

# Business

The Magazine of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Business



Executive-in-Residence



Mentor Network Program

*Engagement*  
*Innovation*  
*Impact*



International Program



**AACSB**  
ACCREDITED

# About the SIUE School of Business

## Our Vision

The SIUE School of Business will be an internationally recognized premier business school that develops highly skilled and innovative professionals who, through achieving their full potential, enhance businesses, organizations, and communities.

## 9 Undergraduate Business Administration Specializations

Economics  
Entrepreneurship  
Finance  
General Business Administration  
Human Resource Management  
International Business  
Management  
Management Information Systems  
Marketing

## 4 Undergraduate Programs

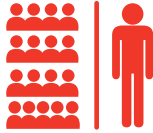
BS Accountancy  
BS Business Administration  
BS Business Economics and Finance  
BS Computer Management and Information Systems

## 5 Graduate Programs

Master of Business Administration  
Master of Marketing Research  
MS Accountancy  
MS Computer Management and Information Systems  
MS Economics and Finance

## Faculty

51 Full-time



16 Part-time

## Our Mission

The SIUE School of Business engages in high-quality learning experiences, research, and service to develop current and future business professionals, scholars, and leaders.

## We Are Committed To


- Provide a leading-edge environment for educating undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education students that fosters creativity, critical thinking, ethical behavior, and an appreciation of globalization and diversity.
- Develop and sustain partnerships with businesses, SIUE departments, and the regional community that lead to professional opportunities for students, alumni, faculty, and regional constituents.
- Offer programs responsive to the needs of our key stakeholders.
- Foster a vibrant regional economy through the exchange of ideas and knowledge.
- Maintain a highly competent administrative and support staff.
- Develop and retain a high-quality faculty whose members strive for excellence, are current in their fields, and make scholarly contributions through discipline-based, applied, and pedagogical research.

These efforts add value: for students, by facilitating and enhancing their career prospects; for organizations, by developing business professionals who meet their needs and stimulate innovation; for the university, by collaborating across the community; and for business disciplines, by producing and disseminating timely and relevant scholarship.



The School of Business is among an elite five percent of business schools worldwide that have earned the prestigious accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International. This accreditation represents the highest standard of achievement for business schools worldwide. Less than 25 percent of AACSB accredited schools also hold the accounting accreditation. The School of Business has been accredited by AACSB since 1975, and the accountancy program achieved separate accreditation in 1987.

 **12 Student Organizations** Including three national honor societies

 **#7 Ranked**  
The economics and finance graduate program is ranked 7th in *The Financial Engineer's* 2017 Financial Economics Rankings. Overall scores are based on the program's acceptance rate, incoming students' undergraduate GPA and GMAT scores, employment after graduation, and starting salary.

**Business Analytics Specialization**  
offered in all graduate programs

**Project Management Specialization**  
offered in the MBA and MS CMIS programs

## Signature Courses

Business Transitions I: Planning for Success

Business Transitions II: Commitment Beyond College

 **332**  
Employers recruited SIUE business students through on-campus career fairs last year

 **11 Years**

For the 11th consecutive year, the School of Business is named an outstanding business school by *The Princeton Review*. "The Best 294 Business Schools: 2018 Edition" by *The Princeton Review* recommends the School as one of the best institutions in the U.S. from which students can earn an MBA.

# From the Interim Dean

*Welcome to the fall 2017 edition of SIUE Business. In each edition, we strive to inform you, our stakeholders, of the highlights from the past academic year. While this year had many highlights, one clearly stands out—the renewal of the accreditation of our business and accounting programs by AACSB (the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business). We have chosen to build this edition around our reaccreditation.*

Several years ago, AACSB revised its approach to reaccreditation, using what it calls a “continuous improvement review” or CIR. The CIR consists of several phases, culminating in a site visit by deans and accounting program directors from other AACSB-accredited business schools. During the CIR, AACSB expects its accredited members to demonstrate the *engagement* of faculty and students in relevant academic and professional activities, *innovation* in programs and scholarship, and the *impact* the unit has on the lives of its students and the communities in which it resides. We are pleased to share with you the progress we have made in engagement, innovation and impact.

During the site visit, one aspect of our School that most impressed the visit team was the engagement of our various advisory boards in the life of our School. This engagement ranges from providing feedback on our academic programs to mentoring our students, and, in the case of our accounting and CMIS boards, directly assessing student learning by evaluating senior projects and presentations. Our School’s success, in part, is due to the involvement of our board members and other interested alums.

The visit team’s final report praised our innovative Business Transitions course sequence and its emphasis on building interpersonal and professional skills in our undergraduate students. One of the visiting deans paid this program the highest compliment possible by suggesting he wanted to “steal” elements of the program and take it back to his school. Several aspects of this course sequence, such as a subscription for each student to the *Financial Times* and a business etiquette/networking dinner, are not things we can cover through our normal university budget. Fortunately, through the generosity of our alumni and business supporters, we have been able to offer these “extras” to our students.

Finally, our School’s most important impact comes through the successes of our graduates in their professional careers. In this issue, we introduce you to two alumni who were recently identified as being part of the “Top 40 under 40” by the *St. Louis Business Journal*. We are confident that many more of our alumni will receive these types of accolades in the future.



One of the most enjoyable aspects of my job involves meeting with alumni, hearing about their experiences at SIUE and learning about their recent activities. The School of Business has started partnering with the SIUE Alumni Association to reconnect with our alumni at events around the country. During the past year, we held successful events in Chicago and Houston and anticipate scheduling several more this year. At the same time, we also enjoy hosting alumni who have come back to the area and want to visit campus.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of *SIUE Business*. Thank you for your support of the School of Business!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Schoenecker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tim Schoenecker, PhD  
Interim Dean



# Why SIUE's School of Business Continues to Receive

To most people, 'AACSB accreditation' doesn't sound terribly exciting. However, it makes a world of difference in the quality of the education School of Business students receive. Accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) provides reliable, internationally recognized third-party validation of an institution's standards of excellence.

Every five years, SIUE's School of Business seeks to renew its AACSB accreditation, which it has successfully maintained since 1975. In early 2017, AACSB extended accreditation for both the School of Business and its accounting program for another five years.

## Engagement, Innovation, Impact

Earning reaccreditation is a rigorous five-year process that includes self evaluation reports, peer reviews, committee reviews and in-depth strategic planning. The School of Business must also demonstrate how continuous quality improvement aligns with three central accreditation standard themes—engagement, innovation and impact.

“We spend a tremendous amount of time combing through data and working with the various program directors to gather information for our reports and identify areas for future development,” said Associate Dean Janice Joplin, PhD, who leads the accreditation process. “It pushes us to be in a state of continuous improvement, and ensures that the learning goals we set for students each year are met.”



**SIUE is among an elite few:  
Less than 2% of business schools  
worldwide are AACSB-accredited in  
both business and accounting.**

### How is quality measured?

**AACSB accreditation sets high quality standards across numerous areas affecting the learning environment:**

- Strategic management of the School and innovation
- Faculty qualifications
- Learning and teaching goals
- Academic and professional engagement of students, faculty and staff

## Why Accreditation Matters

The rigorous standards provide quality assurance for both students and faculty. Students have confidence in the value of the education they are receiving and know that recruiters have a high regard for degrees from AACSB-accredited schools.

For faculty, accreditation is a major selling point.

“Standards create a sense of comradery among faculty—we're all providing input into the students' learning goals and working toward shared outcomes,” said Michael Hair, PhD, assistant professor of marketing, who joined the School of Business in 2015. “I was drawn to the balanced teaching environment at SIUE. The standards ensure research doesn't atrophy, but it doesn't come at the detriment of student learning.”

While each accredited school must align with AACSB's standards, how each school defines and executes quality programming is unique. For example, SIUE's School of Business emphasizes a balanced teaching environment that is student-centered and supportive of active faculty research engagement.

**“Standards create a sense of comradery among faculty. I was drawn to the balanced teaching environment at SIUE.”**

—Michael Hair, PhD,  
Assistant Professor, Marketing

# High Accolades: A Look Behind the Scenes

## Quality Stand-Outs

Achievements that impressed the SIUE School of Business' accreditation peer review team:

- Emphasis on practical skills, such as **project management**, which is woven throughout undergraduate and graduate programs
- Innovative **Business Transitions courses**—one taken by students before they begin their core coursework; the other just before graduation—that offer soft-skill guidance on being workforce-ready and prepared for life outside of the classroom

“The importance of practical skills and experience is constantly emphasized in the conversations we have with advisory board members, alumni and recruiters,” said Interim Dean Tim Schoenecker, PhD. “Our curriculum focuses on developing well-rounded business students who can think critically and analytically, know how to solve problems, and are strong communicators.

“We continue to push to find new ways to help get students workforce-ready and help them gain real-world experience.”

## Supporting Faculty Growth

While student growth is always front and center, the School of Business believes the opportunity for faculty to stay ahead of current and future trends in business is critical to ensuring students get a top-notch, future-focused education.

Funding professional development is exceedingly challenging in an increasingly tight fiscal environment. That's why we're calling on you to help us raise funds to support faculty development.

You can thank those who helped you succeed by giving to the SIUE School of Business' Honor Our Past, Build Our Future campaign.

## Make an impact today

Contact Sara Colvin, Director of Development at 618-650-2317 or [scolvin@siue.edu](mailto:scolvin@siue.edu)

Give online [siue.edu/give](https://siue.edu/give)

**“We continue to push to find new ways to help get students workforce-ready and help them gain real-world experience.”**

—Tim Schoenecker, PhD,  
Interim Dean, School of Business

## Spotlight on Accounting

The accounting program has been AACSB-accredited since 1987. Achieving accreditation requires satisfying an additional set of standards specific to the discipline and profession of accounting. Among some of the accounting program's strengths:

- Members of the **Accounting Advisory Board** are actively engaged with students, listening to and helping evaluate seniors' year-end presentations
- Faculty **engage in industry research**, including Professor Brad Reed, PhD, and Associate Professor Gregory Sierra, PhD, who have both served on Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) research teams

“We're fortunate to have the rare combination of excellent faculty and great students. Our faculty truly want to see students succeed, and students are equally committed to getting the most from their education,” said Michael Costigan, PhD, who recently retired as chair of the accounting department. “It's not unusual for graduates to leave with multiple job offers.”

**This issue of *SIUE Business* showcases the strengths of the School of Business and its alumni and students by highlighting examples of:**

- **Engagement**
- **Innovation**
- **Impact**

## AACSB Accreditation: *Engagement*

The School of Business' AACSB accreditation report recognizes the School's achievements in the area of engagement. Students, alumni, faculty and staff demonstrate a deep sense of engagement with the School and with each other. Several outstanding examples of engagement are described on pages 4-7.

# Retired Boeing Executive Helps Students Prepare for Professional Life



When Eric Levin retired from his nearly 33-year career at The Boeing Co. in January 2017, he developed a new plan: It was time to give back.

Levin, who served as CFO of several different divisions within Boeing Defense, has been a School of Business Advisory Board member for most of the past decade. Although he didn't graduate from SIUE, he developed an affinity for the School after volunteering to serve on the advisory board to help strengthen ties between Boeing and the University. As retirement drew closer, he approached Interim Dean Tim Schoenecker about how his expertise could be better leveraged with students.

They landed on offering Levin the role of executive-in-residence. Typically, there is a regular rotation of professionals who serve in this role for one week, but Levin was eager to commit more time. During his first semester of service, he was available to students one day each week, providing resume and career advice, conducting mock interviews, advising on class projects, and guest lecturing to students about the importance of professionalism.

**“I’d encourage every alumnus to find a way to give back.”**

—Eric Levin, retired, The Boeing Co.

“Professionalism isn’t typically taught in academia; it’s learned through experience and from those who take the time to provide that guidance to students entering the workforce,” Levin said. “Nonetheless, employers expect students to learn it before they are on the job. A lack of professionalism can quickly have a severe impact on a career early on. I wanted to impart the lessons I’ve learned over the years to help students be better prepared when they enter a professional setting.”

The executive-in-residence experience gave Levin an opportunity to more directly observe the curriculum in action, along with day-to-day student interactions.

“I was impressed with how deeply embedded teamwork is in the coursework and in the everyday culture,” Levin said. “I always saw groups of students collaborating. It’s a tremendous real-world skill. I’ve always favored hiring people who could work successfully in a group over the smartest person.”

Schoenecker noted, Levin’s participation as an executive-in-residence enhanced students’ experiences in a variety of ways. “Eric brought an element of real-world experience that our business students greatly value,” he said. “His generous gift of his time and expertise has an impact on our students’ lives. We look forward to his continued participation in future semesters.”

Levin found the experience so rewarding, it has energized him to continue to find ways to give back to students and young professionals. “I’d encourage every alumnus to find a way to give back,” he said. “It’s not only a personally rewarding experience, but the smallest interactions have such a big impact for those on the receiving end.”

**If you have an interest in serving as an executive-in-residence, please contact Sara Colvin at [scolvin@siue.edu](mailto:scolvin@siue.edu) or 618-650-2317.**



# Reconnecting Alumni Across the U.S.

Hectic schedules make it challenging to stay in touch with SIUE's School of Business after graduating, especially for alumni who move away from the St. Louis region. The Dean's office looks for opportunities to arrange in-person alumni meetings around the country as often as possible to help fuse new connections between alumni that can advance personal and professional relationships. These connections augment the value and impact of an SIUE degree. A few meet-ups in recent years included:

## Houston

A conference in April 2017 gave the Dean's office a perfect opportunity to reach out to more than 180 School of Business alumni in the Houston area to gauge interest in a gathering. A diverse group of alumni from different generations came together to network for the first time.



## Chicago

A conference took the Dean's office to Chicago in October 2016, providing an opportunity for the growing contingent of School of Business alumni in the area to congregate. This meet-up served as an impetus to bring together a larger pool of the region's alumni. In May 2017, SIUE's Alumni Association arranged a Cougars on the Move event, connecting alumni from a variety of degree areas, along with faculty and staff. A Chicago Alumni Chapter was launched in July.

School of Business alumni have been heavy influencers in broader gatherings of SIUE alumni, such as:

## Scottsdale-Phoenix

Business executive and entrepreneur Larry Heitz, MBA '69, prompted the first Phoenix SIUE Alumni Association Cougars on the Move event in February 2016. He suggested the idea to the School of Business Dean's office while serving as an executive-in-residence at SIUE and volunteered to kick-off the weekend's event with a cocktail reception at his home. A large contingent of participants were School of Business alumni.



Dr. Janice Joplin with Ms. Johnetta L. Williams '75

"The event was a great way for local alums to get to know each other better and form new connections," Heitz said. "We also had a chance to mingle with SIUE faculty and administrators to learn more about what's happening at the University."

## Tampa-St. Petersburg

After attending a Cougars on the Move event in Washington, D.C., Walter Knepper, BS Accountancy '69, and Stephanie Knepper, MS '87, inquired about hosting a similar event for alumni in the Tampa-St. Petersburg area, where they live. In April 2015, the SIUE Alumni Association brought a Cougars on the Move event to the area, and the Kneppers hosted one of the weekend's activities in their home.



## Coming to an area near you?

If you'd like to see an alumni gathering near you, reach out to Sara Colvin at [scolvin@siue.edu](mailto:scolvin@siue.edu) or 618-650-2317. You can find a list of upcoming alumni events at [siue.edu/alumni](http://siue.edu/alumni).

## Mentoring Program Offers Students Invaluable Guidance from St. Louis Area Leaders



“When someone values you and truly wants to see you succeed, it’s difficult to describe how much that means,” said senior accounting major Whitney Cates as she talked about her mentor, Ricky Vigil, vice president and CFO of St. Louis-based Maryville Technologies.

Cates is one of 10 School of Business students selected for the Regional Business Council’s (RBC) Mentor Network Program during the 2016-17 academic year. The RBC, which formed in 2000, is comprised of leaders from St. Louis area mid-cap companies. RBC began the mentoring program in 2003 in an effort to help generate a more robust workforce. The program connects members with business and engineering students from top universities and colleges in the area.

Students accepted into the program participate in a workshop to better understand how mentoring relationships work, and receive guidance on etiquette and networking. They are given the responsibility of reaching out to their mentors to develop a relationship. While they are encouraged to have at least two points of contact throughout the year, some meet or talk much more regularly.

“I’m always impressed to see how participating students change over the course of the year, especially the confidence they gain in networking,” said Jamie Hoelscher, PhD, assistant professor of accounting and academic liaison with RBC. “Experiential learning outside of the classroom has tremendous value for students, and also gives the School of Business a chance to show off its talented students to leaders in the area.”

While the mentoring program has an official end date, some students are fortunate enough to see their mentoring relationship continue after the program ends. Cates is one of those students.

“I feel so lucky to have been connected to Ricky. He has done more to help me than I could have ever imagined, not only giving me advice on finding a job, but also coaching me on how to manage career challenges and stresses,” Cates said. “I have gained so much confidence in my job search thanks to my mentor.”

“Whitney is a tremendous individual; her engagement in the process has impressed me. She analyzes my guidance and takes it to heart, challenging me to consider how she can apply my advice in practical ways,” Vigil said. “This was my first year participating in the mentoring program, and I’m very motivated to continue doing it in the future.”

Cates has set her goals high for her future and hopes to one day pay it forward by serving as a mentor to others.

**“When someone values you and truly wants to see you succeed, it’s difficult to describe how much that means.”**

—Whitney Cates, Senior Accounting Major



# SIUE's School of Business Advisory Boards Make an Impact

The value of a business degree is not just the academic knowledge and specific skill sets that a student acquires; it's the relevance of this knowledge to the business world that leads to success. The School of Business maintains strong connections with the business community through its six advisory boards.

Alumni and business leaders who serve on the advisory boards provide a critical support network for mapping the future direction of the School of Business through oversight, accountability and guidance to the Dean's office and faculty leaders, as well as financial support for its various programs.

Advisory board members help to identify new ways to nurture student success and provide critical insights that keep the School of Business in-tune with changes in the business world. For example, the main School of Business Advisory Board meets three times a year with the Dean to review and discuss new ideas to advance the School's vision and strategic plan. Several years ago, these discussions gave life to the idea for the Business Transitions courses (see article on page 12) as a way to develop students' interpersonal skills.

"It's tremendously gratifying to share my experiences with students to help guide their path to success," said Dave Schaake, BS '77, School of Business Advisory Board chair and senior executive at Aon plc. "There are many ways for alumni to get involved with the School on a smaller scale as well, such as mentoring a student, doing mock interviews or speaking to a class."

The School of Business advisory boards provide high-level strategic guidance, indirectly influencing student success through updates to the curriculum and directly engaging with students through networking functions or in the classroom.

- **Accounting Advisory Board:** Board members team with an accounting professor to help judge seniors' year-end presentations, providing feedback on the students' ability to respond to "real world" questions.
- **Computer Management and Information Systems (CMIS) Advisory Board:** Board members and industry representatives listen to senior portfolio presentations each semester and offer guidance on how to best market themselves to potential employers.
- **Construction Leadership Institute Advisory Board:** Board members help develop the curriculum for this executive education program, run jointly with the School of Engineering, to ensure it is aligned with industry needs in a rapidly changing environment.
- **Master of Marketing Research (MMR) Advisory Board:** Board members serve as mentors to MMR students, sharing their experiences and offering career guidance and support.
- **Project Management Advisory Board:** Students participate in select monthly board meetings and develop a session for the yearly Project Management Symposium, which is a major focal point for the board.



**"The most rewarding part of being an advisory board member is the connections I make with students."**

—Dave Schaake, BS '77  
Senior Executive, Aon plc

**The School of Business continuously seeks innovative ways to serve its students and the region. If you are interested in learning more about one of our advisory boards, please connect with Sara Colvin at [scolvin@siue.edu](mailto:scolvin@siue.edu) or 618-650-2317.**

## AACSB Accreditation: Innovation

Innovation is one of the accreditation criteria in which the School of Business excels. Pages 8-12 showcase several examples of innovation in action that include student experience and academic research.

# Pushing the Energy Sector Forward One Stat at a Time

It's hard for most of us to process just how much data there is in the world. Market research firm IDC estimates that the digital universe will reach 180 zettabytes in 2025; we only just surpassed one zettabyte (equal to 180 trillion gigabytes) for the first time in 2016.

Big data and analytics are fueling new opportunities for growth across industries. Recognizing this emerging trend, the School of Business supports faculty research and offers a specialization in business analytics to graduate students.

Following are snapshots of innovative work being done by a professor and an alumnus at the confluence of big data and the energy sector, where data is being analyzed to cut costs, optimize investments and improve customer relationships.



Danny Margeson, BS '09, MMR '10,  
Sr. Data Analytics Consultant, Ameren Missouri

Riza Demirer, PhD, Department of Economics and  
Finance Professor and Graduate Program Director



## Uncovering New Insights

New technologies and evolving customer expectations are reshaping the energy landscape. Danny Margeson, BS '09, MMR '10, wanted to be at the forefront of this change.

Margeson joined Ameren Missouri as a data analytics consultant a little over a year ago, eager to dive into its customer behavior and satisfaction data to uncover new insights that could help better inform decision-makers.

"I'm fascinated by the underlying factors driving human behavior that can be gleaned from mining data. In a way, I'm like a storyteller—I get to look for patterns and relationships, then turn them into a story that others in the organization can act on," Margeson said. "For instance, I can identify how the speed of completing an order affects customer satisfaction and create a dashboard that relevant parties can access with real-time information about how quickly orders are being serviced. Decision-makers can reprioritize needs immediately to ensure we're keeping customers happy."

Margeson gives high praise to SIUE's master of marketing research program for equipping him with the skills and experience necessary to succeed. The program provides all admitted students with an opportunity for a corporate-sponsored internship or assistantship while completing their studies.

"That experience gave me a unique advantage," he said. "I was one step ahead of the pack when I graduated."

**"I'm like a storyteller—I get to look for patterns and relationships, then turn them into a story that others in the organization can act on."**

—Danny Margeson, BS '09, MMR '10,  
Sr. Data Analytics Consultant, Ameren Missouri

## Digging for Answers

An active researcher, Riza Demirer, PhD, professor of economics and finance, regularly investigates the impact of energy on the economy and stock markets. In 2012, he was nominated to be a research fellow at the Economic Research Forum, a think tank of policymakers and academics from prominent universities across the U.S. and the Middle East. He has presented research at the annual Middle East Economic Association conference for the past several years, and regularly presents at other financial and economic conferences.

"Like an investor following the stock market, I'm constantly monitoring journals and engaging with peers and researchers across the world to help me identify what's next. There is always something new to uncover," Demirer said. "My research has a big influence on the classroom, and vice versa. You can look at the stock market and research results, but discussing how companies are using that data is how you really get better context."

One of his biggest accolades came from research he conducted with Shrikant Jategaonkar, PhD, associate professor of economics and finance. Their paper on the effect of oil price uncertainty on stock returns won the Best Finance Paper award at the Economic Research Forum's annual conference in Cairo, Egypt, in 2014. The research identified a potential new trading strategy companies could employ.

Demirer's latest research projects include an examination of carbon emissions trading and how fracking, a drilling technique that is largely responsible for the surge in America's oil and gas production, has impacted energy and emissions prices.

## Did You Know?

The School of Business economics and finance graduate program is ranked 7th in *The Financial Engineer's* 2017 Financial Economics Rankings. Overall scores are based on the program's acceptance rate, incoming students' undergraduate GPA and GMAT scores, employment after graduation and starting salary. From the initial rankings released in 2014, SIUE's program has climbed five slots from its original #12 ranking.



# Carving a Global Pathway for Student Learning

Student interest in study abroad programs has been steadily rising over the past decade. The Institute of International Education reported a 52 percent increase in the number of American students studying abroad for academic credit between 2004-05 and 2014-15. The programs provide invaluable experience for graduates entering an increasingly globalized workforce today.

Recognizing the benefits of international programs, SIUE's School of Business works diligently to expand the travel options available to students. Ten years ago, the School of Business offered two or three programs annually through partnerships with a handful of universities in France, Germany, Hungary and China. There are double that number today with more university partnerships planned in Asia.

“Building international partnerships is a time-consuming endeavor that typically involves reciprocal visits to campuses, discussions about the mutual benefits of the relationship and assurances that the relevant courses students need to graduate are available. The entire vetting process takes one to two years,” said Janice Joplin, PhD, associate dean, who leads the development of international study programs at the School of Business. “We feel it’s critical to maintain and expand these partnerships so that students have an opportunity to immerse themselves in other cultures and use that knowledge to make them more well-rounded professionals.”

Students may select semester-long or summer-long study abroad programs, or more intimately-focused one- or two-week travel experiences, all led by the School of Business. The shorter trips typically involve pre-trip course meetings, tours of businesses and government bodies in the region, and interactions with local business school students who attend one of the partner universities in the area.

## School of Business International Partnerships

- ESSCA campuses in Angers, Paris, Budapest and Shanghai
- University of Torino, Italy
- Northumbria University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England
- Hochschule Hannover, Germany
- University of Applied Sciences, Mainz, Germany



## Innovation

**“Understanding the different perspectives and traditions in other parts of the world has left a lasting impression on me both personally and professionally.”**

—Austin Pothoff, BS '13, MBA '17  
Talent Management Specialist, Caleres

### Igniting a Fire

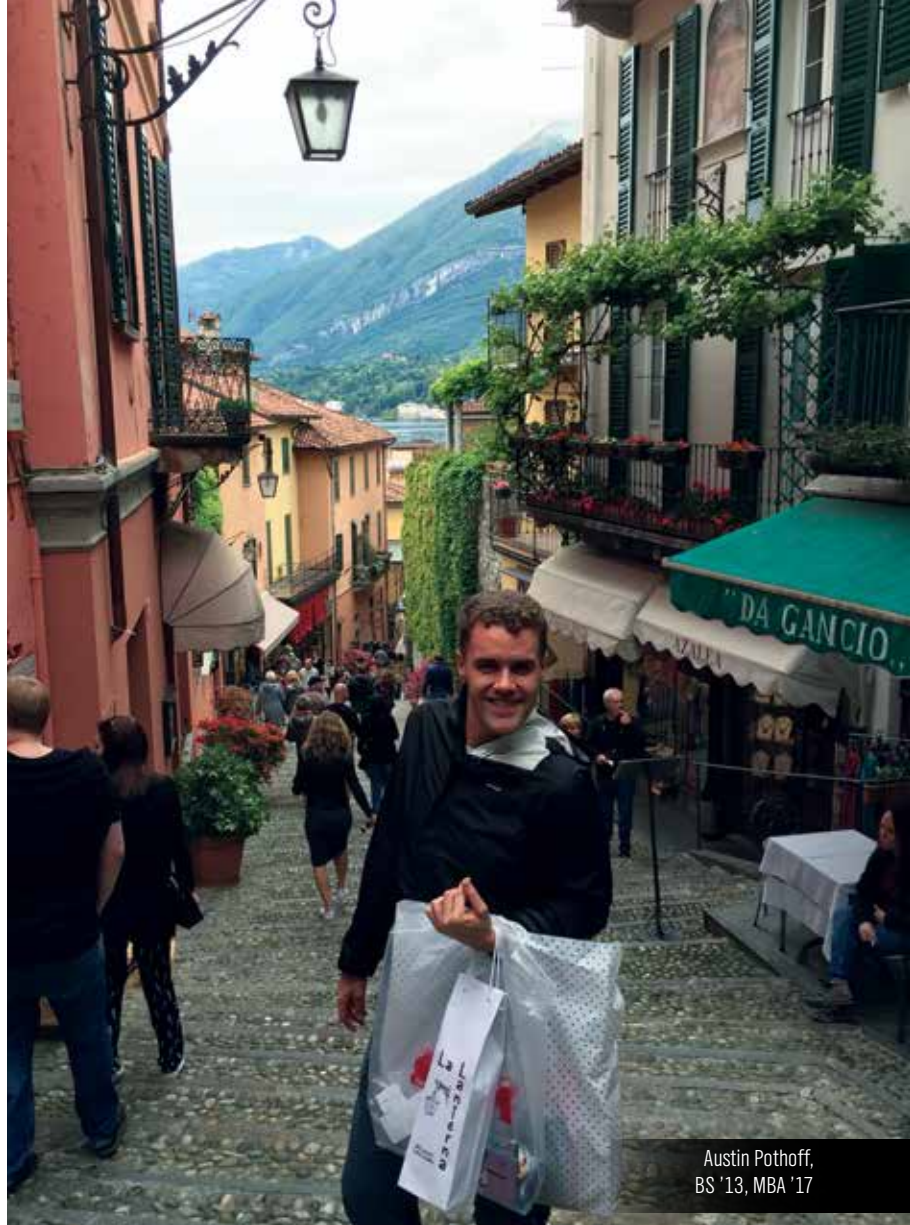
Stephen Tungett, BS '08, MBA '10, participated in a 10-day travel study program to Hong Kong in January 2010. Since then, he has taken around 25 trips to Hong Kong and the surrounding region in his role of helping St. Louis-based start-ups take their operations overseas. He now serves as vice president of operations and finance for a St. Louis-based men's clothing company, The Normal Brand.

“Traveling overseas that first time ignited something inside me,” Tungett said. “I suddenly could envision myself working or even living there. Asia isn't all that different; I just needed that initial push outside of my comfort zone.”

“Six years later, I still find that my travel study experience surfaces in conversations. It gave me a deeper understanding of our cultural differences, and served as a springboard for me to do more international travel,” said Alexis White, MBA '11, a senior budget analyst at the City of Chicago Office of Budget and Management. She went on a 10-day trip to Hong Kong through the School of Business, visiting the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong and a variety of U.S.- and locally-based companies.

Austin Pothoff, BS '13, MBA '17, a talent management specialist at St. Louis-based Caleres (formerly Brown Shoe) went on two travel study programs through the School of Business. The first was a 10-day trip to Germany as an undergraduate in May 2013, during which he toured local businesses. SIUE students also paired up with German students from Hochschule Hannover, the local university partner, who helped immerse them in the local culture. Pothoff's second travel study program took him to Italy for 12 days during his MBA studies.

“Understanding the different perspectives and traditions in other parts of the world has left a lasting impression on me both personally and professionally,” Pothoff said. “I'm always interviewing people from different cultural backgrounds and my international travels have helped me frame questions differently and bring in critical new perspectives that my company needs.”



Austin Pothoff,  
BS '13, MBA '17

### Broadening Horizons

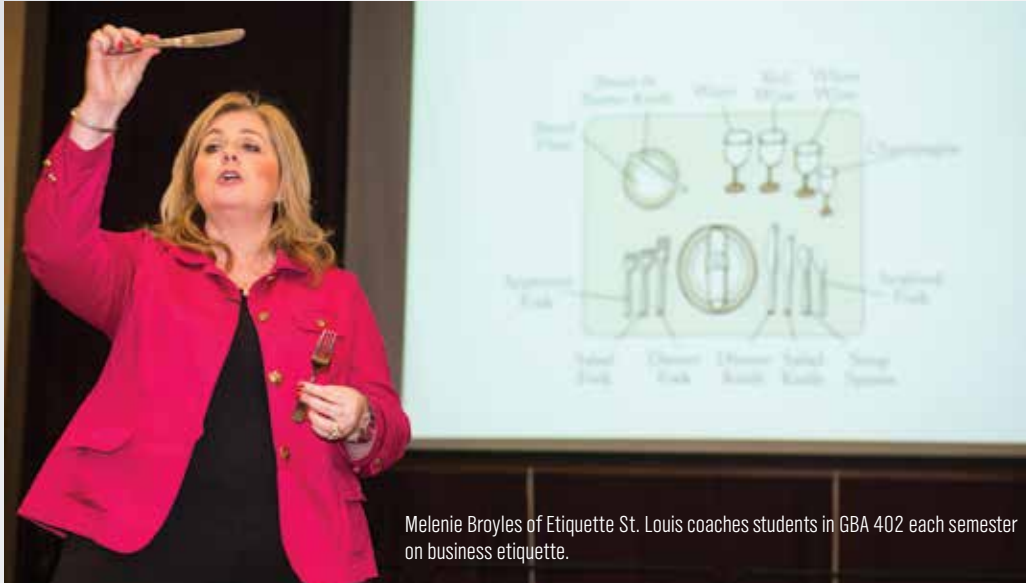
International experiences are truly an integral educational experience that can help professionals advance in any part of the world.

“International travel has so many benefits for students,” Joplin said. “Beyond the obvious cultural perspectives, navigating around other countries teaches them valuable life and professional skills on being resourceful and flexible. Students often come back questioning why U.S. companies do things a certain way, sparking innovative ideas for improvements.”

**One of the biggest limiting factors for students interested in studying abroad is the cost. Alumni interested in supporting the cause can make donations to the School of Business International Program fund, which is used directly to reduce the overall student cost of each trip. Contact Sara Colvin at [scolvin@siue.edu](mailto:scolvin@siue.edu) or 618-650-3217 to learn more.**



# How Do You Teach Intangible, Interpersonal Skills to Business Students?



The Transitions etiquette dinner is entirely donor-funded. If you are interested in providing support to the Business Transitions Development Fund, please contact Sara Colvin at [scolvine@siue.edu](mailto:scolvine@siue.edu) or 618-650-2317.

Five years ago, the School of Business identified a void in its programs' curricula: not all students were prepared for networking interactions in the real world. How do you carry on a conversation with another professional? What is proper interview etiquette? How do little things, like showing up on time, reflect on your character? Soft skills are often taken for granted, but they can be as important as hard skills. The School of Business wanted to make sure its graduates received a well-rounded education to give them a competitive edge.

This was the driving force behind the development of the highly successful Business Transitions program that is now a requirement for all business students. Students enroll in the first course, Business Transitions I: Planning for Success (GBA 301), before they begin their core coursework, to discuss the faculty's expectations, professional attire, and how to prepare for a career and participate in mock interviews. They take the second course, Business Transitions II: Commitment Beyond College (GBA 402), during their last semester in the School.

The GBA 402 course provides guidance on etiquette, networking and practical life skills like financial planning. The class includes a networking dinner event. Students are seated at tables with alumni, community leaders and School of Business Advisory Board members, and are expected to put their training from the courses into practice.

"I once was seated with a student who came from a broken home and had never sat down to dinner with his own family. You take these things for granted," said Dave Schaake, BS '77, School of Business Advisory Board chair

**"I was very impressed with the students and the professional manner in which they represented not only themselves, but the University as a whole."**

—Rachel Moran,  
Campus Relations Specialist, U.S. Bank

and senior executive at Aon plc. "I truly value the time I get to spend with students at this dinner. As part of the advisory board, it's also a great opportunity for me to learn more about their experience at the School and what we can do better."

An increasing number of School of Business alumni are participating in the etiquette dinner, with nearly 20 attending the spring 2017 event. It's one of the many ways alumni can give back to the School, with the added benefit of meeting the latest pool of graduates and networking with other alumni and faculty.

"I was very impressed with the students and the professional manner in which they represented not only themselves, but the University as a whole," said Rachel Moran, campus relations specialist with U.S. Bank. "The dinner provides a great opportunity for students to network with employers, while also gaining critical skills that will help them progress in their careers."

The Transitions courses are equally valuable for administration, because they enable School leaders to interact on a personal level with every student. Interim Dean Tim Schoenecker, PhD, leads the GBA 301 course for incoming students, while Associate Dean Janice Joplin, PhD, leads the GBA 402 course.

"We don't want to be faceless names to the students," Joplin said. "The direct interaction allows us to gather insights that inform continuous improvement in our curriculum."



## AACSB Accreditation: Impact

Impact is an accreditation area in which the School of Business demonstrates significant achievements. Pages 13-15 focus on examples of alumni and students having a positive impact on their communities, industry sectors and on the School.

# St. Louis Business Journal's 40 Under 40 List Features Two Alumni

Two School of Business alumni are among 40 industry leaders recognized on *St. Louis Business Journal's* 40 Under 40 Class of 2017 list. Damon Harbison, MBA '04, and Dave Ruby, BS '03, hold much more in common than their SIUE affiliation; they share similar philosophies on what it takes to be successful.

"One crucial lesson that stuck with me from my days at SIUE is that you have to take risks to succeed," said Harbison, chief operating officer of SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital. "Staying static won't get you far. You have to step outside of your comfort zone to try new things, and accept there will be failures if you aspire to take on bigger roles or do groundbreaking work."

Harbison speaks from experience. He is navigating Cardinal Glennon through the uncharted waters of healthcare reform, working with the leadership team to find ways to reduce healthcare costs, while improving the quality of care. Among his biggest challenges in recent years was serving as the hospital's interim president following its former president's retirement.

"My stint as interim president helped me understand how to do my own job better. The more closely operations and strategy are aligned, the more nimble we can be—and that requires good information flow throughout the entire organization," Harbison said. "Technology helps improve communication, but it can't replace the good old fashioned handshake. It's critical for me to develop relationships with everyone who supports patient care, so I have input from all areas and levels of the organization."

Relationship-building has also been key to a successful banking career for Dave Ruby, vice president, commercial banking relationship manager at Simmons Bank. *The St. Louis Business Journal* highlighted Ruby's role in growing the bank's Small Business Administration (SBA) lending portfolio in the St. Louis region over the past several years, making it one of the top 10 SBA lenders in the area.

"When Simmons acquired Liberty Bank and its SBA lending capabilities a few years ago, it opened new doors of opportunity. My career blossomed when I jumped into unfamiliar territory and developed a more specialized expertise in SBA lending," said Ruby. "Working for a bank that allows me to serve small- to medium-sized businesses gives me the flexibility to develop more personal relationships with business owners and understand their unique needs. There is nothing more rewarding than being a partner in helping a business grow."

Both Harbison and Ruby credit their success to hard work and making the most of opportunities that arise. "You can't be afraid to put yourself out there," Ruby said.



Damon Harbison, MBA '04,  
Chief Operating Officer,  
SSM Health Cardinal Glennon  
Children's Hospital

Dave Ruby, BS '03,  
Vice President,  
Simmons Bank

# Delta Sigma Pi Members Learn Leadership While Helping Others



**“Being part of this organization has taught me so much about the power of delegation, working in teams and how to bring new ideas to life.”**

—Justin Miles, Past President,  
Delta Sigma Pi

“Teeming with boundless energy” describes the students who belong to SIUE’s student chapter of the co-ed professional fraternity Delta Sigma Pi.

“Delta Sigma Pi is the poster child for student engagement on campus,” said Dr. Tim Jacks, assistant professor of computer management and information systems (CMIS) and academic advisor for Delta Sigma Pi. “They have an endless stream of new ideas and are an excellent face for the School of Business. They even impressed the peer reviewers who conducted the AACSB accreditation process.”

At 49 members strong, Delta Sigma Pi brings together some of the most driven School of Business students.

Their activism and leadership hasn’t gone unnoticed. The chapter and its members receive regular accolades in School of Business award ceremonies:

- Delta Sigma Pi was honored as the top School of Business Enterprise Holdings Student Organization of the Year for the second year in a row
- Nick Skinner, a senior business administration major, was honored as the Enterprise Holdings Student Leader for the spring 2017 semester
- Tim Jacks has won the Enterprise Holdings faculty advisor award for the last two semesters

“Being part of this organization has taught me so much about the power of delegation, working in teams and how to bring new ideas to life. Everyone brings something unique to the table, and we all collaborate to help each other out,” said Justin Miles, past president, Delta Sigma Pi.

Delta Sigma Pi has a strong commitment to scholarship, service and professionalism. Its members take these values to heart as they work regularly with outside organizations to provide extra hands for service initiatives. Recently, students packed food items alongside members of the Edwardsville Rotary Club to send to hungry children in Nicaragua.

“I never thought I’d be a great networker, but Delta Sigma Pi has encouraged me to push myself in new ways. I have initiated outreach to other student organizations around events, so we could work together to achieve a bigger impact,” said Skinner, who served as vice president of professional activities in Spring 2017.

For example, in February 2017, Delta Sigma Pi hosted an event with SIUE’s Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) student chapter. The event brought in two speakers from Nestlé Purina who spoke about building one’s personal brand. The two student organizations worked together to identify speakers, handle the logistics and publicize the event.

Delta Sigma Pi members are constantly looking for new ways to connect with others. The power of connections and collaboration teaches leadership lessons that will linger long after college.



## Where Have the Paths of Recent Graduates Led?

Each semester, the School of Business releases a new group of graduates who set off to make their mark on the business world. Below we highlight how a few recent graduates have started to shape their career paths in different fields.



### **Katie Finnigan, BS CMIS '07**

Object Oriented Software Developer, State Farm, Bloomington, Ill.

#### **Describe your job**

I do systems analysis and development for an internal-facing application.

#### **How did SIUE help?**

One of the biggest influences was taking on a leadership role in the student chapter of the Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP), which helped mold my networking and soft skills.



### **Torey Watson, PharmD/MBA '16**

Clinical Services Coordinator, Pharmax Pharmacy, Southeast Missouri

#### **Describe your job**

I do a little bit of everything. In addition to staffing the pharmacy a few days each week, I work on projects that will bring value to the company and our patients, including employee training, inventory management and clinical services development. I help develop services for six Pharmax pharmacies.

#### **How did SIUE help?**

My position isn't very common; I had to pitch my role to the management of the company. My MBA education exposed me to material and concepts that have helped me add value to the company and succeed in this new role.



### **Bre Vonnahmen, BS Accountancy '16, MSA '17**

Staff Accountant, Alberici Group, St. Louis

#### **Describe your job**

I collect invoices, answer vendor inquiries, enter and process payments, and assist with a variety of other projects.

#### **How did SIUE help?**

Although I don't necessarily fit the "accountant mold," professors encouraged me to embrace my distinct personality as an advantage to stand out from the crowd; it helped me land my current job, which used personality tests to screen for outgoing people with high leadership potential.



# School of Business Advisory Boards

## Fiscal Year 2016-2017

The School of Business works closely with the business community to provide the very best business expertise and develop programs that provide a foundation for students to become leaders in their chosen careers. The commitment of these advisory board members to lend their expertise and to serve the School of Business as ambassadors in the business community is gratefully recognized and appreciated.

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The following pages contain a listing of those alumni and friends who have generously provided support for the School of Business throughout fiscal year 2017 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017). We strive to make the Annual Roll of Donors as complete as possible. Please let us know if you see a discrepancy in the report. The faculty, staff and students of the School extend sincere appreciation to these individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations who have invested in the careers of our future business and community leaders. Thank you!

With gratitude, Tim Schoenecker, Interim Dean, School of Business

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