



Passport to the World Program

The knowledge and recognition that we live in an interdependent world without borders require that Jackson State University (JSU) create a pipeline of graduates with global competencies.

Among all disciplines taught at JSU, or at any institution for that matter, business is likely the most global of them all. The mission of College of Business at JSU reaffirms the commitment to internationalization: “The College produces ethical, technologically advanced, diverse global leaders who provide creative business-centered solutions that promote economic and social advancement.” And one of the College’s strategic goals is “providing students with international education opportunities and cross-cultural experiences beyond the classroom.”

Could it be any clearer that exposing our students to international business practices is something that we are committed to do at the College of Business?

The partnership with JSU Global’s *Passport to the World* program is one of the College’s primary means of fulfilling our globalization mission and internationalization goal. The Program is a 4-week faculty-led international experience that includes organized cultural, research, and experiential learning activities. Students spend 2 weeks abroad and 2 weeks on campus at JSU.

Several criticisms have been cited against many U.S. study abroad participants and programs, and JSU *Passport to the World* has been designed to address these issues: (1) Lack of diversity in ethnicity—the majority of students that study abroad are Caucasian; (2) Lack of diversity of location—most U.S. students that study abroad go to Europe; and (3) Lack of diversity of academic majors—most U.S. students that study abroad are in the Liberal Arts.

The majority of students traveling on the *Passport to the World* program are African Americans, and they travel to seven different cities/countries: Cape Town, Madrid, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador Da Bahia, Santo Domingo, and for Business majors either Shanghai, China or Hyderabad, India. All six colleges at JSU participate in the program: College of Business, College of Education and Human Development, College of Liberal Arts, College of Public Service, College of Public Health and College of Science Engineering and Technology.

Jackson State University students, many of whom from historically disadvantaged backgrounds economically or educationally, are profoundly and positively affected by this experience. None of the students who travelled to Shanghai in Summer 2015 had ever been overseas, and many of them had not travelled beyond Mississippi and perhaps a few neighboring states. Several had never been on a plane. The experience was life-changing for them, in *their* words.

Each of these students has been serving as advocates of the program over the academic year. The entire University population has been positively impacted and is excited about the *Passport to the World* experience. This year, the Honors College which houses students from all Colleges, Majors, and departments has joined the program, thus widening the reach of the *Passport to the World* in an interdisciplinary manner. Academically-advanced students from different majors will now join together on the same trip, thus increasing the cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural exposure.

Jackson metropolitan area and the State of Mississippi will of course benefit from the availability of university graduates with an understanding of global affairs and cultures. In the case of business students who are ready to enter the workforce, understanding of global business practices is important and will not only contribute to their own career success, but also enhances the workforce recruitment efforts of local businesses, including Nissan and Toyota with manufacturing plants nearby.

Within a two-week period in Summer 2015, College of Business students first visited Germany's Volkswagen manufacturing plant in Shanghai, China, and then visited Japan's Nissan making cars in its plant in Jackson, Mississippi, USA! How could it be any better than to observe and understand that business is global?

This also enhances the well-qualified workforce diversity and inclusion for local employers given that the majority of graduates from JSU are African Americans.

The College's accrediting bodies agree with the contribution of the *Passport to the World* Program:

According to the NIBS visiting Panel, "what was clear is the School has developed a fine international 'product' in *Passport to the World*, and the Panel was very encouraged to hear about plans to increase student uptake and further diversification of study abroad locations."

The AACSB Peer Review Team noted that "the COB has also made a concerted effort to enhance international study opportunities for students, including trips to China and India. During interviews students express high levels of satisfaction with the COB and opportunities provided for engagement and professional development." The team continued: "Recent efforts to fund foreign study programs for students who could not otherwise hope to participate in such programs is very much to be applauded. It is obvious such experiences are very meaningful to the students."

Passport to the World truly challenges minds and changes lives.