

## Connecting Continents: Inside Our Global Programs

Podcast was recorded on 2/16/24

Patrick Lageraen:

Welcome to another episode of the UB School of Management's Manage-A-Bull podcast. My name is Patrick and I'm your host. Today's episode is going to feature the School of Management's Department of Global Programs. They run and lead trips all over the United States and all over the world. This episode is of special interest to me because I just got back from a trip to Singapore and Vietnam and I'm so grateful for the opportunity that Global Programs gave me. If you have any interest in learning about and visiting different regions of the globe as part of a class, this is a reason to come to UB. And if you have any more questions, reach out to the Global Programs Office, they would be happy to speak with you.

Today my guests are Naomi Smith Perrone, who is the Program Associate, and Gabriela Scoccia, or Gabby, who is the Student Assistant for Global Programs and many of their classes. We discuss what is Global Programs, how it works, what classes and destinations are being offered, and how you can be a part of it. Okay, so Naomi and Gabriela, thanks so much for being here. I guess I'll pose my first question to Naomi. What is Global Programs?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Global Programs is an experiential learning opportunity for students in the School of Management and also outside of the School of Management, we actually have a lot of collaborations at the University of Buffalo, we work with different departments including the School of Nursing, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, School of Social Work, School of Medicine. Really it's an experiential learning for anyone who's interested in learning how what they are going through in the classroom can be applied in the real world.

Patrick Lageraen:

Okay, so the keyword there is experiential learning.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely.

Patrick Lageraen:

It involves a classroom component and trip components?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yes. So all of our classes are virtual with optional travel, which is really exciting for our students, especially from an inclusion perspective. We want to include as many students that are interested in these opportunities as possible. And then of course, financially do our best to provide scholarships and other opportunities for students to make the optional in-person component of the course more expansive or for them to be included in that. But what's really nice about the actual courses themselves is that there's projects that happen during the semester and then the travel is kind of the realization of those projects. So we have people from around the world, depending on the courses, if it's a global course, we have folks from that area or that country come in and either provide the project or provide mentorship for the project. And what's neat is that they're real projects. It's not a hypothetical it's, "Oh, I help this company in Latin America in Costa Rica," or a nonprofit in Ghana, in Rwanda, in South Africa. So you're really seeing the impact of your work outside of the classroom, even though you're doing the work for the class itself.

Patrick Lageraen:

Right, yeah, makes sense. I mean, I've heard of so many projects for all the different classes. The one that we did was with Rich Products, which was pretty cool because we got to deal with Rich Products, which is obviously a well-known local company, communicate with them in English. But the project that we did was for Indonesia, so good way to kind of ease into learning about that part of the world.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely. And something else, so we have both our Experience the Globe and we have our Experience the 50. So in our Experience the 50 courses, there is a component that is really guiding students to think about their own culture in the global community, right? So we have just the University at Buffalo, we are own micro community here, but then also growing that and looking at the perspective, "Okay, how would you do business or what's accepted in this area? What type of nonprofit formation do you have? What legal information do you need to have?" And stuff like that. So that's really awesome for students to experience that in the project. And then for the domestic experiences that we have, the Experience of 50, that's a whole different ball game that we work very closely with our alumni association and our

alumni on campus to connect students with alumni around the country and opportunities outside of the Buffalo area.

Patrick Lageraaen:

So then Global Programs is split into two kind of avenues, there's the Experience the Globe part and then Experience the 50?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Right. We are a Globe and the United States is still on the globe as well, so that's kind of our Experience the 50 part as well.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, makes sense. So how is Global Programs different from study abroad?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

That's a great question. We actually get that question quite often. So study abroad we would say is our cousin, our sister, a really close family member. But what kind of differentiates us from them is that our courses are taught throughout the semester, and then you have the chance to travel optionally at the end of the semester or during spring break. And whereas study abroad may be more focused on a summer experience or a fall experience or a year long experience or even a winter experience, including the course credits within that, but we do work really closely with them.

But something that's also nice that we have in the School of Management is the alumni component. We actually are working really closely even with our international alumni, to give students those experiences that are really meaningful and lifelong. You are able to tap into things that you're learning in the course later on, or when you find your job, you're like, "Oh yeah, I remember doing something like this. Somebody was saying that, I don't know." And this alumni came in and was like, "Oh, this is why we do it that way." So yeah, long story short, I hope I'm kind of putting that together.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, that makes sense. So is it fair to say that study abroad is longer term and involves coursework at foreign universities?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

It can be. So it really depends on your study abroad experience. But yeah, I would say that there's typically partnerships with universities, other universities, foreign universities involved whenever you are doing study abroad. And sometimes the credits can be a little bit different depending on if you are studying at that institution abroad. But again, one of the things that we do in the School of Management, we have a lot of university partnerships and so you're still getting UB course credit, but you may be working, for example, we have helped foster outside of the school of Management within the School of Pharmacy, there is an international connection between pharmacy students in Ghana as well as pharmacy students here at UB. So they kind of talk about what expectations are for the pharmaceutical industry in Ghana as well as here. So just kind of things like that. So a lot of different connections. But yeah, we support each other, study abroad and Global Programs here.

Patrick Lageraen:

So is it fair to say that these two programs, study abroad and Global Programs, are complimentary?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely. We like to tell students, if you feel like you don't have time to do a full semester or even a full year, come and join Global Programs, it's kind of a bite-sized snippet that you can sneak into your undergraduate experience or if you're here for a shorter time, especially for our graduate students, it's a great opportunity for them to kind of sneak in and see what you can of the world.

Patrick Lageraen:

100%, I agree with that part. So do other schools have similar programs? Obviously schools will have study abroad programs, but do other schools have a program like Global Programs?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

That's a great question. I'm not going to be an expert on all universities around the country, right? We've got quite a few. But from what I've heard and with my colleagues in the international education space, there's similar activities like this at other universities. But as far as the alumni, the UB specific alumni, I really don't think that other universities are doing that. And if so, I haven't heard because I think our alumni are the best, they really do kind of give back to students in a unique way. It's not a financial give back, it may be a financial give back, but it can really be the experience part and talking about, "Oh, I went to the same school you did, I got the same MBA you did," or whatever program it is

that you're in, and then kind of tying it back into today, and then maybe even having a job later on, there's all kinds of connections that are made.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah. And if I could just say something about alumni, so on the trip that we went on to Asia, we met probably six or seven alumni and they assisted greatly with setting up the company visits.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Because they're in that local area, they know people, they have those connections.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

They speak the language. Oh yeah.

Patrick Lageraaen:

They speak the language.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

All of that.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah. Yeah, pretty cool. Okay, so looking into what your role is with Global Programs, I'll ask Naomi first and then Gabby, so what's your role specifically with this program?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

So my official title will be Program Associate, but what I like to say is I am the logistics. I come in and make sure that if you want to be involved in this adventure and this experience, well let's sign up. I think I used the example this morning, I was teaching some students or I went into a class and I said, "Look, I have a VIP card. You just have to come and ask for it and I'll give it to you," right? We just have some great opportunities for students, and my job is to set up the logistics to make it a reality, whether it's calling folks in Vietnam or Singapore or working with people in Ghana to not only have our experience

there, but also a conference, an international conference there. So really year-on-year, my job is to make sure that what you want out of this program is what you get and a little bit more because that's what students tend to say is that they have expectations going in, but on the backend there's a bit more that is a reality.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah. Honestly, that sounds pretty stressful to plan everything.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

It's exciting because no day is the same. For me, I think if I had a job that was very routine, that wouldn't be good for me. So I know my strengths, and that's also part of some of the courses as well, is figuring out what's your strength? What do you know that you're good at? What kind of environment do you like to work in? And I get an international environment every day.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, that is very cool. Since you started, would you say you've gotten better at it, all this logistical planning?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely. So I think from learning the university logistics or learning the university rules and the bureaucracy, what a student sees, students may have no idea what went into that moment of my initial presentation on the first day of class about what the travel is, there was months and months of preparation behind that.

Patrick Lageraaen:

I'm sure.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

And many other meetings, whether it's with the partner university or with our own university system here and understanding the legal systems. But I can say with lots of confidence that our School of Management, we provide subsidized travel. So every single one of our travel experiences is subsidized by our programs so that students can find them more accessible, that's our hope.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Could I just clarify that point, subsidized? So if a student doesn't get a scholarship and they're just paying for the course fee, you're saying that's subsidized? The course would normally be more?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Oh, so not the actual course fee actually.

Patrick Lageraaen:

But the trip?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, the trip, the trip, yeah. I definitely would say the trip. So when I give the amount of the trip, definitely we negotiate, we're the School of Management, so we're a business.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Of course, we have to.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

So we are negotiating the best prices for our students and then on top of those best prices, depending on those, sometimes we subsidize them as well. For the most part, we are subsidizing it. So when a student sees a large number, it would have been much larger if we hadn't subsidized it.

Patrick Lageraaen:

I'm sure, yeah. Okay. Gabby, let's come to you. So what is your role with Global Programs?

Gabriella Scoccia:

Yes. So I am Gabriela or Gabby or Gabby if you're speaking Portuguese. So I work as a student assistant with Global Programs. And this semester I've been working closely with the United Nations class and also the Europe class that has been offered to the students. And I also work with promoting Global Programs to students by visiting clubs or visiting classrooms. If you're listening to this right now and you know this hasn't happened in your club or in your class, it's because we haven't done it yet. We're waiting a little bit until we have the information for the fall semester classes so we can start recruiting for those classes.

Patrick Lageraaen:

What did you say your year was in school?

Gabriella Scoccia:

Yes, so I am a senior in the School of Management and right now studying HR.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Okay. Have you taken any of these classes yourself?

Gabriella Scoccia:

Yes. So I've taken one Experience the Globe class and two Experience the 50 classes. So my first class was in the spring of 2023, and that was a FinTech class. It was my first experience with Global Programs. And I was mainly curious. I love traveling, I love other places, I love learning about other cultures. And when I learned that there was a class that was about Seattle, West Coast and finance, finance is not my major, but I was curious. So I was like, "Hmm, I would take this class." And it was very eyeopening. I didn't know there was a whole industry in FinTech that you can learn that I did projects that I talked to alumni in the class and got to know a little bit more about this area of business that I was not too familiar with.

And then after that I took the Disney class, which was really interesting. This is a specific class for the School of Management students. So the class part of it was learning about the business, learning about the Walt Disney Corporation, and then we traveled there as a group last fall and we got a training on teamwork Disney way, which was very interesting. It was something that I would never thought that I would be doing one day. I love Disney, wearing a Mickey sweater today, it was not on purpose. But it was so interesting to see the perspective of a company as a student, but also behind the scenes and get the training that we got during that trip.

And then the other class that I took was the Ghana class, which was a huge, huge desire of mine to travel there. Unfortunately I did not, but I still got to have this experience with the projects that we did with a local nonprofit. So we were doing a marketing plan, they wanted to recruit more donors for the project. So what we did, we talked to them, it was a lot of back and forth, but then we came up with a plan to how they could get more funding for the students that they helped there in Rwanda. But yeah, those are my experiences with these classes.



Patrick Lageraen:

Tell me more about this Disney training. Was that for new employees as they come into Disney? You pretended like you were just being hired by them?

Gabriella Scoccia:

No, so this training is different. It's actually offered by, it's called the Disney Imagination University, if I'm not mistaken. And it's a training that students from all over the country, maybe all over the world, can get. They visit the park, so this one park was Epcot and then we learned how to deal with teamwork problems the way that employees would if they were working there at the park. So I remember that one important factor was efficiency, but another one was also inclusion. So there are a lot of things to think about in teamwork in the environment of Disney.

Patrick Lageraen:

All right, follow up question about your Ghana in-class experience. How would you say your perspective of that part of the world changed from the start to the finish of that class?

Gabriella Scoccia:

So much. I feel like I always thought, "Oh yeah, I am a super well-rounded individual, full of culture, I'm great." No I'm not. I just know a lot about Brazil and a lot about the US.

Patrick Lageraen:

Are you now?

Gabriella Scoccia:

Well, I was not, and now I got a little bit better, I still have a lot to go. We learned that during the class at the beginning you see that there's a spectrum of cultures, I feel like you also talked about that in your presentation over the weekend.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, I did the presentation about the Asia trip and it definitely changed my perspective a lot on Asia. Can talk about that more in a few minutes.

Gabriella Scoccia:

Yeah. So yeah, I can agree to that. But going back to your main question, yes it did because I had this bias to think, "Oh, it's Africa," or, "Aw, it's Africa." No, they're so developed, there's so much to it. The cocoa industry is huge. They're just so much more developed than you would ever imagine if you're just judging or just thinking about it.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

I think I'll jump in here. I think even working in Global Programs, you come into any project that you're doing with your own set of stereotypes, your own set of beliefs, and I think that that's a part of these programs is that we're dismantling them. We're kind of breaking them down and we're looking at, "Hey, there are connectors in this globalized world that we live in and whether we want to continue to have a stable supply chain so that we can make sure that we have the food that we need or the materials that we need in order to continue building or whatever it is that we're doing, we have to understand a bit more about each other's cultures in order to be respectful and to keep those traditions, but as well also to kind of expand and allow us to make more connections across those lines."

Patrick Lageraen:

100%. And how about just caring about global issues?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Oh, definitely.

Patrick Lageraen:

Before the class, I wouldn't say I would've been all that interested in the conflict between China and Taiwan, but now it doesn't seem so far away and I'm keeping up on this type of stuff because it seems relevant to me.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, no, I think that that's kind of one of the things, and I'll let Gabby of course as a student experience speak to the understanding of global issues. But as a staff member of the team, that's something that's really important to us is that students leave the class not just remembering a factoid, but also with a genuine interest for the future. Like I said, we're inter-developed, whether we know it or not, or intertwined is a better way of putting it. One person, one area of the globe effects the other, whether

it's through weather patterns or ship canals or different things like that. So there's a lot of things for us to be aware of.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, I like that word you used interest, because taking these classes really sparks interest to go do more research on your own. I watched quite a few documentaries while I was taking my class last fall.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

You have to give us that list so we can include that for next semester.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Sure, yeah.

Gabriella Scoccia:

I would also include that coming from another country, I used to think that, "Oh yeah, I have such a respect for other cultures," but after taking the course I've come to learn that there is always so much more to learn about another culture or about even how you approach an issue and how another person from another country would approach an issue. So these classes really were helpful for me to get more of that knowledge.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, thanks for sharing that. So coming back to the program itself, who is this available for? Is it just School of Management students? Is it graduate students? Undergrad students?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

We got a little something for everybody. So it really depends on what you're interested in. And of course there are some barriers with regards to, we do have a class right now that's offered for undergraduates only focusing on international business in Singapore. But it does change semester-on-semester and year-on-year. There's different things that we are doing in our department, there's world events of course that affect what we offer. And student interest really drives it. So if a student, if they see, "Oh, I'm an undergrad but this class isn't available to me," well let us know and we can offer it.

But genuinely we work across, like I said, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurial Leadership in Africa and Social Innovation and Entrepreneurial Leadership in Latin America, both of those two courses are inter-level, interdisciplinary. So that means they're open to graduates and undergraduates and graduates in the School of Management and outside of the School of Management. So if you have buddies that you want to take, you want to sign up and take the class together, you can have that experience.

And something about the project work too is that being in those inter-level interdisciplinary teams is something that you can talk about on your resume. It's something that it's a real life experiential learning where you are learning from people who may be going back to school who may have 20 years experience out in the field, and so they know something. And if you're an undergraduate student, might seem a little bit daunting, but you all bring something to the table, whether it's a marketing plan that you're working on or it's a building idea that you have for, one of our projects was students working together to find the correct flow for a medical facility. So different talents are brought to the table in those different classes, but it's open for everybody.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, it's cool to see that you guys are so flexible about it. It really seems like you're working for the good of the students.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely. There's one exception though, at the moment I will say our domestic experiences, we try to kind of tailor those more to the School of Management students because they are our management alumni. And so the goal for that perspective is to help students see different parts of the United States and different work cultures. And so with those domestic experiences, they are mostly school of management students I would say. But the international ones, y'all come on over.

Patrick Lageraen:

So let's talk about what sort of trips are happening right now. So what classes are running this year?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

So right now, this year, this semester? Right now, this year, this semester, we have two domestic and two international courses. So our two Experience the 50, our two domestic experiences, are to Boston

and then to the United Nations for the Sustainable Development Goals in New York City. So we are developing a budding relationship with United Nations, which hopefully can open doors for internships for students and for research opportunities. And really, I mean we are just starting to open those doors right there and see-

Patrick Lageraaen:

That's very cool.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

See what that might mean. And we have 22 students signed up to go to New York City, so we're excited to show them.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Oh wow.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, that's awesome, and Gabby as well.

Gabriella Scoccia:

I think I am too.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

So yeah, the United Nations is a big deal and we also have students going to San Jose, Costa Rica, so they'll be going to the capitol there and working with a nonprofit in the area on a project. And those are our two travel spaces right now. Again, unfortunately, I will say we have two other classes that we just didn't quite have the student interest in traveling, right? So like I said, my job is the logistics side, so I have to make sure that we have enough students to make the experience full and also for the pricing, right?

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, makes sense.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

So pricing that we kind of got together. So we are offering international business in the European Union with a focus in Milan, Italy. And we had a wonderful trip planned, we'll have to cut that this year, but that doesn't mean that next year, it's a great opportunity and we just have to have the student interest.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah. I mean, you already did all the planning.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Exactly, we're ready.

Patrick Lageraen:

So you could just migrate your itinerary over.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Exactly, we'll just move it into 2025.

Patrick Lageraen:

Right, there you go.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

And there's one other course too to Boston. That's quite an alumni hub for the School of Management. And we also didn't have the student interest, but that's okay. Year-on-year and semester-on-semester there's going to be changes based on what the students want. That is kind of how we operate. And in the fall and in the spring, we have some other opportunities, one that you were in, the International Business in East Asia, and then when Gabby talked about her experience in the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurial Leadership in Africa.

Patrick Lageraen:

And those are coming up this fall, you said?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yep, they'll come up one more time.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Are there any more Experience the 50 coming up in the fall?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, so we have Leadership Industry and Culture in Chicago.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Chicago?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

For our domestic experience. And we'll also have another United Nations experience. So like I said, we're really trying to build that in. And it can change, it can fluctuate. What I tell you today may be a little bit different when August comes around, but that just means there's more opportunities.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Right. And then for the class portion of the Experience the 50 classes versus the Experience the Globe classes, is the amount of work and the project the same?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Oh, that's a great question actually. So the domestic projects try to highlight on the alumni business or the alumni, like Gabby was saying, the FinTech industry, either a business or an industry in the area of the United States that we're focusing on or a city. And they're typically smaller projects because the credits are less. So depending on which student you are and your course background, if you're an undergrad, graduate, MSBA, MBA, MIS, I know all of those, this is the logistics talking again, right? So it was either one credit or 1.5 credits. And our Experience the Globe courses, those are three credits and you should expect a bit more work. But again, our focus is not for this to be an exam heavy, this is not an exam class, this is a experience. This is for you to experience, what is it like to work in an interdisciplinary team? What's it like for you to figure out how to make your project work when you don't understand the culture that you're working in, right? So you kind of develop that over the 15 weeks of the class.

Patrick Lageraaen:

So maybe this is a good question for any of us to answer, but why is Global Programs important?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Gabby, you take the helm first, you go in.

Patrick Lageraen:

Why is this important for students to experience?

Gabriella Scoccia:

I feel like coming out of school as an undergraduate student, you feel like you got so much out of school, but at the same time, if you don't have real life experiences, I mean, of course I'm not going to say you didn't because you just got a bachelor's degree, but having those tangible experiences, say, I did a marketing project for a fake company, okay, you learned the concepts, but did you help somebody? Did you actually see, "Okay, what was the real problem in that institution or in that nonprofit or in that company? What was the real problem and how would you have done it if you were an employee for that company?"

These experiences, I feel like, will kind of dictate what you're going to say in a job interview. I feel like I've used, so the semester that I did FinTech, after that, I was applying for internships during that summer, and I remember going into interview and saying, "Oh, I did a case study for a class and we had to figure out if the company, I think they needed a credit card system and what they were going to do." I was using a project that I did during class, but it was for a real company so I thought it was good to talk about even in a job interview.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Definitely.

Patrick Lageraen:

Naomi, do you have any thoughts on that?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

No, I mean, it's super important. When you're doing job interviews, not that you're competing with other candidates, but you are competing with other candidates.



Patrick Lageraaen:

You are.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

We'll just go out and say it, right? And so if you're coming out of an undergraduate degree or a bachelor's degree or even a master's degree, if you don't have something, a real experience that you can draw upon to answer a question, and that's what these courses provide.

Patrick Lageraaen:

That's a great point.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Tell me more about your experience because I want to hear from the course that you took, I want to know, working with Rich Products, tell me how that kind of built into what you are looking at, the course itself and then also because you went on the trip too.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah. Let's see. How do I answer that? All right, so starting with the course itself, I really enjoyed all the guest lectures. It was very guest lecture heavy, and we always had someone from a different country, which was really, really interesting. I really enjoyed that. We had one about the history of the Chinese language and just imagining trying to learn Mandarin and the writing just seems so daunting. Learned about Chinese history, Singaporean history, and it's just completely fascinating.

And then I guess coming to the project that we did, so yeah, that was for Rich Products, it was an analysis of the toppings, creams, and culinary solutions market segment specifically for Indonesia. They do have a factory over there where they manufacture some stuff. And I guess what that taught me is what data actually exists because it was very data research heavy. So we went to the library, we talked with Carolyn Klotzbach-Russell, she hooked us up with Statista.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

She's a great resource. And that's another thing about these classes that you get to know what you already have, what's already at your disposal.

Patrick Lageraaen:

At UB, and then just what exists in general. So I had no idea that we would even be able to research these things. I was staring at the project statement going, "How the heck are we going to figure this out?"

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Week one.

Gabriella Scoccia:

We've all been there.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Meanwhile it's perfectly doable to go on a database and get this data. So that really opened my eyes to what's out there. And then also just learning about these countries in general. To learn about what data actually needed to be applied, you have to understand the country and the demographics and how that affects consumer tastes when you're thinking about food. And then, what was your question? I could talk more about the trip part.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, well, so tell me your question to us or in this section or this section right here, you're trying to ask-

Patrick Lageraaen:

Why is it important?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Why is it so important, right? And so thinking about why is it important to come to UB, but then also to take what you're learning here at UB and applying it when you're abroad? So if you're from the area around UB... You are from Buffalo, right?

Patrick Lageraaen:

I'm from downstate.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

You're from downstate, okay, that's right. Okay. It doesn't matter where you're from, anything that you are experiencing with Global Programs, you can kind of take your classroom, take your in-person experience, and then kind of bring it hand in hand with who you are. I firmly believe we are an accumulation of our experiences. Who I am today in front of you, who I am or who you are, listeners, who you are is everything that you've experienced up to this moment. So doing one of these experiences allows you to see and open your mind and kind of bring it in. But I want to know for you, because you said something the other day when you were sharing your experience and it had to do with your sliver of the world. It was something like that.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah. Well, I've got all sorts of key takeaways from the trip, but one of the biggest things I learned is that what I considered normal and what I grew up with is just this tiny little slice.

Gabriella Scoccia:

I love that part.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, slice, yeah.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, of what the rest of the world considers normal. And I think for me, yeah, it's great to have these things to talk about on your resume or in interviews, but for me it was really a personal growth thing.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

For sure.

Patrick Lageraen:

Changing my mindset, just learning about these areas, it made me able to understand enough to be able to learn about them more and to be able to actually have a conversation about what's going on in the rest of the world. Before the trip, I very much felt like an American. Now I would say I very much feel like a citizen of the world who happened to grow up in America.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

And that's a part of our mission statement, a part of our mission statement in the Global Programs is to help students become global citizens. And what it means, and that also ties back into our United Nations, the Sustainable Development Goals, right? As we grow together, as this world maybe gets a little bit hotter, what are we going to do to actually help each other? And the best way you can do that is by, one, listening. And through listening, you get to learn. And in that learning, "Okay, this is what everyone's culture is, this is how everyone is trying to attack the problem or not," right? So I think it kind of comes back to collaboration, global leadership, what does that look like and how are we going to collaborate with each other to find those solutions that benefit everyone?

Patrick Lageraen:

Another thing I noticed, or another thing that I learned from the trip, which was going to support what you just said, is that going to these places, these different countries, Singapore, Vietnam, Finland, Japan, I learned how different everywhere is. It's surprisingly different. But I also learned that it's all kind of just the same. It's all just people going about their lives, trying to earn money for their families. Everybody has to eat, everybody has to have transportation. It's all kind of just the same, it's just with a different cultural filter over it.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Yeah, I think that's fair to say. And I think too that we are used to seeing the world maybe in a screen and also vice versa, the world is used to seeing us here in America in a screen, right? We have Hollywood. And it's important for us as Americans not only to see the world, but for the world to see us outside of what they see in a screen. Because we're real people too, we're not Hollywood actors. And that's important for us to show like, "Hey, I do have my faults, my flaws, my ignorance, but I'm here and I want to learn. Can you tell me a little bit more? Oh my goodness, I'd like to know what's the history behind that? Oh, the language. Wow, look how beautiful it is. Look at that scripted writing on whatever monument it may be." So definitely important to be out there.

Patrick Lageraen:

100%. You learn to appreciate things that you didn't even know existed. I have two kind of ways to wrap this all up. So first is the question, obviously we know why I took the course, why Gabby had her interest in these courses, what are some other primary motivators that you hear from students? Because I'm sure you talk to students all the time, why are they interested in programs like these?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

It kind of starts with a general curiosity. They hear it from somebody usually that's great, word of mouth is great. So just doing this, something like this is great for other students to hear about it. But curiosity, there's a desire to know about what else is going on and expanding your horizon. And so I think that that's one of the biggest things that I get. And then also too, students have a tight schedule. They're not able to do those full semester or full year, some students are, which is excellent, but they're not able to do that full long, long time cultural immersion. But they're still wanting to know. And they may be interested in understanding of global trends. So being a competitive person in the job market, it's important for you to know the trends that are going to happen and being a global citizen helps you have kind of not a leg up, but be aware. And if someone asks you about current events, you might need to know about them because it could affect the job that you're looking into or even your personal livelihood and how you'd like to plan your life.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah. To support your point about students being curious, this is the last thing I'll say about myself is my primary motivator for taking the Asia course was that I didn't want to be afraid of Asia anymore. And I hate saying that because I wasn't really afraid of it, it's just I had so little experience with it, I didn't know how to understand it and that's why I took the course because now I understand it and I'm so much happier for it.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

And I applaud you, I applaud you for being vulnerable and sharing that, right? Because again, we're all flawed individuals, we only know what we know. And I think as someone who is coming to UB not from UB, I'm from Louisiana and coming to New York, just that in and of itself, it's okay to say, "You know what? I don't know, but I'm going to sit in this class and I'm going to learn. I'm going to listen."

Patrick Lageraen:

In fact, that's cool. To figure out what you don't know and then go seek it out, that's awesome.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

And one other thing that I want to share, we have these Experience the 50, we have this Experience the globe, we also have a global leadership course, which I think you might have someone else to share a

little bit more later on in another podcast. But even when we give lessons and lectures that are similar to students, if they're at UB, if they're students from America, if they're students not from America, when we're doing it in a global setting too, everybody has those biases. Everybody has those stereotypes because we can't separate ourselves from them.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, that's a great point. So just as a final segue, you mentioned a motivator for students prepping themselves for interviewing and going into the job market, and I'm sure that's a motivator for a lot of students. How can students communicate these experiences on their resumes or in the interviews?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

There's many ways it might come up. I think on a resume is one way to show your experience. You could put in, you have your education and then you have your work experience. Maybe you also have some experiential learning section. I know that depending on your course and your major and what job you're applying for, you can input maybe what languages you speak or what coding languages you speak. Kind of see this experiential learning as another bullet point or something that you could include within that. But really truly, just like in this podcast, it's something you have to talk about because a line on a paper isn't going to do it the same justice as a conversation would. But I'm truly not the expert when it comes to resumes and hiring practices and all of that, that's where our career resource center will be a great opportunity for students to kind of take advantage of the things that they have to offer.

Patrick Lageraen:

But to be clear, it should be on the resume, because that's how the conversation gets started in the first place.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Absolutely. So the resume is the foot in the door, but then once you open it up and you talk about if someone asks you in an interview, "What is one of the most memorable experiences you've had that led you to apply for this job today?" There you are, boom, the door's wide open for you to say, "Oh my goodness, let me tell you about this life-changing experience that I had through Global Programs."

Patrick Lageraen:

Right, really great point. Do either of you have any final thoughts? Why should students take Global Programs, anything like that?

Naomi Smith Perrone:

I graduated really fast from my undergrad. I was in and out as fast as I could because I thought that financially it would be the best opportunity for me to do school as fast as I could. And of course, there's personal reasons behind that, but I wish I had done more of these, I wish I had had this opportunity. And that's kind of my motivator for being in this job and sharing these, because you're never going to be the same age, you're never going to be in the same space again. So live it to the max and take one of these opportunities. It's here for you, right? We're offering it. Again, I've got the VIP card, you want to come get it?

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah. It's tough to tell undergrad students that, "Hey, you have no responsibilities," because you feel like you do, you're taking 17 credits. But in reality, you really don't have any responsibilities. And if you're going to do an experience like this, now is the time.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

And this is a perspective shift, that is what the Global Programs is about, changing perspectives, broadening horizons, making folks see things in a different way that they didn't see it the day before.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, cool stuff. Okay. Thanks guys for coming in.

Naomi Smith Perrone:

Thank you.

Gabriella Scoccia:

Thank you for having us.

Patrick Lageraen:

If that sounded interesting, you can check out the Global Programs page on the UB School of Management's website. Thank you so much for listening. I'm your host, Patrick Lageraen, and I'll catch you on the next episode.