



TUFE & Trinity Western Launch World-Class Great Wall MBA Program

By Josh Cooper

On 17 October the Tianjin University of Finance & Economics, in partnership with Canada's prestigious Trinity Western University, launched the Great Wall MBA program. This exciting new course offers an extraordinary opportunity for aspiring business leaders or those who are already working in the commercial sector to boost their skill set and broaden their understanding of global business management in the 21st century.

Our editorial team spoke to the two leaders of this pioneering joint

venture-Dr. Murray MacTavish, Director of Trinity Western University's MBA program, and TUFE's Dean Eve Yi. Here is what they had to say about the course and the partnership between the respective institutions.

Give us a bit of background to this academic partnership.

Trinity Western University has a long history of collaborating with universities in Tianjin. Before now we have had relationships with other institutions in the area and we have come to know quite a lot about the

city. Since 2007 we have been running programs with TUFE and it has been a very successful partnership. Dean Eve Yi of TUFE's MBA Education Centre was a visiting scholar at Trinity Western, which has also served to increase the depth of our association.

The new MBA program is the latest development in a long lasting relationship between the two institutions and it is exciting to finally get the course up and running this year after receiving approval from the ministerial bodies in China and Canada.

Tell us about the people who are behind the teaching and development of this course and the expertise that they bring.

From both sides we are able to bring a tremendous amount of insight into the theoretical and practical aspects of business management. TUFE has a teaching team with a particular expertise in the finance, accounting and economics elements of the program.

On the other hand, Trinity Western's MBA teaching staff will give the student's a global perspective as they foster a cross-cultural learning environment. For example, one of the research areas which we have a background in, for example, is leadership. Throughout our course we will be encouraging students to

think carefully and objectively about their own self-identity and approach to being a business leader; a practice which is very important when it comes to working in a real corporate environment.

So how will the teaching be divided between the institutions and what qualification will students receive upon completion of the program?

It will be taught by specialist professors from both universities. TUFE staff will teach 6 of the 14 units and Trinity Western professors will teach the remainder during their 2-week residencies in Tianjin. The course materials, textbooks, and

such, are all from Trinity Western and the program will be taught fully in English.

As a result of this great partnership we are able to play to the strengths of both institutions and bring elite educational programs to our students. TUFE, for example, is very strong in the areas of finance and economics, whereas Trinity Western brings a great deal of expertise in terms of research skills, marketing and strategy, and global business culture.

As it is a joint venture between two universities, where does the accreditation of the qualification come from?

It is actually a Trinity Western University MBA. After finishing the program the student receives a Trinity Western degree, which is fully accredited and just as valuable as it would be if you did it entirely in Canada.

How does the program differ from other courses of its kind within the Chinese market?

It goes without saying that the strong multinational partnership between our universities brings something new and unique to the aspiring MBA candidates of Tianjin. Like other MBA courses in China, the Great Wall program focuses on the domestic market, legal system and corporate cultures. But in contrast to most other MBA's out there, ours will be taught through a western methodology and therefore will give students a different way of thinking and learning than that which they have become used to throughout their lives in China.

What will the structure and content of the course look like?

The course is taught over a period of about 18 months. Like any MBA program worldwide there will be units which cover the core areas such as managerial accounting, international business law, finance,





global competitiveness, business ethics, and operations management.

A critical area for us is leadership, particularly what is known as 'value-based leadership'. Businesses are built on trust, and therefore it is critical for leaders to learn how to build trust, enhance relationships, and sustain long-term partnerships.

Tell us what impact this course could have on the students' employability.

An MBA degree remains a prestigious qualification which will certainly bolster someone's employability as well as their potential income. The core value of the degree lies in the skills that MBA students obtain. This means the technical knowledge and understanding of the business world, as well as the independent thinking abilities that enable people to be successful in business. In this regard, doing the Great Wall MBA will be an invaluable asset throughout students' entire lives.

What kind of people is the MBA aimed at? Who is eligible to enroll on course?

The program is open to everybody who wants to gain the skills and knowledge needed to elevate them in the business world. In our first cohort we have many students from China, of course, but also some of other nationalities.

Some of the students are recent graduates looking to further their studies, others are already in management positions. We find that having these mixed classes leads to a great learning environment.


Anyone can apply and we really hope to get as diverse a range of students as possible!

How was the 17 October official launch?

It was great. Various leaders from both universities attended, as well as a large turnout of current and future students. We are pleased that so many people showed an interest in this exciting new educational opportunity in the Tianjin area. Going forward, we hope to keep the Tianjin business community

informed of the progress of this program and its development. Now is the time for local and international companies to consider enrolling their key leaders in this program.

Given the success of this partnership up until now, do you foresee any further joint ventures going forwards?

We are very pleased with our existing partnership with TUFE. I can see us continuing to expand these projects, including adding an additional group of MBA students each year, possibly delivered on a full-time basis. We will constantly be looking for additional opportunities to bring value to the Tianjin business community. One such example includes the start-up of a consulting service with TUFE for companies in the region, which can capitalize on each university's faculty expertise in-between the weekend class sessions. 

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Tianjin economic logical forum

info@TianjinEcoForum.com