Message from the Dean
Embracing the Unexpected

AS THE DAYS GROW SHORTER and prompt us to reflect on the year now drawing to a close, it almost defies belief that so much has happened in the span of a few months. Here at the Gustavson School of Business, we continue to support our faculty and students through this chapter of online learning. The university has announced it will continue with a blend of face-to-face and distance learning through the spring term. This fall, we launched a virtual exchange program in partnership with Kozminski University in Warsaw, Poland, offering a new way to integrate direct international experience into the BCom program, while also aligning with public health guidelines (see p. 5).

This year had several other exciting developments for the school. We received approval to move forward with our new Master of Management offering, a pre-experience master’s degree that is truly the program for these times. In September, we launched our redesigned MBA in Sustainable Innovation. This transformational program prepares students to lead the changes they want to see in the world, through a business curriculum that equips them to respond to the wicked challenges facing society today.

This year also brought an anniversary: the school celebrated 30 years of educating business leaders and advancing meaningful management research. I am grateful for the resilience, community and spirit of innovation that has been so strongly cultivated over the years at the school, and which now enable us to adapt and embrace the challenges of the times.

For many of us in the business school family, it is impossible to speak of the school’s culture and not acknowledge the fundamental contributions made by Dr. Ali Dastmalchian over his many years of service. The school was deeply griefed to acknowledge his passing in August of this year. Ali, who built a thriving MBA program at the school and went on to act as dean from 2002-2012, was a venerated individual, a cornerstone of the school; his immeasurable contributions live on in the hearts and actions of the many, many people he influenced.

As this year of unprecedented change nears its end, I reflect on what Gustavson has accomplished by pulling together and I am grateful to be part of such an institution. I wish all our readers remain healthy and well, and I hope you will stay in touch with us as we navigate these unprecedented times as a community.

Dr. Saul Klein
Dean, Peter B. Gustavson School of Business
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Gustavson Cliffs in International Ranking

The business school advanced in the Top 100 Masters in Management Programs Worldwide by Financial Times (FT) for its Master of Global Business (MGB) program. Only one of three Canadian business schools listed to the Top 100, the school earned its highest rating ever on the index, claiming 95th among its global competitors, partly on the strength of a particularly good score for gender, balance and diversity.

Leading the Sustainability Transformation

Gustavson’s newest executive program asks: are you ready to lead sustainable change in your organization? For those looking to build their sustainability and leadership skilset, this fully online certificate program takes place over 10 weeks and uses the Learn-Apply-Practice model to build action-ready knowledge for participants. The next session is scheduled for Jan-Mar 2021. Contact sister@uvic.ca for more information.

International Business Adapts to the Times

Aiming hands-on international business experience during a lockdown might seem impossible. However, Gustavson and partner school Kozminski University in Warsaw, Poland, persisted in finding a way.

This fall term, the two schools launched a new, fully online collaboration that will serve as the BCom international business (IB) specialization this year. Building on the important applied component of international coursework, Kozminski and Gustavson are offering the IB coursework in a jointly supported, digital format.

Overall, 35 students (22 from Gustavson) have signed up to participate in the cross-cultural program, which offers courses from both universities. Coursework is done in teams, to deepen the tangible, international component throughout the term.

Dean Saul Klein says: “International experience is fundamentally important to fostering the leaders the world needs, and during these challenging times, it is essential to continue offering this crucial experience safely and accessibly.”

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