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HAWORTH COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



NEW #2 RANKING FOR ISM

At No. 2, ahead of MIT, Harvard, Penn State, University of Michigan and others, SCM World places WMU's program just behind perennial rival Michigan State in the latest ranking recognizing the quality of the program.

[LATEST ISM RANKING](#)



TEACHING IN INDUSTRY

The college is arming professionals with new insights and skills through workshops in a variety of areas and customized offerings for organizations seeking specific skills and best practices.

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GATEWAY TO INDIA

In this second year of the India Gateway course, Dr. Tim Palmer is focusing even more on social entrepreneurship, exploring what companies are doing locally to make communities stronger, cleaner, healthier and more vibrant.

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Editor: Cindy Wagner
cindy.wagner@wmich.edu
(269) 387-5928



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Supply chain program ranks No. 2 in world

contact: Stacey Markin
January 26, 2017 | WMU News



In WMU's integrated supply management program, students have multiple hands-on learning experiences.

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University's integrated supply management program recently ranked second on a listing of the top 100 universities for supply chain talent produced by SCM World, a cross-industry learning community powered by the world's most influential supply chain practitioners.

Top supply chain talent

The No. 2 ranking places WMU ahead of MIT, Harvard, Penn State, University of Michigan and many other programs. Coming in first in this year's ranking was perennial rival Michigan State University's supply chain program. The survey respondents are industry professionals who valued WMU's connection with industry, curricular innovation and ability to prepare students to add immediate value to organizations in the ranking process. The ranking indicates that industry professionals see a degree from WMU as a marker of top supply chain talent.

The survey respondents were able to select from among 190 university and college options on the poll and were given the option to specify other universities or business schools not available in the pre-populated list.

The results of the survey show that hands-on experience may often be the differentiator in program success. SCM World cites a recent survey about the ideal skill mix that supply chain professionals identified as needed for 2020 and beyond, which stated that communication, strategic thinking and change management were among desired skills. According to SCM World, "Skills like these develop fastest in the world of work, which may explain some of what we at SCM World saw in our latest ranking data compiled in late 2016."

Multiple experiences offered

"The ability to offer our students multiple experiences through projects, consulting and required internships allows them to gain experience in the areas that supply chain professionals most value," says Dr. Robert Reck, professor of marketing and director of the Center for Integrated Supply Management. "We work hard to stay close to industry, listen to the needs of employers and adapt our curriculum to reflect the realities in the field. This ranking shows that our efforts are recognized and appreciated by hiring managers."

WMU's ISM program has evolved to extend students' knowledge of the basic elements, issues and problems facing supply chains in the context of cross-functional, demand-driven, value-added networks. The program includes focus on customer relationship management; governance; lean continuous improvement, including validating students as Lean Six Sigma Green Belts; risk and change management; new product development and commercialization; sustainability; technology; the functional activities of purchasing, operations and logistics; and many other areas.

Students have the opportunity for immersive learning opportunities such as special projects courses, simulations, internships and Bronco Force, an innovative student and faculty consultancy, which aids companies with their supply chain challenges.

"WMU earning the second highest spot on SCM World's list for top supply chain talent does not surprise me; nothing can truly match up to our opportunities," says Rachel Larson, a senior in the supply chain program. "For me, Bronco Force is a great example. The consulting experiences gave me the opportunity to apply everything I've been learning. Also, our faculty members continuously improve the program by meeting with employers to see what they value in employees and then adjusting the curriculum to reflect those values. When I leave the ISM program, I will not only have a degree but valuable skills to truly succeed in the professional world."

The SCM World recognition places WMU in an elite circle of top supply chain programs and is another in a long string of accolades for the program, including a No. 9 ranking from [Gartner](#) and a No. 2 ranking for emphasis on technology in the curriculum by [Software Advice](#).

Additional information

Access SCM World's report at scmworld.com/top-supply-chain-universities-question-reputation.

For more information on WMU's integrated supply management program, visit wmich.edu/supplychain.

For more WMU news, arts and events, visit wmich.edu/news.

Workforce Development Programs Arm Professionals with New Insights and Skills

New and continuing education programs offered by Western Michigan University's Haworth College of Business are providing professionals with new skills in the areas of leadership development and executive and workforce education.

“The college is pleased to offer a variety of workshops for executives and business professionals seeking new insights,” says Dr. Satish Deshpande, interim dean at the Haworth College of Business. “Professionals in all industries can benefit from the additional training these programs offer.”

Education and Applied Solutions

Workshops from WMU's Center for Integrated Supply Management focus on developing a supply chain professional or organization at the highest level. Offerings include an advanced purchasing certificate, a certificate in warehouse design, material handling and operations, a certificate in operations supervision and leadership, and Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification.

“We intentionally take a more holistic approach with the aim of truly transforming a company over a period of one to two years through education and applied projects,” says Ken Jones, director of education and applied solutions. “Unlike the vast majority of comparable executive education programs, we create customized workshops to serve small to mid-sized companies, and develop in those companies best practice capabilities.”

Courses take place throughout the late winter and into spring. More information can be found at wmich.edu/supplychain/center/solutionsworkshops or by contacting Jones. [Email Ken Jones](mailto:ken.jones@wmich.edu) | (269) 387-4143.

Emerging Leaders Development Program

The Emerging Leaders program focuses on developing leadership skills for managing top talent and driving results in a rapidly changing world. Program attendees will learn how to manage

personality traits in their teams and themselves, building emotional intelligence skills, as well as learning more about joint business planning, social networking, sustainable business practices and more.

“Participants in the Emerging Leaders program will have the opportunity to customize the program to fit their individual needs,” says Bob Samples, instructor of marketing and director of the program. “The program offers a variety of tracks to ensure everyone receives the best possible experience.”

The program will take place Monday, April 10, through Thursday, April 13. The cost of attending is \$4,995 and includes lodging, breakfast, lunch and two evening events. Registration is limited to 25 participants.

More information and registration can be found at wmich.edu/foodmarketing/emergingleaders. Questions can be directed to Samples. [Email Bob Samples](mailto:Bob.Samples@wmich.edu) | (269) 387-6122.

Walking through the Gateway to India



Western Michigan University's immersion course India Gateway is a two-week study abroad opportunity that is "intended for both graduate and undergraduate students who want to experience the intersection of business, social responsibility and sustainability in an international setting."

That wording from the syllabus describes a meaningful trip, but as Dr. Tim Palmer, professor of management, elaborates, the trip's purpose is much deeper. "Every faculty member who teaches about the reasons firms consider international strategies includes a discussion about the ability to lower costs by moving some operations to countries with lower labor costs. My view is that students should also witness what it is like for those employees. They earn a fraction of what Americans are paid and the lifestyle permitted by those wages doesn't come close to what we enjoy in the U.S. I think it's important for students to see this directly. It might make sense strategically to outsource; however, we can't forget there are people like us trying to support their families in these countries."

In this second year of the India Gateway course, Palmer is focusing even more on social entrepreneurship, exploring what companies are doing locally to make communities stronger, cleaner, healthier and more vibrant.

Joined by Dr. Jennifer Harrison, faculty specialist II and director of field education in WMU's School of Social Work, Palmer and students reflected in depth upon all their experiences, with emphasis on social issues.

"This study abroad course has a meaningful dual focus on sustainability and social justice and how the two can exist in business and nonprofit ventures in India and globally," says Harrison. "Students were able to experience the sometimes jarring but important point-counterpoint of trips to beautifully resourced corporate settings one day and rural villages receiving aid from nonprofit organizations the next. Crucial learning took place through this juxtaposition of resources of all types and how they are used to advance sustainability and social justice, or detract from it. It is the plan of the Haworth College of Business to expand this cross-cultural exchange and learning by partnering with a sister course in 2017 with the College of Health and Human Services, sharing the travel experience as one group."



Palmer



Harrison

For Palmer, the goal of the trip is to deepen understanding of India generally, the complexity of international business issues and the link between business and social justice.

In addition to daily journaling, he asks students to complete a form called “FACE” before departure. The form asks students to list Facts (F) they know about the trip and where they are traveling. Next, they identify Assumptions (A) they are making about what they will experience (this includes stereotypes and rumors). Third, students identify Challenges (C) and describe what they worry about encountering (fear of interaction with different groups, confusion, time management, safety). Last, they list Expectations (E) and spell out what they hope to get from the experience (people they will meet, knowledge they will gain, skills they will obtain).

“Completing this form prior to the trip allows them to contrast what actually happened with what they thought was going to happen,” says Palmer. “A lot of learning takes place when students see the gap between what they thought they were going to experience and what they truly experienced. How often are our expectations wrong because they’re built on incorrect assumptions? How many chances do we not take because of these faulty assumptions? These are valuable takeaways that can be life changing.”

“This course has forced me to think critically on subjects and topics in a way I never had before,” says senior Kennedy Cockrel. “The cultural differences and attitudes towards sustainability in India have influenced my own opinions and viewpoints immensely. Now that I have gained a better understanding of global business and ethical business practices, I look at big corporations differently. I not only want to research a company’s technological successes, but I am also concerned with their sustainable initiatives and policies. In the future, my goal is to work for an organization that has standards built around sustainability and makes social action a priority. Now, it means more to me than ever to be a part of an organization that gives back and is fully aware of its carbon footprint.”



Students visit companies, startups and nonprofit organizations where they have access to leaders who spend time with them in discussion about the complexities of business, government and society in India. And, this isn’t an “immersion” course in name only. Students get many chances to interact with people outside of organized activities too.

The last item on the trip agenda is a valedictory ceremony where students are asked at the trip’s outset to plan to wear ethnic Indian attire. “Students have two weeks to make their way to shops in auto rickshaws, barter with shopkeepers and pick out clothing that is typically unlike anything in their closets. Many of the women on the trip buy beautiful sarees for this event. But dressing in a saree isn’t like putting on a pair of slacks. Students need to seek the assistance of housekeepers in the guest house to help them get dressed. And since few of these very kind

women speak English, students have to find ways to make themselves understood and gain assistance. Every moment on the trip, even small activities like getting dressed, teach us something new.”

Palmer notes that when the students arrive in the auditorium for the ceremony, you can see a transformation. “Their faces and body language seem to shout pride and self-confidence at having completed the trip and learned about corporate social responsibility; and most importantly, they have learned a lot about themselves.”

“Whether it was blowing my nose at the end of the day, only to have the tissue turn black from pollution, or seeing piles of trash on every street corner, it is evident that India has its share of problems,” says junior Nathanael Timmons. “But it is also beautiful. This trip allowed us to become fully immersed in a completely different and magnificent culture. At a time in our country when having differences leads to conflict, India taught me that by respecting and even engaging with various cultures, we can learn just how beautiful it is to be different.”

This type of trip is not without its challenges.

Palmer pre-screens prospective travelers to ensure they know that this trip can be difficult, as issues of poverty, class and others are explored. “Traveling to India is stressful,” says Palmer. “Each of us is out of our comfort zone. However, because of this, the group becomes almost family-like. Students are always looking out for each other.”

The final reflection just hours before heading to the airport for the journey home encapsulates the magnitude of the experience. “Dr. Harrison led our group reflections, usually every night,” says Palmer. “The final reflection was special. Students summarized what resonated the most for them from the trip. Once they had finished, other students had the opportunity to express to that student why they enjoyed having them on the trip. How often do we get to hear these sorts of things? By that point, so much trust had developed that people felt free to express themselves. There were a few tears—including my own. I’m proud to say.”