

Global Business Schools for the Future

Leaders in business education detail the bold steps they are taking to transform the learning process to meet today's new values and vast technological advances that are rapidly reshaping industry, society and the way we function as individuals

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Leading schools embrace sustainability as core tenant

Top-ranked schools are meeting change by embracing a shift towards green practices, new methods of delivering education and improved diversity

Business schools around the world are reacting to a shift in paradigm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and a rush of new technologies. As the world pulls itself out from a second recent economic crisis, the drive towards sustainability that was once being touted is now being underlined, be it in terms of innovation, green initiatives or promoting diversity. Leaders in education remain singular about one thing: the system needs to change. They are striving to translate this central concept into their curricula to prepare future trailblazers for the battle ahead.

Innovative reboots

Montreal-based John Molson School of Business is working on pushing innovation through its focus on entrepreneurship. The school emboldens its students by providing access to real business owners who talk about pressures they face and the reality of business. John Molson recently conducted a massive revision of classes to match the school's new values.

Other universities are taking a more individual slant on innovating their methods of education. Across the pond, EM Strasbourg Business School is transforming its values towards individual discovery and growth under its Be Distinctive slogan. The school recently initiated a new executive diploma geared at transforming leadership through meditation and data analysis.

The French school also launched a research center called the Observatory of the Future that explores impending scenarios and eventualities.

Other leading institutions are following a similar format, such as the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in the Philippines. They recently established the Aboitiz School of Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship. This new institution supports their recent master's programs in free enterprise, science and business and data science.

Sustainability first

Business schools are not only looking to drive innovation, but also take part in the new surge of sustainable and green initiatives in public and private sectors. John Molson recently received a donation to create a research center aimed at promoting sustainability. The Canadian institution also recently joined with Manulife Investment, a local insurance firm, to create a program that allows students to virtually follow the company's environment, social and corporate governance investments.

In a similar fashion, AIM has created the Jose B. Fernandez, Jr. Center for Sustainable Finance. The school is set up to tackle policy issues that affect the banking sector and form constructive business partnerships in the region.

Sustainability as a movement is not just about creating more



Employers are recognizing the rising legitimacy of online and adaptive learning

efficient business practices. Singapore Management University (SMU) takes a hard stance against climate change through its Cooling Singapore 2.0 initiative that sees students and faculty working to lower carbon emissions in the city's hot months. The school recently set up its Singapore Green Finance Cen-

Anne-Marie Croteau is the first female dean at John Molson and chair of the Business School Association of Canada. She works hard to promote inclusion in both education and the business world. "We want to provide more training and support and raise conversations around women in business," she

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Anne-Marie Croteau, Dean, John Molson School of Business

tre. "We are transforming our processes and training our colleagues to make sure that they are equipped with a level of skills commensurate with new available technologies," Lily Kong, president of SMU, explains.

Women in leadership

In the last fifty years, leadership in the business world has largely passed from out of the hands of men into the collective hands of the community. Particularly in the last decade, women have stepped up to the plate to take on leadership roles as initiatives to promote diversity bear fruit.

says. The school recently started a research center for female entrepreneurs and leaders, the first of its kind in Canada.

Other heads of education have expressed a change within industry itself in terms of inclusion. Kong expresses that she has been contacted by global firms such as Goldman Sachs Group and BlackRock to collaborate on empowering young people and being a mentor through leadership programs and speaking engagements. She views part of her position as being a role model for potential leading women.

Prisma Reports wishes to thank its esteemed partners for their contribution to this project:





The modern SMU campus lies at the heart of one of Asia's most dynamic cities



SMU's state-of-the-art facilities are certified as 100% green

Cultivating change to tackle global complexities

Established in just 2000, Singapore Management University has already risen to 12th position in the QS world rankings for specialist universities

Singapore Management University (SMU) has rapidly gained international renown for its world-class teaching and research. At its state-of-the-art city campus, it offers a wide range of bachelor's, master's, PhD, executive development and other programs through its Schools of Accountancy, Economics, Computing and Information Systems, Law, Social Sciences and the triple-accredited Lee Kong Chian School of Business. It also has over 30 institutes, centers and labs, which consistently generate multidisciplinary research that makes a positive global impact.

Drawing on its wealth of faculty expertise, SMU focuses on three

Business Administration program has input from over 100 business leaders; its award-winning SMU-X pedagogy sees students working with faculty and industry mentors on local and overseas projects to solve real-world issues; it has work-study internship programs with companies such as Google and KPMG; industry experts provide advice to nearly 300 startups SMU is incubating at the moment; and it collaborates on research with numerous private-sector partners to ensure its practicality.

SMU is also focused on nurturing global-ready, responsible citizens and engaging with the world. 50 countries are represented in its

“We are encouraging our students to be positive-change agents who deliver meaningful impact.”

Lily Kong, President, Singapore Management University

cross-disciplinary priorities: digital transformation, sustainable living and growth in Asia. “We are encouraging our students to be positive-change agents who deliver meaningful impact for their community and society,” explains President Lily Kong.

One way it does that is by fostering extensive links with all stakeholders, particularly within industry. For example, SMU's highly ranked Executive Master of

student body of almost 12,000, 40% of its faculty are international and it has 294 partner universities covering all continents.

According to Kong: “Global exposure is an integral component of the SMU core curriculum, be it an overseas project, internship or foreign exchange. Our overseas partners have been our close allies in giving students exceptional virtual and remote global learning opportunities amidst the pandemic.”

The power of knowledge creates opportunities

PR: Why does Singapore Management University (SMU) stand out from its global peers?

LK: We have a remarkably close relationship with industry. Our students develop excellent rapport with the world of business, while collaborating employers love our work-ready graduates. Secondly, we cover the spectrum of courses that you would expect but are unique in our focus on three areas: in a world transformed by COVID, digital transformation, sustainability and understanding the potential that Asia has are going to be crucial.

PR: How is SMU prioritizing sustainability and digitalization?

LK: We can make a difference in thought leadership. We have rolled out a sustainability major, are ramping up sustainability internships and our students are helping communities become more sustainable. Our SMU-X projects in this area allow them to get their hands dirty on real-world issues. Research is also important. We are working on helping companies quantify measurable improvements in sustainability, have jointly established the Singapore Green Finance Centre and a third example involves improving the sustainability of urban environments.

Digital transformation is such an important area too. We have embedded new courses into our core curriculum, not just on the technical side, but also understanding its impact on wellbeing and so on. We have new programs such as a digital business major and a program on computing and law, because lawyers are going to need to understand artificial intelligence (AI), data governance and similar issues, while computer scientists need to understand legal and regulatory frameworks. In research, we have established a Centre for AI and Data Governance and



Lily Kong
President
Singapore Management University

a Centre for Computational Law. These are just a few examples.

PR: How is SMU setting trends in executive development?

LK: Our SMU-ExD team has converted all our custom programs to live online programs and launched new ones in, for instance, digital finance leadership and growing infrastructure. We are also developing asynchronous programs addressing digital transformation, AI and machine learning, product management and cybersecurity.

We are moving to work more in partnership with our clients along a hybridized path. With that model, individual participants can customize how they build upon the foundational knowledge acquired during in-person courses, setting their own pace and selecting modules as it suits them. Technology empowers us to transition from providing learning products to enabling lifelong learning journeys.



Preparing students for future workplace technologies is seen as imperative

Education uses new digital tech to bridge gaps

Business schools are embracing virtual and communication technologies to explore beyond what was thought possible

Digital technologies are visibly transforming the world around us; everything from life sciences to buying a pair of shoes now has a growing digital facet. The tech revolution has also increased the reach of education, with some schools taking advantage of a virtual world without borders to promote leadership and development in previously untappable areas.

Different schools have taken different approaches in embracing digitalization and online education. “We need to intentionally use technology to enhance interaction, not take away from it,” insists Lily Kong, president

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Lily Kong, President, Singapore Management University

of Singapore Management University. The institution recently opened a center for artificial intelligence and data governance.

The Asian Institute of Management (AIM) has taken a leadership role in digital transformation by creating a global academic leadership program in cooperation with the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education. The initiative looks to help local universities embrace smart and digital solutions in education. The program has

been well received. “We are now getting requests from private and local universities for similar services,” says Jikyeong Kang, dean and president of AIM.

Other schools have taken a global approach. International Management Institute in Ukraine has used new online technologies to enter Tajikistan and create a business education system. “In Tajikistan, we represent the modern Europe,” says Iryna Tykomyrova, president of the school.

Digital platforms for global dissemination are also being harnessed. The John Molson School of Business recently

partnered with Ivy Publishing to showcase their studies through the publishers' or Harvard's website. The Canadian school was ready for the jump to online education far before the pandemic.

Top leaders in business education have stayed ahead of the wave and not only transformed but thrived. With more innovation on the horizon, schools with the most impact will be those attuned to the technologies of tomorrow.

Barcelona school seeks education through progress

UPF Barcelona School of Management puts social values at the centre of business education

UPF Barcelona School of Management (UPF-BSM) brings a serious tone to Europe's favorite vacation spot. The beach-contoured city hosts a plethora of logistics and tech firms, making it an ideal location for a forward-run business education institution.

Barcelona has grown to become a European startup hub over the last decade, from virtually none to having more than 1,300 startups in mobile and software technologies and life sciences. In 2020, the city ranked among the top five startup hubs in Europe. The city has transformed its El Poblenou district from an industrial wasteland to a vibrant startup melting pot that offers students a chance to engage directly with growing industry.

UPF-BSM is part of Barcelona's Pompeu Fabra University, which was rated the best university in Spain by Times Higher Education World University Rankings in 2021. The business

with full online programs beginning in 2002. The director general described the school's movement from physical to virtual classes during the COVID-19 pandemic as seamless, unlike at Harvard University where he previously worked that closed its doors.

UPF-BSM prides itself in choosing working partners with companies that have sustainable

arm of the university was founded in 1993 and has since jumped to the top of international charts in terms of its educational offerings.

“What makes us different and a leader both in Spain and Latin America is that we are the management school of a top public university,” says José M. Martínez-Sierra, director general of UPF-BSM. The institution is undergoing what Martínez-Sierra describes as transversal digitization; it is digitizing not only its classrooms, but the connections between students, faculty and its more than 30,000 alumni.

The business institution's digital development started early, visions that look to impact society. For example, the school recently signed an agreement with Triodos Bank, a leading company in sustainable finance, for the creation of an international research center for ethical banking.

In conjunction with the deal, the school is preparing to spearhead a slew of private public partnerships to bolster its curricula and knowledge transfer.

UPF-BSM's ultimate goal is to lead the charge in preparing the leaders of tomorrow to work with industry and ultimately affect legislation and society. The school connects students to Barcelona's thriving industries and beyond.



José M. Martínez-Sierra
Director General
UPF Barcelona School of Management

“What makes us different and a leader in Spain and Latin America is that we are the management school of a top public university.”

José M. Martínez-Sierra, Director General, UPF Barcelona School of Management

Canadian leader looks to inspire through values

Montreal's leading business education institution considers inclusion and sustainability as key elements of a successful education

Diversity and environment, social and corporate governance (ESG) are the cornerstones of Canada's John Molson School of Business. "Being in academia is a privilege and a responsibility. We are part of the relaunch of the economy. We train future leaders that will make a difference in the world," asserts Anne-Marie Croteau, dean of John Molson.

become a video game, cloud computing and artificial intelligence hub, sectors with which the school actively participates.

John Molson is a large part of Montreal's Concordia University, with 20% of the institution's 55 thousand students enrolled in the business school. The university prides itself on diversity. Around 40% of its student body comes



John Molson School of Business, Montreal

petition; the John Molson International MBA Case Competition involves participation of all the School's students as well as students from 40 global universities. Participants compete on analysis and evaluation of unpublished business cases.

John Molson's prestigious executive master of business administration program is celebrating its 35-year anniversary. The curriculum was the first in Quebec and among the first in Canada.

According to Croteau, the program is one of the strongest at the business school. "Students in this category come with a drive to be better at what they do. They gain

a lot of confidence after completing the program. It is beautiful to see," she expresses.

The school takes sustainable finance seriously. Prior to the pandemic, the school launched a sustainable investment practicum in partnership with insurance company Manulife Investment. The program allows students to access the firm's ESG investments through a virtual fund and learn directly from decision makers.

"This has attracted more women into finance, who are difficult to attract. Currently only 30% of our finance students are women, but we see parities in this new program," she says.

PR: Being in academia is a privilege and a responsibility. We are part of the relaunch of the economy."

Anne-Marie Croteau, Dean, John Molson School of Business

The English-speaking school is set in Canada's second largest urban space, Montreal. The eastern metropolis is known for its digital innovations and has recently

from outside Canada and more than 105 languages are spoken in its halls.

The business school also hosts the oldest masters-level case com-

John Molson promotes diversity in education and business

PR: What differentiates John Molson School of Business from other business education institutions?

AC: We are among the top business schools in Canada and the world. Our high ranking speaks to the quality of our teaching and our students. We are strong in research and teaching when it comes to entrepreneurship and innovation. We have put a lot of effort into creating an ecosystem based on the realities of entrepreneurs and welcome people from the business community to speak about their experiences and difficulties in the market.

In terms of innovation, we recently launched the MSc in Business Analytics and Technology Management that will help students develop the marketing and finance expertise required to excel in big data and analytics. The school works with other faculties on interdisciplinary initiatives in areas such as cities, health and applied artificial intelligence.



Anne-Marie Croteau
Dean, John Molson School of Business

We need to make sure artificial intelligence responds to our needs as humans. We are hiring new faculty members with this kind of expertise

PR: How did John Molson cope with the move to virtual classrooms due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

AC: Through Concordia, we have

the e-Concordia gateway and the Knowledge One service to provide the best online learning tools and practices. We had this prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the government locked down, 32,000 students were enrolled in online learning and the business school participated. We had to find new solutions and we pushed our envelope further. Additionally, enrolments are through the roof due to the online platform. People realize they do not have to quit their jobs to participate in higher education.

PR: How has John Molson worked to increase gender diversity in its faculty and offerings?

AC: I used to be the only woman at the table of the team and now there are three women and one man. Our department chairs are at parity. For Montreal, a sense of parity is normal. I hope when the economy restarts after the pandemic, women won't lose any of their momentum.

The United States lost a lot of females in their workforce. Although this has not happened yet in Canada, it is something to be mindful of. We recently launched a new research center called Barry F. Lorenzetti Centre for Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership to promote female entrepreneurs and leaders.

We have about 15 faculty members as researchers who have expertise in entrepreneurship and leadership development. We are the first in Canada with this type of research center. We want to provide more training and support and raise conversations around women in business. We also launched a course on financial literacy for female entrepreneurs.



JOHN MOLSON
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Inspiring a new wave of leaders for Asia

A pioneering institute offers cutting-edge education that is global in scope but Asian in context

Asian Institute of Management (AIM) has been empowering entrepreneurial and socially responsible business and development leaders for over 50 years. "Dubbed the Harvard of Asia, our birth was a unique collaboration between Harvard Business School and top corporations in the Philippines," reveals AIM Dean and President Jikyeong Kang.

As a result of its pioneering management education and research, AIM is the only school in the Philippines and one of the first 10 schools in Asia to receive accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) — a prestigious body that acknowledged AIM's pre-eminence this year when it appointed Kang as its first board chair from the Asia-Pacific region.

Based in Makati, the Philippines' financial hub, AIM delivers practitioner-oriented degree and executive education programs that are global in scope but Asian in context to a multinational student body. Its flagship offering is probably a well-established Master in Business Administration, but AIM's agility allows it to innovate to meet emerging demands.

PR: We can now provide access to learners in far-flung places who would never have had access to our degree or non-degree programs."

Jikyeong Kang, Dean and President, Asian Institute of Management

Recent portfolio additions include master's programs in data science, entrepreneurship, innovation and business, and ones in fintech and business law will soon join them. "Our Master in Data Science is one of the first in the region and last year we welcomed our first intake of PhD students.

We are also helping the government launch a track-and-trace application for COVID. It came to us because we have the best data scientists in the country," Kang says.

As well as promoting innovation, AIM has always championed social



Jikyeong Kang
Dean and President
Asian Institute of Management

responsibility and ethical governance. Alumni from over 40 nations have graduated from its Master in Development Management since 1991, for instance, and in 2019 it launched a groundbreaking Executive Master in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management.

Sustainable management is also a central concern, she states, "We touch on sustainability in the same way we touch upon ethics: it is not taught in a stand-alone course, we teach it in all disciplines from many different perspectives."

AIM's synergizing partnerships with corporations, the public sector, other institutions and development organizations worldwide have been fundamental to its influential nurturing of business, government and societal leaders that are solving challenges and seizing opportunities in Asia. That influence can only grow as more students and clients embrace online, hybrid and lifelong learning, says Kang: "We can now provide access to learners in far-flung places who would never have had access to our degree or non-degree programs."



France's EM Strasbourg Business School nurtures talent and promotes personality

Distinctive approach allows individuality to flourish

Encouraging its thousands of accomplished students to be their true selves is a unique and rewarding experience

The award-winning EM Strasbourg Business School embraces and cultivates individuality and personality among its 3,400 dedicated students by adopting a warm culture that encourages the talented managers and business leaders of tomorrow to stand out from the crowd by finding success through being themselves.

This incredibly novel approach to teaching best practice in international business has made EM Strasbourg Business School a popular choice for several generations of ambitious managers and executives who dare to be different by displaying their unique personality and traits in their chosen business sector or industry.

"Our ambition is to reveal people and organizations to themselves. We believe in each personality and we have a clear slogan: 'Be Distinctive'," explains Dean Herbert Castéran of EM Strasbourg Business School. "This does not mean that we want our students to be different, but that they make a difference by being themselves. You have your own assets, your own qualities, and you have to play with your true personality in order to feel good and to be better. Our value proposition is based on hard skills and soft skills, but many are geared to a path of self-discovery."

Born in late 2007 through the merger of IECS, founded in 1919, and IAE Strasbourg, created in 1956, EM Strasbourg Business



Herbert Castéran
Dean
EM Strasbourg Business School

School is itself unique, as it is the only business school in France to be part of a university.

Over the past decade and a half, the highly respected educational establishment has expanded its range of innovative and challenging programs, and formed close relationships with leading private sector names and international counterparts. EM Strasbourg Business School students can connect with 2,000 partner companies and 230 partner universities.

"We are the only school that is part of Grande Ecole, an elite system in France, and that is also an affiliate of the University of Strasbourg," explains Castéran. "We have, in fact, two identities, a private one and a public one. This may be common internationally, but in France, we are the only one."



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The Ukrainian ambassador for business standards

International Management Institute Kyiv (MIM-Kyiv) is putting the Eastern European country on the global map for business education

As well as being one of Europe's most historic, vibrant and verdant capitals, Kyiv is a hotbed of innovative businesses. The city is home to the regional headquarters of numerous multinationals and has nurtured many of its own entrepreneurial firms, with its startup ecosystem being the second-most impressive in Eastern Europe according to research organization StartupBlink.

A key component of its business networks is International Management Institute Kyiv (MIM-Kyiv), which Eduniversal ranks as the best business school in the country and among the top-300 worldwide. "We established the standards in Ukraine and continue to develop them; when it comes to high-quality international business education, MIM-Kyiv is the place to go. We are important for the country and as a hub that bridges Eastern Europe and Central Asia," says President Iryna Tykhomyrova.

The school was founded in 1989 as a joint venture between Switzerland's International Management Institute Geneva, now part of the renowned International Institute for Management Development (IMD), and Ukraine's National Academy of Sciences, she explains. "We are a private, stand-alone international school focused only on executive education."

MIM-Kyiv is a full member of the Association of MBAs, AACSB, EFMD, CEEMAN and the Baltic Management Development Organization, and has a substantial portfolio of close partners around the world. These include Carnegie Mellon University and the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard Business School in the U.S., Stellenbosch and GIBS Business Schools in South Africa, China Europe International Business School, plus a range of universities in Europe and the Baltic countries.

MIM-Kyiv's practice-based activities include a double-accredited



Iryna Tykhomyrova
President
International Management Institute Kyiv
MBA, tailor-made corporate programs and consultancy services for local and international enterprises. Altogether, it boasts over 8,000 alumni, who make up Ukraine's largest business community, Tyk-



MIM-Kyiv lies at the heart of the Ukraine's dynamic capital

homyrova states. "Almost all of our participants are expanding their businesses in Eastern and Central Europe or the Baltic states, while a lot have global ambitions and some have already gone global."

PR: We are important for the country and as a hub that bridges Eastern Europe and Central Asia."

Iryna Tykhomyrova, President, International Management Institute Kyiv

The school plays a vital role in enabling businesses to take advantage of the opportunities emerging from changing environments within and outside Ukraine. For example, it is currently conducting a series of high-level events related to the potential arising from the European Union Green Deal.

As well as being an ambassador for the best international standards

in socially responsible management in Ukraine, MIM-Kyiv is also an ambassador for Ukrainian business in the world. This year, for instance, governments of the European Union and the U.S. supported its

development of a framework for training in Tajikistan.

"We are helping to create a Tajik business education system and instilling the principles of responsible management in Tajikistan. Despite the pandemic, we are not only launching new online courses, but we have entered an entirely new market with face-to-face programs," asserts Tykhomyrova.

MIM-Kyiv proves nothing is impossible

PR: Why is MIM-Kyiv so highly regarded in terms of its contribution to social development and sustainability?

IT: We share the values of socially responsible businesses and it's our mission to promote those values in the Ukrainian business environment. Sustainability is a key issue: it's impossible to run a successful or reputable business and not care about sustainability. Issues surrounding it have become part of all our courses and are considered from many angles. We also run regular sustainability discussion platforms for our partners and alumni that are dedicated to aspects such as the European Green Deal, changes in the European Union's economic and export regulations, and green finance.

PR: How would you define innovation?

IT: My definition would be that nothing is impossible; everything is possible — and our school is proof of that. We were told it would be impossible to establish an international business school in the former Soviet Union, that it would be impossible to develop it through Ukraine's economic transition period, and that it would be impossible to continue developing the school during the revolutions and war that we have had. We achieved all those things. When in late 2020 the European Union asked us to provide educational services in Tajikistan, that was further proof that everything is possible.

PR: Ukraine is the second-largest country in Europe. How optimistic are you about its future?

IT: I believe in a bright future for our country. Our economy is not as developed as we would like, which means an abundance of opportunities. Reforms have been launched, plus we have a well-educated and talented population. We are optimistic because businesses in Ukraine are thinking about the future and paying for their workforce's educational development. Last year, we had a lot of participants from pharmaceutical, logistics, medical, energy, information technology and media companies — sectors that are growing in the country.

PR: What are MIM-Kyiv's priorities in the medium term?

IT: We want to be on the global map of business education and we want our activity to help Ukraine become more visible on the economic map. One of the consequences of COVID was the negative effect on international relations; online conferences and lectures are better than nothing, but they aren't the same as face-to-face meetings. I hope we will soon have the chance to renew partnerships in person and we would be delighted to welcome people to our beautiful country. I'm sure that there is huge potential for doing business, establishing political connections, and for creating a new Europe and new world. After COVID, the world will not be the same — education is about the future and it's important that we create the new future together.



Spanish institution promotes social change for a better world of tomorrow

Barcelona's business education school promotes itself as a center for sustainability and diversity that means to make a strong impact on government, business and society

PR: What differentiates UPF Barcelona School of Management (UPS-BSM) from other worldwide business schools?

JMS: We place a great deal of importance in curricula and specific courses for global gains that students can expect in the short term. We are training leaders who will take on roles in both the public and private sectors.

We are most fond of businesses that have a long-term vision, care about issues beyond their assets and revenue and want to make a transformative impact on society.

We are business friendly. Some former business leaders are now faculty and some of our former faculty are now business leaders. Working together with leaders of firms to create a teaching joint venture is beneficial.

Our faculty tackles technical problems in the industry and brings them to the classroom on the day they are addressed. The efforts of our faculty to interact with business leaders have paid off, both in terms of the product we give to companies, but also in gains for our students.

PR: What impact does UPF-BSM have on the local and greater business community?

JMS: Our impact is huge. For each euro that is invested in the university, in certain programs we triple it and sometimes multiply it by five through external benefits and contracts we sign with private and competitive research funds.

We have transformed knowledge into sustainable and beneficial projects for our society, but we still have room to improve — particularly in terms of knowledge transfer.

PR: How is UPF-BSM engaging in sustainable practices?



José M. Martínez-Sierra
Director General
UPF Barcelona School of Management

JMS: Planetary wellbeing is a core value of the university. We are educating future leaders, both as professionals and as human beings.

Having a successful career cannot exist independently of what it means to live together on this planet. Not being proactive with sustainability is not an option. We are trying to show leaders in the public and private sectors how they can contribute to planetary wellbeing in the best way.

PR: What strategy is UPF-BSM adopting in implementing digital technologies in its curriculum?

JMS: Essentially, there are two approaches. Either you can treat digitization as something you add to traditional skills, or you can go completely digital. I believe it would be presumptuous of us to make that decision for our students, so we are trying to do both.

Although the pandemic has been extremely challenging for everybody, our school was already in the middle of a transition focused on online education and boosting our information technology capabilities.

However, we must combine this with our cultural programs. These



UPF Barcelona School of Management building in the heart of Barcelona

programs will fill in the gap of what we call second-degree illiteracy. Future leaders must have well-rounded personalities combined with specialization in the digital sector. Our efforts have been working well.

PR: What changes has the COVID-19 pandemic had on traditional business education?

JMS: The last pandemic transformed orthodox education; every school of our kind now assumes that traditional education is over. Those who were reluctant to implement strategies of blended or completely online education are now more willing to innovate the business learning experience. Conservatives are now more open to formative processes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been most effectively addressed

PR: Having a successful career cannot exist independently of what it means to live together on this planet. Not being proactive with sustainability is not an option."

José M. Martínez-Sierra, Director General, UPF Barcelona School of Management

through public and private collaboration in terms of funding, research, implementation and distribution. We are going to see a new launch of public private partnerships on a global scale. We think this is the future of the school. We are aligning all programs with a private dimension towards this strategy. We recently hired a faculty member who is leading the international public private partnerships agenda to take our school to the next level.

When the pandemic started, I was at Harvard University. Massachusetts Institute of Technology

and Harvard launched in 2012 the Edx platform, which represents a new direction in higher education through massive open online courses. At the time business leaders thought that free courses would end traditional education. However, this is not how higher education works. Education is far more than what students gain in the classroom. It is about the life experience and networks students generate. These networks accompany you throughout your life.

PR: What changes do you think are vital in keeping pushing your school's development?

JMS: I came here to transform a good school into a world-class school of management. Our faculty and students demand that we transform the world. The key is

internationalization. Energy, talent and values exist in the world, and we want to bring them more decidedly to our school.

Diversity in terms of gender, culture and race must be the driving force for the future for our school. Education is the best investment in modern history and will be for many decades to come. It has always been the best way to grow as a person and as a society.



An Asian nexus transforming business, government and society

Dean and President Jikyeong Kang of the Philippines' Asian Institute of Management takes a participant-centered, collaborative and multidisciplinary approach to solving real-world problems

PR: What makes Asian Institute of Management (AIM) unique?

JK: We are a stand-alone business school with our own heritage and legacy, and we try our best to turn the fact that AIM is small to our advantage. For example, we do not have a big engine to turn in terms of introducing innovations. The role of business education is to produce skill sets required by industry — we are agile and can act on what we believe to be the latest trends.

We recently established a school called the Aboitiz School of Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship that houses three master's programs: Master in Entrepreneurship, MSc in Innovation and Business and MSc in Data Science. Our Master's in Data Science is the first in the country, one of the first in the region and last year we welcomed our first intake of PhD students in data science. Its establishment speaks to the strength of our institution.

PR: Has AIM embraced the move to virtual classrooms?

JK: Historically, our school has been deeply rooted in case-based teaching and participant-centered learning. In 2020, we had to transform our seven master's programs to a Zoom environment almost overnight. Our staff worked 24/7 to train and prepare our faculty, we brought in experts on online teaching and even a former actor for stage presence.

The shift towards online teaching has been embraced by students. If you think about the time and money we spend plus the carbon dioxide we generate on travel, a virtual environment is far more sustainable in all sectors. The benefits significantly outweigh potential negatives if done correctly. By utilizing blended learning and hybrid classrooms, we can provide access to learners in far-flung places who would never have had access to our degree or non-degree programs. Online expo-



Jikyeong Kang
Dean and President
Asian Institute of Management

sure will accelerate the pace of badges, certificates and stackable credentials for workers all over the world.

PR: How important will lifelong learning be in future?

JK: Lifelong learning is not going away. People currently change jobs an average of three to four times during their professional lifetime. However, it is predicted that in 20 years workers may see an average of three to four career changes across completely different sectors. Learning incremental knowledge will be constantly necessary.

Most employees currently think that it is up to them to fill in gaps in knowledge and skills. However, it should not be left to individuals to figure out how they can continuously learn and reskill; this needs to also be the responsibility of corporations and governments. Currently, many companies let older staff go because they feel older generations cannot keep up with new technologies. We cannot keep doing this. Companies need to invest in training, retraining and developing staff. The same goes for governments, in terms of placing policies that encourage corporations to consider lifelong learning.



Asian Institute of Management is based in the city of Makati in Metro Manila

PR: What changes would you like to see in academia?

JK: One of my pet peeves is the focus on research and publishing in PhD programs. We want to make sure our graduates are not only excellent researchers but form a basic understanding of the different modalities and skill sets they will need to be good teachers. Teachers now need to keep the interest of a generation of students who expect to be engaged through multiple devices at the same time seamlessly. A completely different skill set is required and institutions need to deliver to meet their expectations.

Additionally, we used to joke about the number of people that read academic articles because they are so specialized. We need to change this attitude. A lot of what we do in academia can make significant contributions to corporations, policies and people's lives. Traditionally, academics keep their knowledge within their own com-

a big portion of this program relates to how to transform the country's higher education sector to embrace the notion of smart universities and digital transformation. The program has been well received and we are getting requests to run similar programs for private colleges and universities.

We are also helping the government launch a track-and-trace app for COVID. Many were floated, but it came to us because we have the best data scientists in the country and can do this easily. This project brought together several societal pillars: funding was provided by the private sector for a government-initiated project. Later, we will work with communities to test the app. Another example is our Center for Sustainable Finance that is led by a thought leader who is an ex-banker. He is in contact with financial institutions, including the Central Bank of the Philippines, regarding to the importance and delivery of sustainable finance.

“The role of business education is to produce skill sets required by industry — we are agile and can act on what we believe to be the latest trends.”

Jikyeong Kang, Dean and President, Asian Institute of Management

munity and most business leaders think that academic research does not bear relevance to actual practices. We need to take knowledge dissemination seriously and broaden our audience.

PR: How important are partnerships for AIM?

JK: I am a firm believer in the full partnership of academia, industry, governments and communities. AIM is currently delivering what we call the Global Academic Leadership Program, which is funded by the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

The government realizes our education system requires overhauls and

We are developing a master's program in fintech and collaboration with the financial industry will be vital in this as well. We are also developing a business law program, because business and law have a lot of intersections that could benefit the real world if we work together. I believe in a multidisciplinary approach to problem solving. Business schools should not just remain in their own world.



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Providing guidance and support on the path to self discovery

Herbert Castéran, Dean of EM Strasbourg Business School, gives valuable insight into the many ways students can pursue their specific programs

PR: Please sum up the essence of EM Strasbourg Business School and what makes it unique? What values and ethos does it stand for?

HC: Our ambition is to reveal people and organizations to themselves. We believe in each personality and we have a clear slogan, "Be Distinctive". This does not mean that we want our students to be different, but that they make a difference by being them-

selves. Our value proposition is based on hard skills and soft skills, but many are geared to a path of self-discovery.

PR: What is your vision for producing the socially responsible leaders and managers of tomorrow?

HC: We have three values: diversity, ethics and sustainable development. Firms must now act as societal actors. They are seeking profits, which is also a condition for sustainability, but they are also considering the impact of their actions on society.

We have developed a specific on-line learning tool for CSR to train our students and our partners to think in terms of sustainable responsibility. There is also a certification system within the tool to make sure they come out of it confident that they understand the principles. Nowadays good managers are required to be genuinely committed and involved in the future.



Herbert Castéran
Dean
EM Strasbourg Business School

PR: How has executive education evolved at your school in recent years and what new programs are on offer, or will debut soon?

HC: We have 14 programs devoted to companies, and our goal is to formulate a precise definition of the exact content of the training on a company-by-company basis. We are also launching a new executive education degree that explores the impact of meditation on behavior and how it can improve decision-making. We are looking for new trends to improve decision-making and to reduce bias. Our goal is to train new leaders with scientific approaches to meditation. It is very exciting because it is a novel approach in France, and in Europe as well.



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