she met at the language school, and she still thinks of the picturesque scenery regularly.

“It was very beautiful,” she said. “I just remember what I want to wake up to every day—water and flowers.”

There’s still plenty of world to see, though. Bates said her goal is to visit a new country every two years.

Studying abroad taught Bates that there are some things you can’t learn in a classroom. Some things you must experience first-hand.

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Nesmira Muratovic has enjoyed the attention that’s come her way the past month since the St. Louis Business Journal first unveiled its 2019 list of 30 under 30 honorees.

Muratovic, a 2013 graduate of the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Business Administration, was still getting over the surprise of finding out she was being nominated when the list was announced with her on it, along with 2012 UMSL graduate Gabrielle Clay on June 6.

“It’s been really cool,” said Muratovic, now a retail risk & supervision oversight manager at TD Ameritrade. “At first it was a little strange because it made me realize that I guess I’m old enough to work in this industry, in finance.”

As meaningful as the honor and all that comes with it – a photo shoot, Q&A in the Business Journal and award reception on July 11, 2019 at the Stiefel Theatre in downtown St. Louis – has been for Muratovic, it might be even more meaningful for her parents.

They fled Bosnia more than two decades ago with Muratovic and her two siblings amid ethnic violence and restarted their lives almost from scratch in St. Louis. “My family moved here with absolutely nothing,” Muratovic said. “They left everything they knew and literally came here with a backpack and no money. It shows them that it was worth it – that the last 20-whatever years, the struggles that they went through, all the stuff that they did to survive paid off. They were both very emotional and very happy.”

Because her family had spent so much time in survival mode, Muratovic hadn’t always gotten to fully enjoy all her previous accomplishments – graduating from Bayless High School, attending college or landing her first finance job at Scottrade.

Muratovic got in the door there before she even finished her BSBA with an internship while a student in the Pierre Laclede Honors College.

She began working at Scottrade after earning her degree and worked her way up in the compliance department. When TD Ameritrade purchased Scottrade, Muratovic, after initially looking elsewhere, decided to transition along with many of her familiar colleagues.

“It’s different because Scottrade was a private company,” Muratovic said. “It was a lot smaller, and TD Ameritrade is publicly traded and three to four times the size in clients and in assets. The decisions are different, but TD Ameritrade kept a lot of Scottrade people in two offices here, so the culture is still there.”

Clay, who grew up in Creve Coeur, Missouri, has experienced her own career shifts since she finished her degree in mathematics at UMSL.

Her original plan had been to get into accounting, Muratovic said. “It was a lot smaller, and TD Ameritrade is publicly traded and three to four times the size in clients and in assets. The decisions are different, but TD Ameritrade kept a lot of Scottrade people in two offices here, so the culture is still there.”

Clay, who grew up in Creve Coeur, Missouri, has experienced her own career shifts since she finished her degree in mathematics at UMSL.

Her original plan had been to get into accounting, Muratovic said. “It was the route I wanted to take. That was how it got started.”

She spent a year and a half at a public accounting firm, Davis Associates in Florissant, Missouri. Then she moved to Cushman & Wakefield, working as a corporate accountant in the commercial real estate company’s St. Louis office.

After another year and a half, she transitioned again to HOK, the worldwide design, architecture, engineering and urban planning firm, and now works as a senior project accountant.

“My family moved here with absolutely nothing,” Muratovic said. “They left everything they knew and literally came here with a backpack and no money. It shows them that it was worth it... all the stuff that they did to survive paid off.”

“My sister-in-law graduated from UMSL as well, and she’s a pediatrician now. She gave me a really good recommendation before I started the school. She loved it while she was there and so did I. I still think it was a great choice. I had really good teachers that wanted to see you succeed, and I used a lot of their office hours. Her nomination for 30 under 30 was unexpected, and she’s been a little overwhelmed by all the emails, cards, flowers and even gift cards she’s received over the past month, including the reception on July 11.

“I wasn’t expecting all of the attention,” Clay said, “but I’m grateful.”
The University of Missouri–St. Louis’ International MBA program provides immersive training in international business to students from around the globe with partner institutions in six countries. MBA China and Manager Magazine recently recognized the partnership between UMSL’s College of Business Administration and Nanjing University among the top 10 Best Chinese-Foreign Cooperative MBA Programs. The UMSL-Nanjing program ranked fifth on the list.

"To be ranked as one of the top five dual degree programs is a significant honor," said Joseph Rottman, the associate dean for graduate and international programs. "The China MBA market is incredibly competitive and this ranking shows the high quality of our MBA program and how impactful our partnership with Nanjing University has been for both institutions."

The recognition bolsters the College of Business Administration’s already strong reputation in international business. U.S. News & World Report has ranked UMSL’s undergraduate international business program among the top 25 in the United States for 17 consecutive years.

Students in the International MBA program spend one year abroad, one year at home and complete an international internship en route to earning their degrees. This combination of domestic and international coursework and the internship prepare both UMSL and NJU students for careers in many fields.

Students improve their international mindset and technical and managerial skills. The knowledge they gain while pursuing their degree leaves them well suited to compete and succeed in an increasingly complex global market.

UMSL has also partnered with universities in Taiwan and South Korea to offer the International MBA, giving students options to study how business operates around the world.

More than 150 American and Chinese students have been transformed by the innovative program between UMSL and Nanjing over the past 15 years.

MBA China is the largest MBA web portal in China. It offers comprehensive information on how to prepare for MBA national exam and develop interview skills, and it provides business school rankings and career guidance.

Manager Magazine is an upscale business journal, which provides business solutions and career guidance. "To be ranked as one of the top five dual programs is a significant honor," said Rottman. "The knowledge they gain while pursuing their degree leaves them well suited to compete and succeed in an increasingly complex global market."

"This is a way to internationalize our curriculum because the South Korean students will bring different perspectives, different business models, a different culture," said Joe Rottman, associate dean of graduate and international programs. "They will enrich our MBA classrooms, and the agreement presents an opportunity for UMSL students to earn an international MBA."
BY MEGHAN DAIRAGHI

The trip will take place June 5 – 19, 2020.

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UMSL Accelerate partners with Business for Israel study abroad

Dan Lauer, founding executive director of UMSL Accelerate, emphasizes the importance of getting out of the classroom and into the world, so it makes sense that a study abroad trip was in order.

In June 2020, UMSL Accelerate will partner with Michael Costello, associate teaching professor of business and international business, in sponsoring a study abroad trip to Israel. What started as an international business trip will now also focus on entrepreneurial aspects. However, all students, not just business students, are invited to attend. The trip will take place June 5 – 19, 2020.

Since its foundation in 2016, UMSL Accelerate has produced innovative leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset ready to take on the world of business. Accelerate focuses on teaching students how to effectively turn the world of business. Accelerate focuses on teaching students how to effectively turn the world of business.

One of UMSL Accelerate’s goals is to be the number one choice for entrepreneurship study in the country. That can only happen if they experience global markets and utilize new strategies. Israel, considered the startup nation, is a great place to do so.

“We want to show students a dozen different companies and management styles and structures, so students can infiltrate sponsored startups there and earn a stipend opportunity to intern in the St. Louis Cortex district. This district is a concentrated area off of Kingshighway and I-40 where students can rent office spaces, network with like-minded entrepreneurs, and gain real-world experience. Students intern for Ameren-sponsored startups there and earn a stipend alongside practical application.

However, exploring the entrepreneurial market outside St. Louis is essential for business students.

“Even if you don’t want to go into international business, you can’t help but consider it,” Costello says. “You’re going to be involved in the global economy. It’s important for students to understand how to make an effort in shoveling care about other cultures.

The aim of the trip is to excite students about the possibilities of their future businesses while experiencing international practices.

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“Most students are talented, but they lack the self-confidence, so they undervalue themselves,” Costello says. “The most important thing about this trip is to give them confidence and help them get inspired.” Lauer agrees.

“We want UMSL students to know that they are just as smart as any other student. We all have it in us. We just have to believe it.”

U.S. News ranks international business program in top 25 for 17th straight year

BY STEVE VALENTE

The University of Missouri–St. Louis has built one of the premier international business programs in the country. That fact was affirmed again September 9, 2019 with the release of the annual U.S. News & World Report “Best Colleges” rankings, which placed UMSL No. 21 for undergraduate international business, marking 17 consecutive years in the top 25.

“I think to get this kind of sustained national recognition, you first have to have a really good program, and I think our study abroad, our international partnerships, our curriculum and our faculty are all world class,” said Joe Rottman, the associate dean for graduate and international programs in the College of Business Administration.

He noted that UMSL also maintains high visibility as the secretariat for the Consortium for Undergraduate International Business Education, an entity connecting about 40 schools with international business programs.

The College of Business Administration has made international business a focus since launching an undergraduate international business program in 1999 and the International Business Institute a year later. Gerald Gar recently took over as the institute’s director.

“It would be hard to imagine any area of business that isn’t global,” Rottman said. “Our students need to understand the global forces that are affecting international supply chains, labor shortages and security risks. Our curriculum addresses these concerns.”

He said UMSL’s international business advisory board is currently in the middle of a top-to-bottom review of all areas – including accounting, marketing, finance, supply chain and analytics, management and information systems – to ensure that there is a global thread running through the curriculum.

Over the past 17 years, UMSL has awarded more than 1,000 international business degrees and has sponsored more than 500 study abroad trips. UMSL faculty also have ranked eighth in North America in research contributions to the Journal of International Business Studies since 2010.

UMSL top school in St. Louis region for social mobility

UMSL also received high marks in U.S. News’ first-ever list of Top Performers on Social Mobility with the top ranking in the St. Louis region. It was one of only two schools in Missouri to rank in the top 100.

The new ranking highlights how well universities have graduated students who receive Pell Grants and fits well with UMSL’s mission to transform lives. Students who receive Pell Grants typically come from households whose family incomes are less than $50,000 annually, though most Pell Grant money goes to students with a total family income below $20,000.

The rankings were computed after factoring the Pell Grant graduation rate and Pell Grant graduation rate performance, which compares graduation rates among Pell- and non-Pell students for each university.

Overall, UMSL remained in the top tier of the U.S. News rankings and was tied for 140th among all public universities. The university also ranked No. 75 on the list of best undergraduate engineering programs among schools where a doctorate is not offered.

Steve Moehrle, professor and chair of the Department of Accounting, received the 2019 AICPA Distinguished Achievement in Accounting Education Award. (Photo by August Jannone)
The IMBAi Global Master’s School opened my eyes to a new way of doing business

I have been lucky enough to experience the IMBAi program on both sides of the Atlantic. In my first semester in the graduate business program, another student mentioned the tri-lateral program with German and Finnish students. The program takes place in St. Louis, Seinäjoki, Finland, and Aschaffenburg, Germany. From the beginning, I was motivated to be in the program at all three locations.

The first program I attended was in St. Louis. The company we worked with was the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, which is an umbrella company for many different organizations. The week was packed with meetings and getting to know the company we were working with. We also had some social activities for team building throughout the week. It proved to be difficult but also rewarding, as we worked closely in international teams and learned a lot from our peers. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience to have hands-on involvement with a corporation in St. Louis and to have a classroom comprised of nine different nationalities. Observing how companies operate in a collaborative space to ensure the product and mission are fulfilled gave me a practical knowledge that went beyond the classroom.

The second program I attended was in Seinäjoki, Finland. In Finland, we worked with a company called Prima Power. Prima Power works in the business-to-business market. For me, this was an entirely new market. Our schedule focused more on the social activities and experiencing Finnish culture. We had a nature-based trip, where we rode in a bus out of the city and were dropped off at a national park. We also had a traditional Finnish evening at an old house in the city where we had a chef come and make us a traditional Finnish meal.

The final program to complete the tri-lateral program was in Aschaffenburg, Germany. In Aschaffenburg, our program was different than in the previous two locations. Instead of working with a company, we had a business simulation challenge with our class divided in five teams. During the simulation we dealt with real business obstacles and had to decide how to bring our products to the market and compete with our classmates’ products. During this program, we had many speakers come to our class and give presentations on their companies and how they face the market. In Germany, our unique cultural experiences included going for a long hike in the Spessart Forest. We saw the Rapunzel Castle and had a team building activity. During our hike, we were invited to a dinner with the vice president of the university. The restaurant offered traditional Christmas time dishes and drinks. Another part of the trip included a short day trip to Frankfurt where we met with the European Central Bank and discussed the difference between that and the Federal Reserve in the United States.

The tri-lateral program opened my eyes to many cultures and unique experiences that you cannot get sitting in a classroom for a semester. It posed many challenges that were rewarding and helped the students learn what it will be like to work in the business world in Europe and the United States. These courses have offered me real-world knowledge of networking with companies around the globe and the expertise of professors from great institutions.
Dr. Gerald Gao appointed Director of International Business Institute

Gerald Gao started as an assistant professor at UMSL in 2006. Today he is a professor of marketing in the College of Business Administration. With a PhD in marketing from the University of Hong Kong and a series of top-tier publications in international business and marketing journals, he is regarded as a highly accomplished academic professional. Now he can add one more line to his already impressive resume: Director of the International Business Institute (IBI).

Gao was appointed director in August 2019. He is preceded by Dr. Joseph Rottman. In this role, Gao wants to make the international business program as accessible to students as possible. As director, Gao will be responsible for providing students a high-quality international business program with meaningful opportunities. He feels passionately about study abroad programs that allow students to see firsthand the diversity they will encounter in their international business pursuits.

However, he recognizes that UMSL’s student population differs from other universities. “Sixty percent of our students are first-generation college students and don’t come from wealthy families,” Gao says. Often students need financial aid to partake in these trips. In order to meet student’s financial needs as director, Gao encourages the creation of multiple scholarships and stipends for students. Gao knows it is essential to create linkage between UMSL, global business communities, and the IB Advisory Board in order to expand the program’s international business knowledge and afford students the opportunity to fully experience this program.

In addition to study abroad, Gao is supportive of UMSL’s IMBA program and sponsoring activities that provide students with real-world business experience. The case competition, which UMSL competes in annually, is a great example of the projects Gao loves. Students have just 48 hours to read, assess and create a practical solution to a real international business problem provided by various companies with locations in St. Louis. IBI’s fellowship programs enable the leveraging of world-class international business research generated by UMSL faculty.

IMBAi Program

Students pursuing an MBA degree at the University of Missouri–St. Louis have the option to experience and see business through a global lens.

- Take two-week courses in Germany, Finland, or both, and apply it toward your UMSL degree
- Intensive instruction provided by international faculty
- Students participate in corporate visits, networking opportunities and cultural activities
- Evenings and weekends are open for a variety of cultural excursions, tours and social activities offered by the host university

The IMBAi is an excellent addition to the College of Business Administration IB offerings and helps to fortify UMSL’s strong international partnerships, including those in the MBA program.

CONTACT

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By Meghan Davachi
SIGNS OF BUSINESS

GAGA

David P. Gustafson

Name of Scholar
Robert B. Vinette Jr.

Memorial Scholarship

Requirements

• Minimum GPA of 2.5
• IB Major or Minor
• Must use scholarship for study abroad to meet International Experience requirement

Value*$

Up to $1,500

Renewable

Multiple scholarships available each year

International Business Scholarship

Messen, Pang Yulem and Pian Yang

Memorial Scholarship

Requirements

• Enrolled as an undergraduate in the CoBA and majoring in IB
• Junior or senior
• Minimum GPA of 3.1

Value*$

$1,500

Non-Renewable

Multiple scholarships available each year

International Business Advisor Board Scholarship

Requirements

• Minimum GPA of 3.0
• IB Major or International MBA student
• Must use scholarship for study abroad to meet International Experience requirement

Value*$

$2,000

Non-Renewable

Multiple scholarships available each year

International Business Fellows Scholarship

Requirements

• Minimum GPA of 3.2
• Non-Renewable

Value*$

$500

Non-Renewable

Multiple scholarships available each year

International Business Studies Matching Scholarship

Requirements

• Missouri resident
• Demonstrate need as determined by FASA
• Full-time student
• Pursuing a bachelor’s degree in the CoBA with emphasis in International Business

Value*$

$1,500

Non-Renewable

Multiple scholarships available each year

Smith Family Study Abroad Scholarship

Requirements

• Student in the CoBA
• Must use scholarship for study abroad to meet International Experience requirement

Value*$

Up to $1,500

Renewable

Multiple scholarships available each year

*Actual awards vary by semester

To view a full list of scholarships and awards available through the College of Business Administration, please visit www.umsl.edu/student/scholarships. Students must apply online and have the application submitted to Dr. Gabriel Gan at gangan@umsl.edu.
The study abroad programs at the University of Missouri–St. Louis provide International Business students the opportunity to experience unique cultures and businesses of other countries. This learning experience is essential to enhancing the students' abilities to appreciate and flourish in a climate of international business.