

The Sextant

The Sextant is a publication produced by the International Office of the FHNW School of Business. People, projects and programmes with an international aspect related to the School of Business are the focus. It does not reflect the opinions of the School of Business, the FHNW or any other organisation.

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Participation enriches experience



Students Council «playground» to practise business

Studying should be more than just sitting in lecture halls. Those who actively involve themselves in the student community reap rich rewards. "Joining the student council gives us business students opportunities to experiment and grow," says Florian Georg, the current president of the Fachschaft Wirtschaft, the Olten branch of the business students council.

“Our branch is the biggest and most active in the entire FHNW. Possibly this is because we have so many international students here in Olten. At campus Basel for instance, they have a city with many events on their doorstep or at Brugg there is large campus with a sophisticated infrastructure – we lack these but compensate with the liveliest and most active student community,” Florian explains. The student council began as a very small group of a handful of students mostly organising a Christmas and Easter apero. Meanwhile it has flourished to an active 45-member organisation with seven teams responsible for such projects as events, the European Student Network branch and an e-shop.

“We don’t see this volunteering as work – people who join us really enjoy all the opportunities to network, be part of the student community and go the extra mile.

“The opportunities are unique. It’s like we have a playground to learn how to actually do business in a safe environment. We get opportunities to set up small businesses like the e-shop or running events like the extremely popular and profitable Studi-Party,” Florian reports. “It also significantly increases our networks beyond just our campus.”

Exchange Students

Key to many of the activities are the large numbers of exchange students from partner universities around the world on campus Olten. A sub-division of the student council, the ESN team, concentrates on providing buddies and support for the visitors, and organising events such as international dinners or visits to the ski slopes or Swiss cities. The presence of the visitors also enhances the numerous events organised for local students (See box).

The student council, despite rapid and successful expansion, continually sets itself new challenges. The latest project, the e-shop (see box), is a current priority, as is developing more sustainable structures to deal with the inevitable fluctuation. “Although we have more and more people joining each year, we also lose members, and especially lose their IP each year and we’re working on creating an optimised administration to ensure better retention of knowledge.”

“Most of us do this because we love being involved and it enriches our experience of student life. And yes, it enhances our CV’s. When I recently looked at what former key student council members were now doing, it was extremely impressive. The experience gained undoubtedly gave them experiences, networks and skills which advanced their careers,” Florian says.

The Fachschaft Wirtschaft’s members are drawn from the Bachelor programmes run at campus Olten: International Management, Betriebsökonomie, Wirtschaftsinformatik. For full information on their activities go to <http://fwolten.ch/>. There are similar councils at campus Basel and campus Brugg. All such student councils come under the umbrella of FHNW Students (<http://www.students.fhnw.ch/>). ■

Brigitte Sprenger



Joel Vogt (left) and exchange student Essie Ora at one of the Student Council events in October: a pub tour.

Haris Besic - E-shop: „Just do it“

We’ve just re-launched the e-shop where especially the foreign students can buy t-shirts or hoodies as a memento of their time here. I volunteered to take on this project when I was still in my first semester as I’d had some web-site skills but no previous entrepreneurial experience – they gave me a free hand and told me to just do it. Many aspects came together: budgeting, organising, logistics, the technology. We’ve started small but it’s now on solid feet so people after me can expand it further. I initially joined the Student Council to become involved with the exchange students. I was quite shy about approaching people from other cultures and I was worried about my level of English. Becoming a buddy strengthened my confidence and I built a network of friends including in Vietnam: by the time I went on my exchange there, I had a ready-made circle of friends. What I’ve really learnt is organising stuff, how to manage projects. Through experience you discover there need to be schedules, people need to be informed and tasks need to be delegated. You also discover it’s okay to make mistakes.

Tanja Nann – treasurer ESN team: Gaining Skills

Earlier this year we took a large group of exchange students to a national ESN event in Lausanne. This was a whole weekend - 20 exchange students who had to be transported around, fed, accommodated and entertained. And you are responsible for them, you need to make sure that nothing happens. Of course, they are all adults but they are from another country and so for instance they don’t know where places are in Lausanne or how for instance tram tickets are bought. Because they all are from different cultures, they all behave differently and have different needs. So you have to anticipate and plan. Our process was to plan within the organiser group, and clarify what would be done on the day, and then via the Facebook group we had especially created, we’d call everyone to come and meet us and then we could brief them. This was an enriching fun experience. You get wonderful feedback and you gain many friends. And you gain skills and experience in things that you are learning about in theory in class - you are actually doing it.

Brugg Ice Rink opens on Long Night of the Careers on 12 November



The new ice rink on Campus Brugg will offer opportunities to practise high jinks like this 1930’s group in St Moritz.

The opening of an ice-rink at Campus Brugg is one of the many highlights of the Long Night of the Careers to be held there on 12 November. From 6pm onwards students, alumni, locals and business people have access to a wide range of activities such as Career Planning work-shops, Business Yoga sessions, an Alumni Bar, a mini-golf tournament, Dressing for Business workshops,

Memory Trainings, a Soup Bar, or support in Tuning your Profile. The 10 x 30 metre ice-rink, built up early in November, will have its pre-opening on 12 November so visitors can both test the ice and enjoy some mulled wine and raclette from the side-lines. The rink will remain on campus over the entire winter. This is the first year the FHNW joins the suc-

cessful Long Night of the Careers concept which is held simultaneously at 12 Swiss universities. Prof. Stephan Burkart expects the evening will be very popular and will also function as a kick-off for the new Careers Services. More information about both the event and the Career Services can be found at: www.fhnw.ch/business/degree-courses/career-services ■



Coventry University lecturer Dagmar Johnson (inset) and Brugg students during the Latvian lecture.

Latvia and UK Lecture Link-up before Brussels Study Trip

As part of an Intensive Programme, BSc students in Brugg linked up online with Romans Putans of the Jean Monnet Centre for European and Transition Studies at the University of Latvia in October. The Brugg input session kicked off the cooperation which culminates in a Swiss Day at the Swiss Mission and Swisscore in Brussels in November. Prof Robert Buttery, who leads the programme, said the concept enables internationalisation for part-time students within core study subjects. “Our Swiss students will study alongside Latvian students, investigating current EU and Swiss issues which

culminates in the one-week visit to Brussels from 8 to 13 November,” he said.

A similar concept will soon be launched with Coventry University which is another FHNW School of Business partner. Ahead of the cooperation, Dagmar Johnson, lecturer in Strategic and Applied Management at Coventry University visited Olten on 18 – 21 October to discuss further details and teach a class on Brexit – the referendum to be held in the UK on whether to leave the European Union. ■

Partner Profiles

The School of Business cooperates with 130 universities around the world. A full list is on www.fhnw.ch/business/international. Each issue of The Sextant profiles half a dozen of these partners.



Nihon University, JAPAN

Where The University is located in the centre of Tokyo. Tokyo is one of the largest cities in the world and offers everything you can imagine. There are countless cultural and historical activities as well as places to visit and entertainment to be found.

Cooperation Student exchange

Size 14 colleges, 72'000 undergraduates, 3000 graduates run on

1175 international students per year

Study Fields 83 departments in 14 colleges and schools with 22 majors at the graduate school level. Faculties include: law, economics, commerce, art International relations, science and technology, engineering, medicine

The University also offers Japanese language programs

Campus The College of Economics is located in the centre of Tokyo, very close to the major political and financial institutions of the nation and the famed Jimbocho, an area noted for its number of bookstores, are the tranquil grounds of the emperor's palace, a short walk beyond that the seat of government, the National Diet, and the financial district. Getting around is easy using subways, buses, taxis, walking or cycling.

Website <http://www.nihon-u.ac.jp/en/>



University of Economics in Katowice, POLAND

Where Katowice with 2.8 million inhabitants, is one of the most rapidly developing Polish metropolises. Formely the capital of Polish heavy industry, over the last decade it has been transformed into a modern municipality. The city is known for its rich cultural and academic life, with 14 higher education institutions whit a vast area of investments attracting businessmen from all over the world. Among the biggest investors are General Motors Opel, Japanese Isuzu Motors, Spanish Roca, Mecalex etc.

Cooperation Student exchange

Size 11 000 Polish and international students at the Bachelor, Master, Doctoral and Post-diploma levels at the five faculties.

Study Fields Business, Finance and Administration, Economics, Finance and Insurance, Informatics and Communication, and Management.

Campus The main campus is in Katowice and contains classrooms, dorms, library, computer facilities, canteen, sports facilities, student organisations and events. There are also many pubs, restaurants, theatres, cinemas, operas, galleries and entertainment centres close to the campus in Katowice.

Website www.ae.katowice.pl



Universidad EAN, COLOMBIA

Where EAN University is a Colombian high education institution located in Bogotá's Metropolitan area. At EAN, students experience diverse activities for their professional development. Ten million people call vibrant, passionate, sprawling Bogotá home. The energy of this metropolitan heart of Colombia is in part fueled by its hundreds of eclectic and authentic dining hot spots, fantastic wines, and frequent foodie festivals. Ask the locals where they like to eat, then walk off your empanadas and aji with a stroll through the historic district of La Candelaria or during an indulgent shopping adventure on the North Side.

Cooperation Student exchange

Size 4 Faculties, 7'500 students

Study Fields Business Administration, Finance and Economics, programs include: Business Administration, International Business, Economics, Public Accounting, Marketing, Engineering

Campus "El Nogal" is located in Carrera 11 – which is in the metropolitan area of Bogotá. This main building contains 4 faculties, banks, the university management as well as the IT department and computer labs.

Website <http://en.ean.edu.co/>



Kymenlaakson University of Applied Sciences (KYAMK), FINLAND

Where The campuses are located in Kotka and Kouvola, about 130 km from Helsinki. Kouvola, where the International Business program is has a population of 86,302 and the natural beauty of Valkeala and Jaala as well. The town as the cultural heritage of Elimäki and Anjalankoski the town is infamous for its Soviet-like Brutalist architecture.

Cooperation Student exchange

Size About 4,200 students (of whom about 3,300 are undergraduate students and about 900 are graduate students)

Study Fields International Business, Design, Logistics engineering, Business Logistics, Energy Technology and Data Networks Engineering

Campus Kouvola and Kotka are the two campuses. The International Business program is in Kuovola. The atmosphere in Kyamk is very international. Modern facilities, high quality education, and cutting-edge technology are all good reasons to choose Kyamk.

The cities of Kotka and Kouvola which offer plenty of cultural and sports activities, such as downhill skiing, gyms, bowling, cinemas to name a few.

Website www.kyamk.fi



Université Lille 2 Droit et Santé, FRANCE

Where Lille has become a real meeting point of north European and Mediterranean cultures. Only one hour from Paris, 35 minutes from Brussels and 80 minutes from London, Lille cultivates and shows its own entrepreneurial, cosmopolitan character.

Cooperation Student exchange

Size 11 Faculties, 24 000 students, 1050 faculty members and 830 staff, 50 research labs

Study Fields Law, Health, management, and sport. – Over 250 courses!

Campus Located in Lille. There are around 90 student associations, cultural workshops for free (theater, dance, music, slam, photography...)

The University of Lille 2 is the most sportive of France : more than 50 different sports are on offer. The campus is also very international as Lille 2 has 360 partners in over 70 countries.

Website <http://www.univ-lille2.fr/>



Universidad del País Vasco, SPAIN

Where The Basque Country – Main campus located in Bilbao and Leioa. Travelers generally come to Bilbao to see the Guggenheim—some for the art inside, but many for the amazing building itself. The Fine Arts Museum and the Basque Museum may not have been designed by Frank Gehry, but are worth a visit, and you can catch international opera stars at the Palacio Euskalduna. This vibrant city also has a large amount of students which makes it a perfect place for a semester abroad.

Cooperation Student exchange

Size At least 13 different faculties in three campuses. Undergraduate students: 41,724, Postgraduate students: 5,520. And 1,400 international students per year

Study Fields Our courses catalogue is varied and comprises a wide range of programmes in all fields of knowledge, from Health Sciences to Business, Art or Architecture. More specifically, our offer consists of over 60 undergraduate programmes and around one hundred master programmes

Campus Campus of Biscay: A total 13 Faculties and Schools make up our biggest campus. It's located in downtown Bilbao, as well as in the University complex of Leioa (15 km from Bilbao)

Website <http://www.ehu.eus/en/en-home>



From 30th October 2015 ESN Fribourg will be hosting this year's third National Platform for the European Student Network Switzerland. There will be presentations from the national board about their activities so far and their plans for the future as well as workshops for oldies and newbies with topics such as: "How to use the ESN Wiki", "Taking pictures for ESN", "What is ESN?", "Google Analytics",

"Communication and body language", "First Aid" and so on. Finally through team building activities across different sections, participants can meet, strengthen their networking skills and increase the collaborations between the sections in Switzerland. As is fitting for Halloween, various "spooky" celebrations are planned for the evenings.

ESN is a student run non-profit organisation which focuses on student mobility. (i.e. making the exchange opportunities as feasible, cheap and educational as possible.) Each year there are three National Platforms – these are the general assemblies of the national organisation and each one is hosted by a different section. The last NP was hosted by Olten and Berne. ■ TW

FHNW campaign «Face» graduates



Three years ago the FHNW launched a marketing campaign based on „Faces“: current students in the different study programmes across the entire FHNW were selected, then filmed and photographed. One face for the School of Business, Keven Bieber, received his BSc in Business Information Technology degree last month and was

a speaker at the Graduation Ceremony in the Elisabethenkirche in Basel. A spate of graduation ceremonies took place across all three FHNW School of Business campuses in October. For photos go to www.fhnw.ch/wirtschaft/bachelor-und-master/diplomfeiern-2015 ■

Guest Master Students Visit Basel Municipalities



From left: Christoph Breier, Elena Tudose, Dawn Sutherns, Veronica Buga (Photo: Marisa Helfer)

Eleven municipalities in the Basel region hosted 16 Master students from the University of Gloucester/UK, the University of Chi in u/Moldova and the University of Bucharest/Romania during the second international seminar on Public Management held in Basel from September 1-3, 2015. Hosted by the FHNW's Institute for Nonprofit- and Public Management, employees gave participants an insight into their tasks, financial funding and services provided. The students had been prepared for the intense exchange the previous day by the vice president of Solothurn's Amt für Gemeinden, Peter Steiner who gave an overview of the main links between cantons and their municipalities and Landschreiber, Peter Vetter who especially elucidated election processes. Participants also appreciated the exchange on various aspects and challenges in public management in their various home countries. "We're looking forward to coming a next time," participant Dominic Stapleton said. ■ Dorothea Lämmlin

Who's Where?



Liani Eckard, International Coordinator, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia (Photo: Kierin Mulholland)

Twice a year I come to Europe where, for three to four weeks, I visit partner and potential partner universities in Switzerland, Germany and Austria. It is quite intense as I aim to visit between 2 and 3 partner universities per day.. Being on the road like that means I don't have much time for any sightseeing – it's important to stay fit, eat healthily and get enough sleep. I was born and raised in Germany so I know this region – sometimes though I miss time to explore more. For instance, the Alps are so beautiful and it would be wonderful to visit more of this breathtaking region. I've worked as an International Recruitment Coordinator for the University of the Sunshine Coast for 12 years now. We're a large team each responsible for a different region in the world. Our university has about 1000 international students – 10% of the total student population on campus. Tertiary education funding in Australia is very dif-

ferent to Europe. We used to have a student mobility contract with the FHNW School of Business. Australian students didn't realise that Switzerland is also English speaking and that they can study in English here so they were very hesitant to come here. This meant that the exchange was only one-sided and couldn't be continued. However, I'm here now to see whether there are other options to collaborate between our universities. We're offering, for instance, double degree programmes where we transfer the credits of what students have studied here and reduce the length of our programmes: a Bachelor can be attained in one year, a Master in half a year. This is on a fee-paying basis, of course, but we do hope this will appeal to Swiss students as it will give them an additional qualification and our professors absolutely love them. They do very well in our programmes. *BS*



Zekeriya Ter, BSc in International Management Brugg, now on exchange in Latvia

I see a lot of potential in Eastern Europe. The culture really interests me and I want to learn Russian. So you can understand my main reasons to go to Riga, Latvia for my exchange semester. This is also why I chose to learn Russian at the FHNW. Here in Riga 26% of the population is Russian so most people can speak English, Latvian and Russian, which is very special. There is a really good atmosphere here. This is because since the financial crisis in 2008 the unemployment went from 5.8% to 20% and now in the last 3 years it is back down to 10%. I can feel this and there is significant growth. The economy is flourishing and there is a positive vibe again in this country. In comparison to the constantly organised Switzerland, Latvia is quite the opposite – which I find exciting. The standard of living for a foreigner is very good here, I have my own apartment and can buy anything I need. For Latvians with normal jobs the quality of life is still quite harsh, which is why many Latvians are looking for jobs in other countries. As an entrepreneur though I see a lot of potential here. Back in Switzerland I founded my own IT company which does website designs I have been playing with the thought of one day establishing a start-up in Eastern Europe. Many of these nations have well-educated people and a lower salary, so if they can achieve similar quality as for example Germany or Switzerland there is huge potential in starting businesses here. I am sure we will see a

substantial growth in Eastern Europe in the next 5 to 10 years. My uncle for example is building up a company in Bratislava, Slovakia, which is where I will study next semester. Before my studies and starting my own business I worked for Coca Cola for two years as a contractor internationally. Furthermore I worked for "Beverage Partners Worldwide" which is a joint venture between Coca Cola and Nestlé where I had various tasks within the IT management. This international experience is what drove me to study International Management which is the best study programme I could find for myself. In Riga, I have learnt to understand cultural differences and be open to new ways of interpretations and opinions. Through listening to these different opinions from other cultures I have opened myself up and have learnt to see things in new perspectives. This is vital for progress as we can complement each other to achieve better results. This is something I was taught in the IM programme. I am very much looking forward to my planned second semester in Bratislava. Here I hope to see more of this entrepreneurial trend and growth in Eastern Europe. Also it is likely that I will be able to further my Russian studies and learn even more about the culture, albeit from a slightly different angle. I do not have any concrete plans yet but I could see myself building something here in the future. *TW*



Imane El Khalfi, Student at Université de Haute-Alsace, BA International Business Management

Basel feels quite „French“. I'm in the Colmar cohort for the tri-national IBM programme and now doing my 3rd semester in Basel. As a first impression, Swiss people seem to be very fashion-forward, just like my French mates, and so it feels familiar to me. I've yet to really explore the city and up to now concentrated on my studies here and the campus and that feels less familiar. Our classes here are very interactive, you can enter into dialogues with the lecturer and our schedule is more flexible. You also notice how very international the campus is as you often hear students speaking English to each other, using it as the lingua franca, although I know they come from all over the world. I enjoy that very much as I have had a similar life experience: I have spent 90% of my life in foreign countries on different continents. This experience has proven to be really exciting as you discover

breathtaking landscapes, make new and unforgettable friends, and get to learn different languages. But, there also downsides. It's not always pink and perfect. Moving around from country to country, from campus to campus, can be difficult and stressful. You get homesick and miss your family and friends. But then you pick yourself up and adapt to the new situation. My number one tip is to be open-minded and flexible. Having a clear goal is also a motivator. I want to keep working so I can one day work in an international company, with talents from all over the world. I recently did an internship in Business Development and found this extremely interesting. There are also various activities, which keep me connected with my home. I skype daily, even if it's just quickly, with my family and stay in close touch with friends. Listening to music that I identify with is also a great support. *BS*



Thi Minh Ngoc Huyen, 2+2 BSc in International Management student from Vietnam (Photo: Kierin Mulholland)

You can never ride a bike to school in Vietnam. That's one of the reasons I like it here as I can take my bicycle to class every day. This is not possible in Hanoi, where I am from and have studied in the past two years. Having a bicycle allows me to explore the region and I have discovered that it's more beautiful here than you can see by just walking. On the other hand I am already struggling with the cold and it is not winter yet! As part of the 2+2 study program, which is a US-Vietnamese program which involves my home university FTU (Foreign Trade University of Hanoi), California State University Fullerton and the FHNW. In this program we are educated exclusively in English by US professors from FTU for two years and then we can choose between Fullerton and the FHNW for the final two years. I chose Switzerland for two main reasons. Firstly, as Fullerton is our main partner over half the students there are Vietnamese, so I wanted to have a richer cultural experience. Secondly the FHNW's reputation amongst Vietnamese students is great, Switzerland is famous for its beautiful scenery and I have always wanted to come back to Europe. I discovered that Switzerland is quite different than the rest of Europe. My expectations have been

met: It's beautiful, fresh and clearly organised – this organisation is definitely something that is missing back home. What is great is that I have classes with mostly local students and they all come from different cities! So I talk to them and learn about their homes. Each week I visit a different city which then furthers my cultural experience and knowledge of Switzerland and its diverse cities. An amazing experience was when I went to a friend's home in Geneva, which is located close to the mountains. We picked grapes and apples and watched real chocolate being made. That was a unique experience that would not be possible to do in Vietnam. Back home I volunteered for AIESEC for 1.5 years and was part of the recruitment process for exchange students coming to Vietnam. This included organising their accommodation and social as well as cultural events to help them integrate and give them a great cultural experience. I enjoyed this so much that I immediately joined the ESN team here in Olten as soon as I found out about it and am now organising trips for international students already, which gives me the perfect platform to explore Switzerland and it's culture even more. *TW*



Fabian Basciani, Alumnus MSc in Business Information Systems, now works as Java Developer at Citigroup in London

When I was 16, I went to Bath for a language course and on my way back home I stayed in London for a weekend. It just blew my mind: you can imagine what it was like to be in such a big city for a teenager from the countryside of Glarus. After that, I visited London nearly every year and when I finished my studies it was clear that I wanted to work there. London is such a vibrant city - it's very multi-cultural and there's so much going on. I know it can be a quite hectic place to be but I like that - even when I travel I prefer big city destinations like Tokyo or Bangkok. After I graduated from the MSc in Business Information Systems I got the chance to do an internship at Royal Bank of Canada in London. Straight after my internship I started on a graduate programme at the Royal Bank of Scotland in London. Obtaining an internship or a graduate programme position here wasn't that easy - you need to get high scores at online tests and thus, it's very important to be well prepared for these tests. Overall, it was very competitive and many of

the people I was with on the programme came from all the top ranked universities like Cambridge or University College London (UCL). I assume recruiters liked my profile because I had gained a lot of work experience over the years. This is unusual for many of the graduates here. I had worked alongside my studies. I started with a typical Swiss banking business career and then became increasingly interested in technology. My interest in information systems grew and then I got into coding. This was what led me to do the MSc in Business Information Systems. In Switzerland there is a focus on wealth management and not on investment banking. I wanted to work in a trading environment which requires low latency, high frequency capable backend systems - but this is rarely done in Zürich. That's usually done in London. I recently was hired by Citigroup as a Java Developer and now work in pricing of foreign exchange and short term interest rates products. *BS*



Nicolas Honegger, Part-time BSc IM student in Brugg and Beijing Summer School student

Working 80% while studying on the side may seem a like a crazy idea. Yet it is a choice I made when I decided to study International Management in Brugg two years ago. I chose this degree as I am working for an international company and the studies complement my work perfectly. My company is called "CLS Communication" which is an international language service provider headquartered in Switzerland. Having a steady job, sharing a flat with my girlfriend and numerous other commitments meant I was not able to go for a semester abroad. Luckily the FHNW offers a lot of other international opportunities such as summer schools. As I am very interested in languages I chose Chinese last semester which ended up enabling me to go to the summer school in Beijing at BFSU (Beijing Foreign Studies University) to strengthen my language skills and learn about the culture. Amazingly the accommodation and tuition costs were fully waived which was another huge incentive for me. During these five weeks in August I had a fantastic experience. Not only did I learn a lot language wise and culturally – thanks to "the

Beijing experience" – I also met a lot of cool people during my time there. It was an extremely nice change of pace to my intense everyday life. I find the Chinese language and culture really interesting and want to keep improving. Obviously people might think I will attempt to become a translator for my company but that is not realistic considering the amount of study that would be necessary to achieve a sufficient level. But this Chinese experience might help me in the sales or different functions in this business, as I now know more about the culture and am able to speak the language a little. This could be a vital asset for me as the Chinese market is huge and growing and our company has many offices in Shanghai, Beijing and Singapore. Now that I am back home normal life resumes. As a proper Basler I am part of a "Fasnacht" (carnival) "showband". We do shows and take part in a nationwide competition. Another national event I'm involved in organising is an unihockey night in Basel featuring 30 to 35 teams and even attracting teams from Germany and France! Wouldn't it be great if we could attract a team from China? *TW*

A Day in the Life of Teresa Freiburghaus



Dr Teresa Freiburghaus (Photo: Kierin Mulholland)

Dr Teresa Freiburghaus is a lecturer in Finance and Entrepreneurship, manages Bachelor and EMBA co-operations with Vietnamese universities and now also supervises the new student project Explore ASEAN. Like its sister projects Insight China, Focus India and connectUS, Explore ASEAN will also feature 1-week preparatory and 2-week on-site seminars but additionally hopes to introduce closer collaboration between the Swiss participants and the Asian contributors.

We're currently in a very intense work phase because everything for Explore ASEAN has to be set up from scratch. So all the aspects of organising the seminars, finding sponsors, acquiring delegates and speakers are matters where the other student seminars have precedents and networks, but it is all new for us. Although the focus of the seminar is on Entrepreneurship, we also seek synergies with universities in South East Asia as we have a few additional new concepts and ideas where educators and students in Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam can work with us. We'd like to offer the opportunity to Asian students to attend the Preparatory Seminars here in Switzerland in February and at that stage also

set up research collaborations between those Swiss students selected for the seminar and the Asian students. These pairs of students would then also meet up again during the on-site seminar and if these collaborations are fruitful, we hope to stage a conference for Global Entrepreneurship Educators in 2017 where students can present their papers.

The project is managed by four very capable students but it's a lot of work for them, especially establishing the all-important networks which translate into seminar content. They will only have a week to travel to all three countries and meet up with potential companies and speakers as well as planning the travel and accommodation. As I have excellent education networks in Asia, I visited potential partners in Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam over the past fortnight. It was a whirlwind trip where I could pitch all our ideas to numerous universities and set up some of the formal collaborations. Now I'm back it means I have to synthesise everything into a report and especially write up a formal proposal. Then with the student team and other colleagues we get to work on making the ideas reality. I love working like this – I love it when I can be innovative and my experience here in Switzerland is that good new ideas are welcomed and supported.

Although I'm from Vietnam which is famous for coffee, I never start my day with a cup of coffee. I tried, a few times, but whereas coffee helps other people to wake up, it seems only to send me to sleep. So, after I have brought my daughter to school, I start my working day with a large mug of tea. First thing, I like to deal with my mails. At the moment there are many of these: I dealt with all the urgent matters while in Asia, but of course there is a backlog of business now.

After the mails, I can proceed with meetings and following through on the aspects raised during my trip. I have meetings with some of the Vietnamese students who are here doing either one or two years of study at the FHNW School of Business. We call these 2+2 or 3+1 programmes within the BSc of International Management because students at our partner universities in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City can do the same degree in Vietnam but if they qualify, can do the final one or two years here in Olten and qualify for the Swiss degree. This is proving increasingly popular and we currently have eight such students here. While in Vietnam I talked with two other universities who are also interested in this programme. And then, one of the other co-operations we have with two Vietnamese universities, the EMBA in Banking and Finance, is attracting fewer students so we also discussed enrolments for this.

When it's this busy, I tend to take along food from home and eat at my desk. Unless there are evening events, I leave the office by 4.30pm to pick up my daughter.

For me, the perfect way to then spend time with my family or to relax is to cook and to sing along to music. I love cooking Vietnamese food. It takes a lot of preparation as it always involves a great number of dishes and each dish has a long list of ingredients. Quite often I will cook many dishes in advance at the weekend; it would take too much time at the end of a working day. We also love Swiss cheese – we often eat raclette because the smell is very similar to Vietnamese fish sauce so it reminds me of home! As I cook I like listening to music – mostly pop music either from the West or from Vietnam. Preferably songs with really good melodies and challenging to sing along to – for instance songs by Céline Dion or Mariah Carey. I wanted to be a singer when I was young but my father said "no".

The food and the music relaxes and restores my energy so much that I might then work again for a while in the evening. It is very enjoyable at the moment working on such a dynamic project. ■

Brigitte Sprenger

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