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Cal Poly MBA Students Learn by Doing in China

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Students and faculty from the Orfalea College of Business MBA program recently returned from a 14-day Learn by Doing tour of China that included stops in the cities of Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing.

The excursion offered MBA students an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the global business environment and China's influence on Western business models. While in China, the 28 students met with top business leaders from prominent Chinese companies and socialized with Chinese MBA students from the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) and Tsinghua University.



An international trip to either China or India is the capstone of the Cal Poly MBA program. Professor Chris Carr, who organizes and hosts the annual trip, describes the experience as an excellent opportunity for practicing things such as networking and cultivating relationships in an international setting.

"The trip is an important and eye-opening experience for students because it gives them a chance to gain a firsthand understanding of the influence of foreign countries on Western business models," Carr said. "Other countries like China and India are becoming increasingly important. Future business leaders need to learn how to partner with them."

MBA student Jason Sharma agrees. "Nations such as China help make the world go round, and specifically China cannot be ignored," he said.

Carr believes students come away from the experience with a new perspective on China and international business in general.

MBA student David Hart says the ability to remain open-minded was one of the most important lessons he learned.

“We will be much more successful in conducting business if we strive to understand the cultures of different countries as well as different firms,” he said. “We need to be careful about making assumptions and try to expand our own world view so that we can better know how to interact with others.”

For more information about the Cal Poly Orfalea College of Business MBA program, visit <http://www.cob.calpoly.edu/gradprograms/>.

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About Cal Poly's MBA Program:

The Cal Poly Orfalea College of Business MBA program is focused on the university's Learn by Doing philosophy and includes a full array of core courses, electives and several optional specializations. In-class experience includes simulations of management decision-making scenarios, case studies, team exercises, extensive interaction with faculty and other students, and personal communication and presentation skills enhancement. Coursework is designed to provide future managers with the ability to make data-supported, ethical decisions.

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