Sustainable on exchange

Sustainability and social responsibility stayed front and centre for 44 per cent of the 170 Gustavson student (mostly undergrads, with a few MBAs) who went abroad for an academic exchange term in 2016-17. Seventy-five students took at least one course that had some kind of S/SR content, 26 took two courses, and four took three!

Not all of the courses they chose to take at Gustavson’s 94 partner universities were dedicated to sustainability. From Aalto to Yonsei, the titles ranged from Economics of the European Union to Social and Environmental Entrepreneurship. Even so, the topics covered in the classes were astonishingly diverse.

Business to Business Marketing, for example, included child labour issues. Strategic Market Management discussed gender and other equity. Corporate Social Responsibility: A Japanese Perspective brought in ethics; human rights; environment, society and governance; triple bottom line; gender and other equity; and more.

International Programs Associate Director Brian Leacock points out that 17 percent of the BCom program is delivered abroad. “With such a high level of student participation in the exchange program,” he says, “it’s important and heartening to see that they are choosing so many courses that offer this kind of content.”

Finns drive a circular economy

Finnish businesses have found new uses for wood pulp and doughnut fryer fat. Finnish forest industry company UPM — the only paper company listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices and the only forest industry company invited to the United Nations Global Compact LEAD sustainability leadership platform — has found a creative use for the residue and waste resulting from its paper, pulp and plywood production. Meanwhile, oil refining and marketing company Neste and Fazer Bakery have joined forces to launch the Doughnut Trick campaign to create renewable diesel derived from fryer oil used to make doughnuts.

Read the story in Sustainable Brands of May 8, 2017.

And more on Neste: the company has also figured out how to refine rendered animal fat into diesel with fewer emissions than the dinosaur kind. See Burning the fat in The Economist of May 6, 2017.

Convo without kvetching

Your next bar conversation is about climate change: here’s how to do it in Grist now.

Another sustainable exchange activity that Gustavson students can take part in is the SustainableExchange blog. This student-founded and student-run forum lets them share cool (or not-so-cool) things they see while they’re studying abroad.

These posts can form part of their customized COM 405 learning experience too.