MBA Curriculum 2.0
An Interview with Assistant Dean GAO

The IMBA program of Tsinghua University’s School of Economics and Management launched a significantly redesigned curriculum this year. The new curriculum places a greater emphasis on learning soft-skills, practical application of knowledge, and integrated learning. Assistant Dean GAO Jian sat down with GATEWAY to elaborate on the thinking behind the new curriculum.

Sitting in a beige polo shirt behind his office desk, Dean GAO explained that, “The goal of the new curriculum is to balance knowledge of the business world and application of knowledge through integrated projects. We’ve learned from schools overseas, which place more emphasis on soft skills and integrated application.”

In the second year, the administration of the IMBA program has worked to provide more useful, relevant courses. It is also changing the final thesis paper into a case study report.

“The new program focuses more on soft-skills, such as leadership and organizational behavior, as well as emphasizing the China element. We have a strong China roots program,” Dean GAO said. “Other schools each have their own unique environment. Tsinghua wants to create a curriculum emphasizing its Chinese heritage and also realizing the trend of globalization. Tsinghua needs to revise its pedagogy.”

He paused to sip tea from his Chicago Booth School of Business mug, then continued, “Because Tsinghua gets the top students, it must always improve its courses and its non-course offerings, such as the quality of its students and its career development department. Our objective is to become a world-class program. To do this, Tsinghua will recruit top faculty and improve the standards of its program so it can join the group of schools like Booth, HBS and Stanford GSB.”

SEM Dean QIAN Yingyi initiated the curriculum reform in 2007, creating three teams of faculty members to study the current program and answer the questions, “What are the challenges to Tsinghua?” and “What are other top schools doing?”

What have been the results of the new curriculum? Dean GAO proposed that the new curriculum launch has been a success. He observed that: “More students have applied to the program. The faculty seems to be very positive and supportive. The school has also received positive feedback from the students. In fact, other schools in China have also announced changes to their curriculum reflect to the changes in the IMBA program’s new curriculum.”

For the immediate future, the Tsinghua administration plans to keep the direction of the new program and modules. Next year, it will be combining the six soft-skill courses into three soft-skill courses to erase some of the overlap in subject material.

They will also be revising the integrated projects program and guidelines for graduation to increase the amount of communication between students and faculty; the schedule will also be changed next year. The students will be limited to select a maximum of 20 credits per semester. Dean GAO also mentioned that he hopes that the percentage of international students in the program increases in the coming years.

(Continued on Page 2)
By Ioana Monica SIMION

On a sunny Wednesday morning in April, the Weilun Auditorium overflowed with faculty members and students from the Tsinghua School of Economics and Management. The reason for the commotion was a speech by the former Treasury Secretary of the United States, Mr. Henry PAULSON, titled Leadership on the Brink, named after his latest book On the Brink. On his first visit to the SEM since stepping down as Treasury Secretary in January 2009, Mr. Paulson delivered a captivating talk addressing diverse issues, ranging from the recent global economic turmoil, to the strategic Sino-US relationship and the five leadership traits. The talk ended with an incisive Q&A session, spanning topics such as the bankers’ involvement in the first World War, the contentious issue of the RMB exchange rate and how to link life goals with career choices.

Markets are not to blame

A strong supporter of markets, he cautioned against labeling the economic downturn as a failure of markets, since markets are inherently cyclical. The true cause of the economic problems, he said, was the rigid and outdated regulatory system that did not allow for adaptability. Market innovation to a certain extent is good allowing for capital market development and growth. As an example, he points out how the opening up of short selling in China will aid hedging efforts. However, too much innovation, he notes, especially in the absence of regulatory infrastructure is dangerous.

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Sino-US strategic relationship
China is an engine of growth for the world economy, Paulson said. And, when China does well, the US benefits as well and vice versa. China and the US therefore share a strategic relationship with mutual interests in many areas, including stable and continued global economic growth, flourishing global trade and investment, global stability, in anti-terrorism, preventing nuclear proliferation and clean energy and energy efficiency.

The five traits of strong leaders
He praised the audience on being smart and hard working, but cautioned that this is not a guarantee of effective and strong leaders. After 32 years of financial, governmental and environmental experience, Mr. Paulson shared what he identified as the five traits of strong leaders. Firstly, strong leaders continue to learn and to grow personally. They thus understand their weaknesses and are good listeners. Secondly, strong leaders define their job expansively. They think outside the box, ask themselves continuously what could their jobs be, and they run towards problems, not away from them. Thirdly, strong leaders work well with others. Skills like teamwork and values like caring are critical. People will follow you even if you fail, provided you care. Fourthly, strong leaders have integrity. They do what is legal and what is right. They avoid group thinking. Lastly, strong leaders think of the public good and genuinely care about it. Mr. Paulson underscored the fact that all strong leaders he witnessed maintain a healthy work life balance.

About Mr. Henry M. Paulson, Jr.
Henry M. Paulson, Jr. graduated from Dartmouth in 1968, where he majored in English. He served under President George W. Bush as the 74th Secretary of the Treasury from June 2006 until January 2009. Before going to the Treasury Department, Paulson had a thirty-two year career at Goldman Sachs serving as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer since the firm’s initial public offering in 1999. He is also involved in a range of conservation and environmental initiatives, having served as Chairman of The Peregrine Fund, Inc., Chairman of the Board of Directors for The Nature Conservancy and was Co-Chairman of its Asia/Pacific Council.

Paulson was the first Chairman of Tsinghua SEM’s Advisory Board. During his three-year tenure, he invited internationally famous entrepreneurs and scholars to join the Board, and kept close contact with all members. The Tsinghua-Harvard Executive Education Program and the China Center for Financial Research were both initiated with his support. Currently, Paulson is an Honorary Member of the Advisory Board.
Globalization and Cultural Interactions

Mr. GREEN first talked about his recent book, Good Value. As both a banker and an ordained minister, he analyzed the past 300 years of capitalism though the lenses of history, philosophy, and religion. Looking into human history to understand the market and globalization, Mr. GREEN found that globalization had many benefits to the development of countries particularly in the alleviation of poverty. However, globalization has also led to less attractive consequences such as Europe’s exploitation of less developed countries in the 19th century. As such, markets have been able to distribute wealth and destroy it too. In the recent financial crisis, many parts of the globalized world were affected and the effects of the markets spared no country, forcing many governments to step in.

Mr. Green also noted the merits of globalization in accelerating cultural interchange between countries. We need to understand more about other cultures and histories. He described the recent crisis as one of market fundamentalism. For example, some businessmen failed to consider the social impacts of their business. Many companies define their businesses as organizations to maximize shareholder value and forget the aspects of social and economic contributions. While business is not about charity, firms must consider social and economic impact. Going forward, sensitivity to other cultures is especially important in shouldering the joint responsibility to future generations in the areas of climate change, global stability and environmental degradation.

Personal beliefs to anchor career

As Group Chairperson of HSBC, Mr. GREEN leads some 300,000 people in over 88 countries. His advice to the students was to think about what motivates them, what they want to contribute, and what they want to achieve in life. Some believe that more money leads to more happiness, or succumb to the belief that money measures one’s worth. Mr. GREEN cautioned against falling into these traps. He believes that everyone should understand that there is a greater good and that we would be happier to find careers that make a positive contribution to the world.
Sustainability and the World’s Consumption

Mr. NAIR challenged students to imagine future sustainability issues, such as when the two most populous nations in the world, China and India, have more and more people aspiring to drive and own cars. With such a strain on resources, the two governments would have to intervene. Some of the students questioned the concept of the government making decisions for the people and Mr. NAIR countered by citing examples of governments in China and Singapore intervening from a holistic angle by limiting car ownership and/or car travel while providing more efficient public transport. Having previously chaired an environmental consulting company with operations across Asia Pacific and having lived in various countries, Mr. NAIR was able to bring in his observations of different corporate, government and community factors. Another area of concern was food, for example, we are confronted with the collapse of fishing industries in many parts of the world. There will be further pressure on seafood sustainability as Asia’s income levels continue to rise leading to higher demands for seafood, something that is enjoyed in many Asian cuisines.

Sustainability - Starting from Self

The interactive exchange ended with a student asking Mr. NAIR what could be done immediately at the individual level to support a drive towards global sustainability. Mr. NAIR stressed that everyone needs to be engaged in these critical issues. From the perspective of business, leaders need to consider the responsibilities and value of price on externalities. For example, supply chains should not continuously seek to lower the cost of the supply chain through lower labor costs. Instead, businesses should start to by revamping business models and be charged for carbon footprints. While this will have tremendous impact and cause an immediate price increase, the surcharge on the price of carbon would direct consumption towards local sources and thus greatly reduce the intensive use of resources involved in distribution for many of today’s business models. The take away from Mr. NAIR’s talk was clear; there is an urgency need for sustainability.

Corporate Social Responsibility: The Strategic Differentiator?

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become the new buzzword in business. In China, the areas garnering the most attention have been on efforts to lower carbon emissions, and bridging the urban and rural wealth gap as well as the gender divide. But is this new trend simply corporate efforts of “CSR-washing”, or is CSR emerging as a legitimate strategic differentiator for companies? On March 31, 2010, students had the privilege to hear about the trends, opportunities and social impact of CSR from Ms. PEI Bin, Director of Partnership Development at BSR China—BSR is the world’s largest CSR consultancy. Ms. PEI stressed that CSR is now an important part of corporate strategy, no longer can it be viewed as an afterthought or an add-on. Rather, CSR must be integrated into the company’s vision and business strategy and must be linked to public needs, only then can a company maximize its profitability. Summed up beautifully, Ms. PEI said businesses of today must focus on the industry standards of a “Triple bottom-line”: profit (stakeholders), people (employees and customers), and planet (sustainability).

Ms. PEI further explained that CSR is not simply about conducting philanthropy or donating money. CSR should be defined by responsible operations, from being energy efficient, incentivizing employee volunteering, greening the supply chain, to providing healthy working conditions. More importantly, CSR is about aligning business with the world’s needs because businesses can create tremendous value and contribute to a just and sustainable world by developing innovative solutions to problems and creating wealth.

Corporate Philanthropy

An important component of CSR is corporate philanthropy. Ms. PEI offered much advice on how firms can conduct this strategically to create a win-win situation and maximize value for both the company and society. Ms. PEI suggested that companies could begin by: 1. Identify the link(s) between public needs and business strategy; 2. Integrate corporate philanthropy into the long-term business goals of the company based on respective core strengths and expertise; 3. Establish the right partnerships fit, and 4. Ingrain the philanthropic cause into the businesses’ and employees’ value systems, thus, guiding the way of thinking. The above provides a pathway to achieving a win-win partnership for the business and society, only then can philanthropy create new and differentiated economic value for businesses.

About BSR: Business for Social Responsibility serves as a CSR consultant to many Fortune 500 companies. Their expertise and experience are in the areas of developing sustainable supply chains, environment (water and climate change), strategic philanthropy and in establishing a platform for CSR dialog. Their clients in China include IBM, Pfizer, GE, Chevron and China Mobile.
18 MBA students from Tsinghua SEM organized and attended a 10-day study trip to Bangkok, Thailand and Singapore during the winter break in February. The students engaged with CEOs and top executives in 25 companies and government agencies in different industries and gained perspectives on doing business and working in these two countries. LI Huibin (PMBA Class of 2012) provides a reflection on the trip.

**Singapore: A determined garden city**
The first impression of Singapore was the beautiful environment of lush greenery, clean streets and buildings. I was interested to understand Singapore's public housing policies and was impressed by how well maintained the buildings were, looking so new despite some being built more than 30 years ago. I was equally impressed with how people of different beliefs and races live so peacefully with one another and have managed to build Singapore into the economy it is today. During the four days in Singapore, we visited top companies in the food, banking, real estate and IT industries, a government agency (Contact Singapore) and the National University of Singapore. The determination of Singapore companies to create a footprint with very few natural resources left a strong impression on me.

**Keppel: Macro vision, detailed implementation**
One of our visits was to Keppel Corporation, one of the largest Singapore conglomerates, where we met with the CEO, Mr. CHOO Chiau Beng, and senior management. Keppel has business units covering marine, real estate, infrastructure and environment sectors, and one of its major shareholders is Temasek Holdings, a big name in the region. Keppel has various projects in China, including the Tianjin Eco-city, which Keppel is developing. We were impressed with Keppel's estate and infrastructure management with a focus on eco-sustainability. Keppel shared with us on the need to look far ahead, to strategize and to be transparent in work. From conversations with the top executives we realized that Keppel has an eye on details too. In any project, Keppel looked into all possible angles and combs through details to ensure smooth implementation and safety for all workers. YANG Ning (PMBA Class of 2012) remarked, "I can see the concern and importance Keppel attaches to its workers. For such a huge company to delve into details like workers' welfare, suggests they are a great organization."

**Breadtalk: To Care**
Our first impression of the Breadtalk visit was the air of openness and vibrancy in its headquarters. The office space was partitioned by glass and everyone had a smile on their face. Even the cakes with which Breadtalk welcomed us looked so enticing.

We had a long and in-depth discussion with Breadtalk's CEO, Mr. GOH Tong Pak. Mr. GOH was previously in the Ministry of Education (Singapore) and had been to China many times for official duties. He is a China know-it-all. Mr. GOH shared that Breadtalk does not just sell bread; it sells an experience too. Breadtalk grows with its customer base by constantly offering new offerings and healthier selections. Breadtalk also ensures it understands the local markets through local research and production to meet local needs.

The personable Mr. GOH also shared with us his philosophy of life. For him, a fundamental value in life, as well as in doing business, is to care. This concern extends to business partners, and employees as well as friends and family. CONG Cong (PMBA Class of 2012) summed up the Singapore leg of the Study trip, "Breadtalk's success was built on its culture of care. In this study trip, I have learnt to better appreciate the culture of Singapore; the rigor, seriousness and dedication of Singaporeans to their work are qualities that left the strongest impression on me."

**Thailand: Self Reliant Land with the Thousand Buddhas**
The second leg of the trip was in Thailand. Thailand is indeed the land of smiles. Throughout all six days of the trip, we were warmly welcomed by all, whether we were in a village or in the capital city of Bangkok. During this trip, we had the chance to visit corporations in Bangkok, the Business Schools of leading Universities (Chualalongkorn, Thammasat, and the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce) and Buriram, a province in
the northeast of Thailand.

PDA: Cabbages and Condom – a Charitable Enterprise
Our first meal in Thailand was at a restaurant with the unique name of Cabbages and Condom. The restaurant was run by the Population Community Development Association (PDA), an NGO that started out working in villages to promote the idea of birth control in a bid to arrest poverty issues. The villages soon took to the idea of birth control and PDA simultaneously helped improve their earnings by introducing new scientific ways of farming their cabbages, sponsoring schools and providing micro-loans. PDA soon turned its focus to the battle of Aids in Thailand and thus the restaurant was fully decorated with messages on on Aids alongside their work in the village. “The visit to Burirum reminded me of Korea in my childhood and caused me to think of the stages of development between the two countries. What left a strong impression on me was how passionate the PDA staff in the village was in helping the villagers to improve their standards of living. This will be my constant reminder - passion in my work.” LEE Won Uk (IMBA Class of 2010)

Creative Juice: More than Just Innovation
We had the opportunity to visit the leading companies of many different industries in Thailand, such as SCG (paper, building materials, chemicals and distribution), MMP (plastic materials), CP Foods (agro-industry and food). But I was most impressed with Creative Juice, a leading advertisement consultancy company. Creative Juice started out in advertising but ventured into a consultancy that identifies the strength of clients, and brings in media and advertising to help publicize the strengths of these companies. Executive Director, Mr. Ravipa PHIWKHAO shared his insights on the journey of change for the company. We were treated to watching many award-winning commercials created by the organization. The awards that lined up the entire walkway to the offices were testimony to the success of Creative Juice. Paul KIM (IMBA Class of 2010) shared his thoughts, “A leader with acute business sense and determination is very important for any business. With these qualities, Mr. Phiwkhaoo brought Creative Juice to new heights. With his experience in consultancy, he brought with him a social and business network and Creative Juice definitely benefited from him as the leader.”

Experiential Learning
Reflecting on the 10-day study trip, not only have we learned about the similarities and differences in business culture in the two countries, we also gained insights on differing management practices. I am convinced that we have to continue to build our knowledge of management not just from books and lectures but also from talking with more of these successful executives and from our own practice.

LI Huibin (PMBA of Class 2012) contributed the article to Gateway. LOW Ming Hwee and LIN Hui-Yi translated the article.

Experience Sharing on Career Change
By Karmen Yu
Ms. ZHANG Feifei is a Tsinghua alumnus who graduated from the IMBA Program in 2009. Her interesting career path started off as a program manager in the Education sector and now she’s working as a consultant. As many MBAs use the MBA program as a platform to make a career switch, especially into the fields of finance or consulting, Feifei’s experience and insights are useful.

Feifei obtained her undergraduate and masters degree in history. Upon graduation, she worked as a manager for the International Educational Program at Beijing Normal University. She excelled in her position with her outstanding analytical and organizational skills. After several years of hard work, Feifei felt that she had reached a bottleneck in her career and wanted to find new breakthroughs and challenges. This was the main reason for her joining Tsinghua’s IMBA program in 2007.

The IMBA experience led Feifei in a new direction. She broadened her horizon as well as expanded her network during those two years. Furthermore, she had also used the opportunity to understand more about herself, such as her true interests and capabilities. Feifei believed that if you do not realize what you really want in life and career, you will never find your goal. It was after this ‘self-discovery’ journey that she decided to pursue her career in consulting. The new ways of thinking and frameworks she gained in her MBA study, such as leadership, strategy and managerial communication, are all very helpful for her current work.

How can she be so sure of the career move? Actually, Feifei had struggled in making such a big decision since the opportunity cost for this change was very high. She had to give up her previous achievements in the education department and start in a brand new role. Her advice to us is: “choose the career that you have interest and talent in and more importantly, in order to reduce the loss you might need to bear, it’s wiser for you to pick an area that you can use your previous work experience and knowledge.” In her case, Feifei could utilize her skill sets in running educational programs in her new consulting projects. She further stressed the importance of soft skills like leadership, communication and negotiation. “If you know how to influence other people, you will be able to take control of situations. These important skills are needed to advance in your job much quicker than others”.

In Thailand, learning from the paper exporter SCG

Photo by YANG Ning
New Year Gala

By Charles HSIEH

At the end of December 2009, the faculty members and student community from the School of Economics and Management (SEM) held a New Year Gala to celebrate the upcoming New Year. The event showcased the talents of the student population and brought together all students within the SEM onto a platform for communication and cultural exchanges.

The International MBA (IMBA) Class of 2011 was an active participant in the New Year Gala with each Section presented diverse performances. These two of performances caught the eyes of many: Musical—A Love Story by Section One and Belly Dancing by Section Two.

Solo DENG directed the Musical Opera with the help of more than a dozen students in both front and back stage. Students in the group were hesitant to perform at the beginning, “At first, most of us were uncomfortable with the thought of performing; we were worried about not doing a good job and embarrassing ourselves on stage,” said YANG Shan-Shan, the lead actress. However, with a combination of hard work and efforts from all the participants wanting to do their best, the musical was not only a success on stage, it was also a bonding moment for the class members in which a strong unity of friendship was born.

If the musical opera brought together the classmates, the Belly Dancing certainly was a show of enthusiasm and life of the Tsinghua students. Even though the Belly Dancing show did not hit the stage until the end, it was no doubt the climax of the night.

The cheering and clapping of the audiences rocked the place as the performers went on the stage; it was the exact reaction the Belly Dancing team had hoped for, “Because belly dancing is quite exciting, and can easily shake up the atmosphere. This is a good way to show off our passions in life and for MBA,” explained JING Xin, one of the performers of the dance.

As the music waned and the crowd dispersed, the New Year Gala left a memorable experience for both participants and audience. It was the perfect platform for students from all walks of life to come together and share their talents. “Every class prepared very well for the show at the Gala, and it was a wonderful event,” recalled JING Xin.

More than just showcasing the talent, the Gala was also a platform for cultural exchanges, “shows might be either interesting or dull, but everyone worked hard equally. We learned a lot about each other through the Gala. Being a part of the New Year Gala was precious and special, it will be a part of our Tsinghua memory for many years to come,” said Shan-shan.

Justin HO, the lead dancer in the musical, summed up the event, “It was an unforgettable night where the class bonded through music and the performance.”

IMBA Networking Party

By LOW Ming Hwee

Tsinghua SEM held its annual International MBA Networking Night on April 23, 2010 at Ten Years After Café. IMBA alumni, current IMBAs and incoming students (Class of 2012) were all invited.

The event began with an address by Dean QIAN who updated the alumni on the new MBA curriculum and talked about his recent trip to MIT. There, the IMBA program was highlighted by Professor Susan HOCKFIELD, President of MIT, as one of the 3 major initiatives between Tsinghua University and MIT.

Amongst the distinguished guests who attended the networking night were Mr. MA Zhanchun, President of China National Investment and Guaranty and Mr. SUN Zhaodong, Senior Deputy Manager of China Construction Bank. From Tsinghua SEM, Professor GAO Xudong, Director of MBA program and Ms. Pearl MAO, Executive

(Continued on page 9)
Many of the alumni appreciated the chance to continue to stay in touch with Tsinghua SEM and to meet the new IMBAs. Maximilian E. Johnson (Class of 2009) noted that such events allow the alumni to keep in touch with fellow graduates and meet new people. “This was done on the common platform of the Tsinghua family and where we share the interests of Tsinghua.”

For the current IMBAs, Larry Lian (Class of 2011) saw the benefits of knowing more people through which to understand the different industries possibly leading to more job and development opportunities. Xu Bin (Class of 2012) knew he made the right choice to enroll in Tsinghua SEM as he saw how open the alumni and current IMBAs were in sharing their insights and experience during his conversations with them. It was a successful event, providing the ideal platform for past, present and future Tsinghua IMBAs to mingle and share their interests and experience.

Mercedes-Benz Tour - The Grown-up’s Candy Shop

By Charles Hsieh

Chit-chatting in high pitch voices, cheerfully taking photos, running around in excitement, and showing off youthful exuberance, a group of Tsinghua IMBAs seemed to have transformed from their usual calm and collective persona into little kids visiting the candy shop for the first time. The place was at Beijing-Benz DaimlerChrysler Automotive factory just outside the fifth ring of Beijing in April 2010. The tour was organized by Professor David Robb of the Operational Management class with intention to use the visit to demonstrate a working operation.

The tour was more than a learning experience but also an eye-opening fieldtrip of fun and excitement. “It is a rare opportunity to get up close and observe the making of a renowned luxury automobile like Mercedes-Benz. Moreover, it is special to see it here in China”, said Ju-Tzu Kao (IMBA Class of 2011).

The factory commenced operations in the beginning of 2006 and assembles up to 25,000 Mercedes-Benz E- and C-Class sedans each year. As the excited students arrived, they were greeted and received by Mr. Sung-Soo Lee who had graciously coordinated the visit by walking the IMBAs through various work stations of stamping, welding, painting, and assembling. Throughout the tour, there was something for each student. The general response for the tour was positive, and students left with multiple impressions of the tour. The tour was a learning experience for many, “It was interesting seeing what a multinational manufacturing plant in China would be like. You always wonder whether the operations in a foreign country would be the same as that in the home country. The sheer scale and size of the factory was very impressive given that their annual capacity pales in comparison to their factories found back home.” said Eugene Huang (IMBA Class of 2011).

For others, it was simply to see “the potential in luxury automobiles and the emergence of hybrid cars”, said Simon Chow (IMBA Class of 2011). And yet, for some like Li-Yan Gao (IMBA Class of 2011), it was a trip to the candy shop as she recounted the tour for her friends, excitedly mimicking the sounds and animations of the automated robotic arms found in the assembly lines of the factory. As the tour concluded in the end, it was a great activity for the Tsinghua IMBAs to become familiar with a top multinational business organization and its manufacturing process. It was a day well spent.
Student Life

Student Ambassadors Welcome New Students

By Maurice LI

The Spring semester is a time when the IMBA program at Tsinghua welcomes prospective students the world over for applications and interviews. Understanding that applying for graduate school in a foreign country can be a daunting task, the MBA office, working alongside students from the Student Ambassador Program (SAP), have developed a series of outreach programs designed to facilitate this process for prospective international students.

With the support of the MBA office, the SAP has developed and executed programs that aim to help prospective students throughout the entire transition process – from decision-making, to moving to China, to student orientation – these activities include applicant outreach, interview-day hosting, campus open-day, as well as providing input for the school’s new website.

When asked to sum up the primary role of the SAP, Tom PAN, President of SAP for the IMBA class of 2011, said, “because of the collective international experience and resources of the SAP members, it is essentially an additional resource that the MBA office can leverage on to connect with international entities such as prospective students and employers as well as the media.” He goes on to add that the SAP also serves as an official feedback mechanism for prospective and current students, allowing the ambassadors to work closely with the MBA office in continually shaping the IMBA program, such as improvements to the curriculum or the application process.

SAP and the MBA office recently hosted an Open Day event for the incoming IMBA Class of 2012. The event aims to give students a glimpse of student life, see the campus as well as an opportunity to learn more about the IMBA program from current students and the faculty. Of the many students who flew in from all over China and the world, Neil SCHWARTZ – a new student from the US currently living in Shenzhen – had this to say about the event, “The open day was a very positive event and I’m glad that I came to Beijing to attend it. It was a great opportunity not only to meet future classmates but also to get a feel for what everyday life as a student in the IMBA program is like”.

About the SAP
The Tsinghua IMBA Student Ambassador consists of a select group of student volunteers dedicated to promoting the “Tsinghua IMBA Spirit” within and beyond the campus. They play an integral role in projecting the Tsinghua IMBA image to various stakeholders, including prospective students, employers and the general public. This year’s Student Ambassadors comprise of 22 first-year IMBA students from 10 different countries.

For more information, log onto:
China Roots: Experiencing Shanghai

By LOW Ming Hwee & Dipak SUNDARAM

The China Roots Program grand finale was a trip to Shanghai during December 12-16, 2009. This trip complimented the various lectures held in the SEM to allow Tsinghua SEM foreign exchange and international students to develop a better understanding of the business environment in China. The Shanghai visit was a relaxed trip that consisted of company visits, meeting with the Tsinghua Alumni, and some sightseeing. A total of 25 students, including International MBA students and exchange students went on the trip.

Company visits included the GTJA Allianz Funds and McKinsey (Shanghai). At GTJA Allianz Funds, a joint venture between Guo Tai Jun An and Allianz of Germany, the CEO, Mr. FU Xuedong, welcomed the delegation warmly. Mr. CHEN Suqiao, Head of Research and also a Tsinghua alumni, briefed the delegation on the background of the company and shared his views on how the company continued to stay on the top of the game. He highlighted the need to strike a balance between reading global trends and the need to understand the China market intimately. This balance would continue to be critical to the success and continued growth of the company.

Mr. Jose Luis CORTES from Peru, an exchange student from the National Chengchi University, enjoyed the visit to GTJA Allianz. As top managers hosted the delegation, he gained an in-depth understanding of how the business was managed as well as the strategic direction for the firm. “This allowed MBAs to tap into the experience of the company directly,” he said.

At McKinsey (Shanghai Office), the Director of Professional Development for Greater China, Ms. Miranda SHU received the delegation. She walked the group through the recruitment process, the career progression of a McKinsey consultant, and the professional development opportunities McKinsey provides to every one of its consultants.

Mr. Markus SEIDLER, from Austria, an exchange student from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, noted the presentation offered insights into the company’s culture, but felt it could have been better if Ms. SHU had shared more about the current business of the Shanghai Office.

Further insights – Tsinghua Alumni and Fudan University

The delegation also visited Fudan University’s School of Management. Ms. Marcela BREVIS, a student from Chile in Fudan’s IMBA program, shared about the school and students’ MBA experience and life in Shanghai. Ms. Victoria MACHA and Mr. Dipak SUNDARAM, (IMBAs Class of 2011) from Tsinghua followed on with a presentation of SEM and a video clip about the IMBA experience in Beijing. After a tour of the school facilities, the visit concluded with a dinner hosted by Fudan. From the interactions with the students at Fudan, the delegation came away with a better understanding of the school as well as insights on how people living in Shanghai see the city.

The delegation also had a chance to have dinner with Tsinghua alumni living in Shanghai. The alumni shared about the differences between Beijing and Shanghai from personal perspectives. Shanghai is more cosmopolitan while Beijing retains its Chinese culture in tandem with its fast development. Mr. Terence LAM (IMBA Class of 2011) from Australia said the dinner was a good opportunity to learn about diversity in local working culture since the alumni were all working in different fields and companies. The alumni were also a valuable resource for students who wanted to understand more about Shanghai as well as to find work upon graduation.

The dinner was a rousing success with the current students and the alumni toasting one another and the current students sharing their background information and future career directions with the alumni. An instant network was formed for many.

Sightseeing and Further Thoughts

For sightseeing, the delegations visited the Shanghai Museum, the F1 circuit, Nanjing Lu and Xintiandi. Jose LUIS thought the sightseeing helped some of the students, especially the first time visitors to Shanghai, to understand more about Shanghai and was a good way of helping the students start to consider if they would like to settle in Shanghai upon their graduation.

Mr. Darren CHAN, (IMBA Class of 2011) from the United States, remarked how Shanghai had developed since his visit many years back with the swanky towers in the Pudong. He also noted that the city hosted F1, a high-end entertainment business, indicating further changes to the Shanghai experience.

Takeaways From the Trip

Markus SEIDLER was glad to have the opportunity to interact with the various students of the Tsinghua IMBA program and the Fudan IMBA students. Markus summarized that MBAs almost always had a wish list or a strategic roadmap. Most times, they were quite ambitious and challenging. He also shared that MBA graduates should be able to give back to the society, whether in terms of building up companies or in projects to better the society.

The trip provided the delegation with the opportunities to interact with diverse groups of people living and working in Shanghai and to understand the business culture of China better.
Harbin Trip: Who Said Beijing Was Cold?

By Karmen YU

Right after our stressful economics exam, seven IMBA students and one student's spouse started on a 4-day trip to Harbin from 8th to 11th January 2010. It was something of a challenge for us since several of us come from warm or tropical places such as California, Singapore and Indonesia. Just the thought of staying outdoors in -20 degree (Celsius) temperatures was unimaginable. Our Harbin trip began with an exciting visit to the Siberian Tiger Park. A bus took us through the open park and we had close encounters with hundreds of tigers. It was even better than watching the National Geographic channel. It was a once in a lifetime experience.

What were the most breathtaking attractions in Harbin? They must be the snow and ice sculptures. Our first stop was the Sun Island for the snow sculptures. This island has hundreds of magnificent snow sculptures in the form of towering pagodas, giant Buddhas and even a beautiful dragon. We still tried our best to withstand the chilling wind as we walked around taking pictures and even started snowballs fights.

The temperature dropped further after sunset. We headed to our next destination: the Harbin Ice World. Blocks of ice were carved into buildings and world famous structures such as the Coliseum and the London Bridge. Each building had internal lighting that gave an impression of colorful glittering ice towers. We were all amazed by this wonderland. If anyone of you plan to go to Harbin next year, I highly recommended the ice slide! It was over 50 meters in length. Once you climb the ice stairs to the top of the ice castle, what better way to get down than the ice slide?

We all enjoyed the trip and we were proud of ourselves to have survived the extreme weather. This Harbin trip would surely be one of my most memorable travel experiences.
In fact, my students often challenge me and I just love it when I cannot answer those difficult questions raised by my students. Teaching is more about two-way communication between the teacher and students. I would love to see the beauty and usefulness of Operating Research help our next generation to operate business as we all talk about efficiency these days”, said Prof. Freund.

In his spare time, Prof. Freund runs and reads. Despite being 56 years old, he just completed his first marathon run, in Providence, Rhode Island in 2009. He also enjoys spending time with his three kids, aged 5, 7 and 9 respectively. For Prof. Robert, having a meaningful family life is very important.

Advice for MBAs – Passion and Responsibilities
Lastly, Prof. Freund offers two pieces of advice to our students. First, to do the things about which you are passionate, and secondly, to try to improve the world around you!

Entrepreneurship: Insights to Look Around the World

Professor Donna KELLEY, an associate professor of Entrepreneurship at Babson College, Wellesley, Massachusetts, United States, was at Tsinghua SEM to give a series of four lectures on Corporate Entrepreneurship. Gateway had the opportunity to do a lunch interview with Prof. Kelley to understand more about her research into entrepreneurship.

Since 2004, the major focus area of Prof. Kelley has been on entrepreneurship in Asia. Prof. Kelley is a member of the research project named Global Enterprise Monitor (“GEM”). The GEM was started in 1999 and has been exploring the role of entrepreneurship in national economic growth in 56 different countries in the world. The GEM China team is led by Professor GAO Jian, associate Dean of SEM, and is based at the National Entrepreneurship Research Centre, Tsinghua University. It is due to this exciting linkage that Professor Kelley came to Tsinghua.

Areas to consider in international entrepreneurship
Since Professor Kelley had conducted studies in different countries, Gateway asked her to share her insights on what should entrepreneurs look out for in different countries. She advised that one should consider four major areas. The first is government policy, which will play a major role in influencing the start up of any business in a country.

The Ease of Doing Business report is one measure of the ability of firms to conduct businesses in their countries, such as the ease of starting a business, dealing with permits, employing workers, getting credit, trading across borders, and other factors. Of the 183 economies ranked in the 2010 report (http://www.doingbusiness.org/EconomyRankings/), Singapore was ranked #1, The USA was #4, and China was ranked #89.

The second is social culture environment. A good example is how corporations in countries like Japan and US value failure differently. The former generally sees failure as negative and would not likely hire people with failures, whereas the latter sees failure as valuable experience and tend to hire people who can learn from their mistakes. The third is the level and stability of the economy. China’s GDP per capita is lower than many wealthier countries, but the total level and rate of growth in GDP is very high. Lastly, is infrastructure and the availability of financing sources for businesses. For example, US entrepreneurs have a long history of raising funds by borrowing; whereas Chinese entrepreneurs tend to be more conservative and much prefer to use their savings as capital.

Tsinghua’s program: Learning from different perspectives
Associate Professor Zhu Hengyuan (Henry) from the Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship of Tsinghua University will be visiting Babson as a visiting scholar for one year starting this September. He will work with Prof. Kelly on research about entrepreneurship education. As explained by Prof. Kelley, Tsinghua has a separate department devoted to entrepreneurship, and because of the linkages between Tsinghua and Babson, she anticipates these two schools will have more collaboration, and will both learn from each other and create synergy for their research ability in entrepreneurship. Prof. Kelly also appreciates that Tsinghua brings in people from different countries to lecture on special topics, and provides different perspectives.

Shaping your entrepreneur ideas
Lastly, Prof. Kelley offered some advice to students interested in becoming an entrepreneur. When you have an idea for a business, think of it as an opportunity space that you will mold more specifically into an entrepreneurial opportunity as you acquire deeper understanding. Talk directly to customers, understand current offerings, and consider what unique value you can offer. Then test your ideas inexpensively, for example, make a rough prototype and have customers try it. Remain open to shaping your Plan A into Plan B based on what you learned. The best thing you can do is to get out of your everyday environment, for example, your apartment or office, and observe what goes on around you. This should lead to ideas that better match the reality of the environment you will operate in.

About Babson College
Babson College is located in Wellesley, Massachusetts, United States. Babson College has been heavily focusing on entrepreneurship. According to the U.S. News & World Report, Babson’s MBA program has been ranked No. 1 in entrepreneurship for 17 consecutive years, and is 54th overall in the 2011 rankings.

Facuity Links
Job Hunting: Are You Ready When Opportunities Come Your Way?

By Jonathan KRIVE and Jarunee SINCHAIROJKUL

In the middle of spring, Gateway newsletter had the opportunity to sit down with two IMBA students from the Class of 2010 to talk about their job-hunting experiences. Both of them had already secured their jobs by the end of last year and will start work after graduation in July.

Ms. JIAO Fang Xing, an IMBA from China, will be joining Colgate-Palmolive (China) as a brand manager. She noted that one important thing in job-hunting “is to be always ready for interviews because you will never know when the opportunity will come.”

FangXing still remembers the day that she went for a campus talk by Colgate-Palmolive (China) arranged by the Career Development Center last November. She said, “It was a very interesting talk by high-level executives, and at the end of the speech, the vice president answered my two questions I posed to him. After the talk, I found an opportunity to discuss my questions with him, and passed my resume to him. Unbelievably, I got a phone call that evening inviting me for an interview the next day.”

“My job hunting experience has demonstrated that while we continue to develop our knowledge and capabilities, more important is our attitude,” Fang Xing added. “When opportunity comes your way, you should be ready to bring out your unique points.”

Ms. Pamela CHENG, from the US, will be joining WPP, the world’s largest marketing communications company. As an MBA Fellow, she will participate in a multidisciplinary rotation program across Asia. Pamela gladly shared her job-hunting experience with us.

“The current economic situation has not impacted me too much,” Pamela said. “The key to obtaining jobs in this market depends on how well you position yourself. My experience in China as well as my MBA at Tsinghua has contributed to my unique background and helped set me apart from other candidates.” She highly encouraged MBA students to pursue internship opportunities and take advantage of the time they are in companies to build relationships.

Pamela also shared with Gateway that she found this position through her own channels. Her recommendation to the MBA students of 2011 is to develop personal networks early and actively seek out opportunities that can support their careers. She said, “There are many events arranged by Tsinghua SEM that you can join as well as industry events in Beijing.”

A Busy Semester for CDC

By Jonathan KRIVE

With the second semester well underway, some students are working on group projects and class presentations, while others are studying for upcoming exams. When speaking with students, it appears that many of them are thinking about what the summer will bring. While most students are pursuing internships, some just want a chance to travel or visit friends and family. As the economy recovers, more job and internship opportunities are opening up. However, the first year students of Tsinghua University’s International MBA program still encountered some challenges. Typically students find summer internships through one of the following two ways, Tsinghua University’s Career Development Center (CDC) or through personal relationships and networks.

The CDC is tasked with promoting job and internship opportunities to all students currently studying in the School of Economics and Management, including undergraduates, MBA, and PhD candidates. Gateway recently sat down with Ms. Jade SHI, CDC’s newly hired Executive Director and Ms. Linda LIU, Associate Director of CDC to understand more about how CDC actively reaches out to students. The directors listed some of CDC’s recent undertakings:

• CDC produces CV books that were sent out to more than 500 recruiters. These include more than 50 CVs from international students.
• CDC recently released an English version of its career website, which includes job opportunity postings and a resume pool that is open to companies looking for interns.
• CDC recently hosted a job fair with 12 companies, including manufacturers, a private equity fund, and other service companies.
• CDC recently organized two information sessions with Louie Vuitton Moet Hennessy group and Li Yun Fong investment company.
• CDC continuously offers career-coaching activities on topics such as how to find jobs and special interview techniques.

Ms. LIU offered a few pieces of advice for students seeking internships. “An internship is not just working for a company, it can be doing research with a professor or helping write a case study.” She emphasized the need to think creatively and outside-the-box when defining internships. She also highlighted another point, “Sometimes students are not prepared for interviews. They need to know the company they are interviewing with so that they don’t ask questions that are too simple.” She goes to add that students should leverage on the Tsinghua alumni network. “Alumni members of Tsinghua are a very valuable resource. But students need to communicate with them to build relationships, not just demand jobs,” she said. Her final comment was, “Just call CDC if you need anything, we are a resource for you.”

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Reflections on a Practice Interview with Accenture

By Karmen YU

On March 26, 2010, Accenture invited 3 Tsinghua IMBA students - Terence LAU, Karmen YU (Class 2011) and Ted MUI (Class 2010) for practice interviews. The activity was aimed at helping the Accenture Recruitment Team train their line managers in the hiring process as well as practice sessions for the MBAs. Each of us (the candidate) was interviewed by three Accenture managers (interviewers) in the presence of a trainer, the head of Human Resources for Accenture Australia. The trainer first gave out instructions describing different interview settings.

The managers then started interviewing the candidates and at the end of each round, the trainer commented on the managers’ interviewing skills that proved to be useful advice for us too. From the MBAs’ perspective, this was a remarkable opportunity to understand and experience a globally renowned company’s interview process as an insider.

After listening to the trainer’s advice, the managers then applied these improved interviewing approaches on us. We benefited from knowing what the managers wanted to know about a candidate and how we can improve on our answers and behaviors to impress the interviewers.

Such information helped us improve our own interviewing skills significantly. For instance, we learned that interviewees should not rush to answer a question. It is perfectly fine to ask for 30 seconds to a 1-minute to structure and polish one’s argument. The interviewer looked out for such organization and planning skills.

At the end of this practice session, the trainer also commented on our performance and provided us with invaluable advice. One needs to prepare thoroughly before the interview and carefully consider why this job is appealing and what made it so. Of course, one has to be convincing about what he/she can offer to the company and team as well.

For this reason everyone should be ready to share their work related leadership or problem-solving stories. Furthermore, the trainer pointed out the importance of using “I” instead of “we” when sharing these stories. Should interviewees use “we”, the interviewers might have the perception that the interviewee was just passively involved in the project and not the central, leading force. This could cause doubts regarding the interviewee’s skills and leadership abilities. Thus, preparing for the interview, avoiding hasty responses and highlighting one’s achievements are all must-do’s for a successful interview.
A Fond Farewell…
A Sincere Thank You…
For Inspiring Us
For Showing Us The Tsinghua MBA Spirit
And what it means to strive for…

EXCELLENCE

Your enthusiasm, hard work and talent will be missed.

All The Best, Dear Friends.