

Wednesday, April 15, 2009

## International business course offers summer European travel

**Editor's Note:** The following story is part of a series featuring Oakland University courses offered in the 2009 Summer Semester. It is designed to highlight diverse opportunities for students to continue their education year round. For more information, visit [www.oakland.edu/summer](http://www.oakland.edu/summer).

*By Amanda Benjamin, student writer*

The School of Business Administration presents "MGT 681: Globalization Impact—Case Study Europe," a graduate class taught by Frank Cardimen. Starting May 4, the class meets Monday and Tuesday 6:30-9:20 p.m. with five weeks of classroom research, case studies and a guest speaker.

Students will then travel to Austria, Germany, France and the U.K from May 28-June 13. The focus of the class explores the economic, political and social issues that impact any U.S. firm's decision to "do business" in these countries.

"The class was preparing you for your trip to Europe," said student Francesca Vitale. The students learned about a country, its history and culture, and researched one of the businesses. They were prepared to ask good questions and understood strategy, Vitale said. For the first class in 1999, students visited three or four countries.

"The response was overwhelming," said Frank Cardimen, an OU business professor who started the program. He said that students should learn from these countries that have been around longer than the U.S.

"For students, I think being exposed to that broadens your horizons," Cardimen said. "The world, globally, is one big marketplace."

He asserted that people need to be sensitive and exposed to difference cultures and countries if they want to succeed. "They don't have to be experts, but they get that they have to understand the culture and the currency," Cardimen said.

He said he tries to expose the students to the change that is out there. "It's an essential element for a business education at a university."

"You have to find a way to differentiate yourself," Vitale said, adding that this class does that. "At the end of the day, you will reach a lot of benefits from it."

Cardimen said he wanted to teach that there are other factors to make good business decisions. "That is where I feel I have succeeded and that's the greatest joy," he said.

"Cardimen is an amazing, caring man with a lot of experience and knowledge," Vitale said.

According to Cardimen, the most important aspects of the course are the educational experience, networking and ability to be exposed to corporate leaders, the U.S. embassy, Parliament and so forth. He asks students for their input and provides different options for which contacts they would like to learn more about.

The students develop a camaraderie and network with the people they travel with, Cardimen said. All groups meet once a year for a golf outing and dinner, and continue to network.

"I want to go again," Vitale said. "It's really a once in a lifetime opportunity. It's priceless."

Vitale now works for GM, whose programs are very global. She went to the University of Michigan for her undergraduate degree in engineering and earned her MBA with a concentration in international business at OU, where she said she got a better education.

According to Vitale, about 90 percent of OU professors worked or are still working in the industry, and from that comes a wealth of experience and knowledge.

"Oakland University, by far, I would recommend to anybody," Vitale said.

For more information, visit [www.sba.oakland.edu](http://www.sba.oakland.edu).

Current students may register for this class online at <https://blitz.sys.oakland.edu>. Guest students interested in taking this course should follow the undergraduate or graduate link on [this page](#).



*The June 2007 class stands outside the Harley Davidson building in Oxford, U.K.*

### SUMMARY

The SBA offers a graduate summer course that explores the economic, political and social factors of international business first-hand by travelling to Europe.

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