

TEACHING MARKETING OVERSEAS TO FOREIGN MBA STUDENTS IN COMPRESSED TIME: DO YOU JUST TALK FASTER?

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ABSTRACT

Increasingly U.S. business schools are establishing MBA programs overseas (Rosenberg, 2004; Duncan, 1996; Buerkle, 1995). They are either partnering with companies, other universities or going it on their own. The trend has taken California State Polytechnic University, Pomona to Vietnam and Siberia; St. Louis University to Madrid; California State University Hayward to St. Petersburg, Singapore, Austria; DePaul University to Poland; California State University, Los Angeles to China.

There are many reasons for schools of business going overseas. According to the William Kooser, associate dean of the University of Chicago's part time MBAA program, "We (University of Chicago) wanted to provide our educational model other parts of the world, and it's a great opportunity for our faculty to interact with business leaders in Asia and Europe (Rosenberg, 2004)." Moreover, Faculty can enhance their credibility on international topics. They can bring their world experiences back into their domestic classrooms. They can also build relationships that will result in international research. International programs also offer travel opportunities for domestic students.

This trend is likely to continue especially as business schools across the country are reporting falling enrollments of foreign MBAs. As a consequence they will most likely increase their efforts abroad. "About 74 percent of master's of business administration programs in the United States reported a significant decline in international applications to their schools in 2004, according to a recent Graduate Management Admission Council survey (Pappa, 2004)." "The number of people taking the Graduate Management Test, the most widely used assessment for graduate management admissions is down on last year's figure by 3.9 percent in the U.S. But for overseas students the decline is 17.5 percent," according to David Wilson, president of the GMAT Admission Council (Murray, 2004).

Foreign students are coming to the U.S. to study in smaller numbers due to visa restrictions, increasing competition from universities in other countries, and more attractive options in their own countries (Murray, 2004).

Many adjustments need to be made when transporting MBA classes overseas. For example, the programs need to take into consideration varying cultural environments, economic development, and language comprehension. A major consideration that is often overlooked, however, is that traditional U.S. programs must often be offered in a highly compressed time format. What do faculty do when they must teach a semester or quarter long course in marketing in a time frame which may be anywhere from two weeks to two days long?

This session will cover a number of issues that must be addressed when teaching a MBA marketing course overseas in a compressed time. It will do so from the perspective of faculty who have taught in a broad range of countries including, Vietnam, China, Russia, Swaziland, Spain, and Poland. These instructors have taught semester or quarter long courses in usually two weeks or less. Some have taught the course in as little as two days.

The issues that will be covered will include:

- 1) "How To Set Up and Administer the Compressed International MBA – An Example From Vietnam" (Andrew Truong)
 - a. How do you pick a partner or do you go it alone?
 - b. How do you choose a time format that will work? What are the considerations?
 - c. How is the program set up to facilitate learning in an abbreviated time format?
 - d. What are some of the problems associated with an abbreviated time format?
- 2) "Using Cases To Teach MBA Marketing Overseas in Compressed Time" (Susan Peters)

Cases have been found to be a successful pedagogical tool in international setting (Clarke and Flaherty, 2002).

 - a. How many cases can you use?
 - b. What should cases cover – domestic companies or U.S. companies or both?
 - c. What length should the cases be?
 - d. How comprehensive should the students' analyses be?
- 3) "Lectures, Readings, Assignments, and Projects – Possible or Impossible in Compressed Time" (Juanita Roxas)
 - a. What topics do you keep in? Which do you exclude? Are some too culturally sensitive?

- b. How much reading can you expect the students to do?
 - c. Can you use the same term projects, e.g. marketing plan or must the projects be modified?
 - d. Marketing Thesis – Are you kidding?
- 4) "Evaluating Student Performance –What Time for Exams?" (Patricia Hopkins)
- a. Should time be devoted to an in class exam? Are other forms of evaluation preferable?
 - b. What type of exams work best?
 - c. What are some of other issues to expect regarding grading the performance of foreign MBA students?
- 5) "Tips For Surviving Teaching An Eight Hour Day and Dealing with Spare Time (If Any)" (Helena Czepiec)
- a. How does an instructor survive teaching an eight hour day in a highly compressed format?
 - b. How do you prepare for teaching the program?
 - c. How do you find time to network, meet with students, experience the culture?

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