

Learning for tomorrow

Building on its 251 years of history, Rutgers Business School strives to innovate and push the boundaries of education

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A lively buzz fills the air as students and other patrons mingle and engage in discussions over steaming cuppas at the university's new premises located at The Working Capital, a co-working space.

The premier business school's relocation to a non-traditional campus venue this year is testament to its continuous drive to seek out new ways of fostering innovation, creativity and collaboration in education, and to keep pace with the increasingly dynamic demands of the business world.

251 YEARS OF LEGACY AND PRIDE

RBSAP is a wholly owned subsidiary of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, one of the United States' oldest, largest and most distinguished institutions of higher learning.

Today, Rutgers Business School educates more than 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students and has a strong network of more than 33,000 alumni.

This year, the school was ranked among the top 10 schools in the US with the most diverse faculty, according to the PhD Project survey conducted by KPMG Foundation.

Rutgers Business School has been running Executive MBA programs in Singapore since 2001. The school also offers open enrolment and customized executive education programs.

Executive MBA graduates in Singapore earn a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree conferred by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (USA) and are invited to attend the annual convocation in New Jersey each year.

Students here generally have at least 10 years of global work experience, and come from diverse backgrounds — among them are medical doctors, scientists, IT and digital marketing executives and supply chain experts.

A CUT ABOVE THE REST

The Rutgers Executive MBA was ranked among the top 20 all-US Executive MBA programs in 2013 and 2014, and 7th in Finance in all Executive MBAs worldwide by the Financial Times; it was placed fourth in the Big Ten Conference in 2014 and 2015.

In 2015, it held the 33rd spot in the world rankings for Executive MBA programs, 26th for reputation and 28th for career advancement by Ivy Exec, an online professional network for executives.

Prof Farrokh Langdana, Rutgers Business School professor and director of the Rutgers Executive MBA, says: “Our vibrant approach to executive-level education involves cutting-edge theory married to real-world applications, taught by professors who are the best in their fields.”

The program emphasizes progressive topics like psychometrics digital marketing in Marketing Management, and technology and a cross-

disciplinary emphasis in Supply Chain Management — all within the Asian and Singaporean context.

Says Prof Farrokh: “Our courses are built from scratch — they have Singapore as their epicenters, and then they incorporate the rest of the world into the discussion.”

He cites the Macroeconomics course he teaches, which discusses the macro-policies of Singapore in the context of global policies.

In the Organizational Behavior course, there is a huge emphasis on how to lead global teams based in Singapore, China, India and the US; in the supply chain course, the supply chains are Asia-centric first and US-specific second — students even visit a company in Singapore to study a supply chain in a real business environment.

Students who have graduated from the Executive MBA can attend future lectures free of charge at the Rutgers’ Singapore and New Jersey campuses.

LEARN FOR LIFE

Rapid technological advancements, increased competition and the speed of change in today’s business environment should compel executives to become learners for life, says Mr Joseph Schaffer, the associate dean, Executive Education, Corporate & Alumni Engagement. Dr Schaffer is also associate professor of Professional Practice and business director of the Executive MBA-Singapore and Rutgers Business School Asia Pacific.

He cautions that failure to commit to lifelong learning could result in stalled or mid-career derailments.

“The Rutgers Business School is extremely proud of our decades-long reputation of offering an executive education curriculum specifically designed for a diverse executive audience, that is rich with cutting-edge, relevant and highly applicable content, all delivered by our world-class faculty,” he adds.

Mr Bhavya Sehgal, an industry representative who sits on the RBSAP Board of Advisors, likes the way the school's courses have been designed around future business issues, digitalization and innovation.

The managing director of Strategy & Innovation – Asia Pacific & Japan, ORC International, adds: “Rutgers is differentiated by the practicality and adaptability of its courses. The board meets frequently to discuss and decide what's relevant and what's not, so students stay ahead of the curve.

“The case study approach, coupled with activities such as industry interactions, provides a balance between learning for tomorrow, and ensuring students have sufficient risk appetite for the future.”

Fellow board member Edward Lau, who is also president of Landmark Global Asia, says the close alignment of the Executive MBA with the business and econ-political dynamics of the region demonstrates Rutgers' commitment to keep pace with prevailing market trends.

He adds: “This prepares class participants to tackle real-life problems better than their peers.”