

International MBA Field Experience: The Business and Economy of Japan



Temple bells die out.
The fragrant blossoms remain.
A perfect evening!
--Basho

This MBA field experience will explore one of the world's most important and fascinating countries: Japan, a modern hi-tech country retaining traditions dating back thousands of years. Japan has the world's second largest economy, is a prosperous and stable democracy, and is a major U.S. trading partner. Japan has a wealthy and sophisticated market and is famous for its post-war economic growth, its keiretsu system, and its manufacturing methods and excellence. After a period of economic turmoil, it has recently gone through a painful restructuring that has led to economic recovery.

All of this makes Japan a wonderful destination for business men and women. The group will travel to Tokyo and the Kansai region which includes Osaka and Kyoto to learn about the Japanese economy and explore several business sectors, but most importantly participants will learn how business is conducted in Japan. We will see the beauty of both modern and traditional Japan.

In Tokyo we will meet with several firms in a variety of industries including banking and investments, law, trading, advertising and marketing, diversified paper manufacturing, and apparel. A "must do" is to tour the famous Tsukiji fish market—the largest in the world. In addition to these business opportunities, students will have the opportunity to visit museums, temples, and shrines, sample Japanese cuisine, see Mount Fuji, visit the famous Ginza shopping district and Akihabara (or "Electric Town"), try karaoke, and much more.

From Tokyo we will take the Japanese bullet train, the Shinkansen, to the Osaka/Kyoto area of the Kansai prefecture. On the way we plan to visit the Toyota manufacturing facility near Nagoya. Kansai is Japan's second largest industrial, financial, commercial, and population center. Kyoto is referred to as "the Heart of Japan," and it is here where the group will find the spirit and beauty of traditional Japan. In Kyoto we will walk the "path of Philosophy" and visit

many beautiful and important temples, shrines, Zen gardens, and historical sites. If possible we will experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony.

Trip leaders:

Dr. Richard Borgman, Associate Professor of Finance.

Mr. Paul Myer, Executive in Residence.

Keiko Myer, Japanese expert.

What the students will do:

The group will begin periodic meetings early in the spring semester.

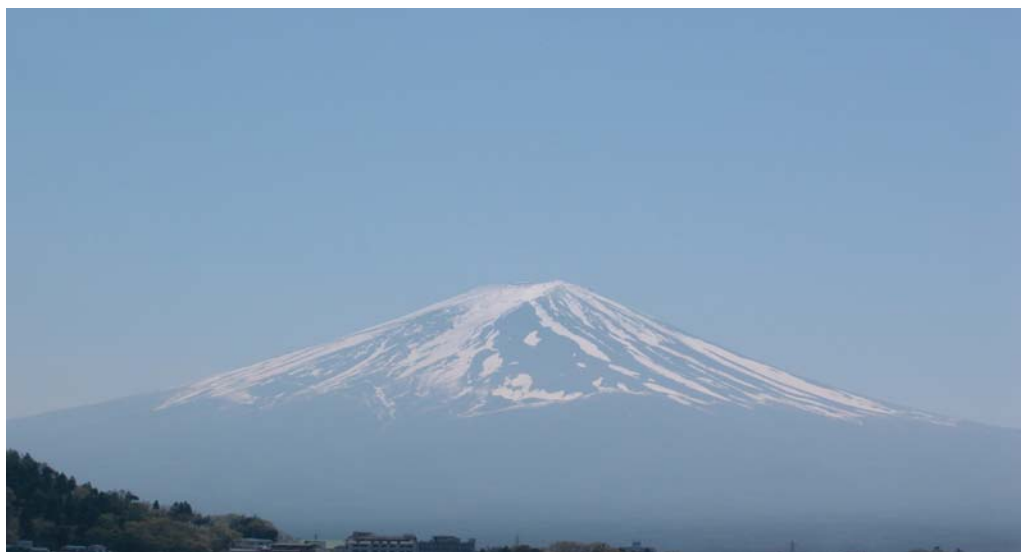
The students will lead a “briefing series” on Japan, its economy, and the firms we will visit. The Maine International Trade Center will present an economic overview.

The students will be introduced to Japanese customs and language.

They will begin exploration papers.

Exploration papers will be student driven and explore an issue or problem of relevance—potentially ranging from the firm level to the economy or country level. Perhaps a trade issue or an examination of the changes in the Japanese financial system over the turbulent recent period. They will do preliminary research before the trip, ask questions while in Japan, and finalize an in-depth report after the trip concludes.





Tsukiji Fish Market

