

Graduate Students Visit Brazil

Posted on Aug 16, Posted by [Marcus Goncalves](#) Category [International Education](#)

Tuesday, May 22, 2012, 3:03 PM

By Andrew Conklin '13

During the past week and a half, Professor Marcus Goncalves expanded the school's horizons by venturing to Brazil with his graduate International Operation Management class. Students and instructor departed Massachusetts on May 12th and returned on the 22nd after spending 10 days in the city of Victoria on Brazil's coast.

The students viewed the scenery, businesses, and infrastructure around Victoria, but they also had to attend class as if they went to school in Brazil. The class met every morning in their hotel, the Praia Do Sol.

The class was led by a paid instructor from Brazil's Salesian College. It provided insights into the many areas of Brazilian international business operations, as well as into change and innovation management.

Students received a real life perspective as well, visiting a chocolate factory, one of the biggest exporters out of Victoria Harbor. The class also spent time at Vale, [pronounced valley], which produces iron, aluminum, and copper and operates out of five different ports.

Goncalves, , the International Business Chair at Nichols, says that the visit to Vale provided a

valuable perspective on learning how businesses are run in Brazil, and how a valuable product can be so important to a country. “They are the second biggest iron company in the world,” he explains. “When you see the ships in the harbor, they are ten times the size of a football field.”

Goncalves adds that Brazil is a very important country in the world right now as it maintains the 6th largest economy, and is projected to have the fifth largest in 2015. Not only is the country’s economy stable, but Brazil also belongs to the “BRIC” nations. (Brazil, Russia, India, China), the economies of which have all grown substantially in the past decade.

Besides bringing his students to Brazil to study successful and established companies, Goncalves says that there are other reasons that his native country is a great destination for the MBA class.

“This is such a unique opportunity that my students have,” he points out. “They do not even get to go on field trips when at Nichols, so this gives them a unique opportunity to gain a great perspective,”

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