

University of Hawaii Asian Field Study 2022



The University of Hawaii at Manoa, Shidler College of Business, completed its 37th Annual Asian Field Study (AFS) themed “Asia in Recovery.” Vaccine boosted, PCR tested and wearing high quality KN95 masks, 6 EMBAAs, 3 MBAs and Program Director, Ben Bystrom challenged the first AFS since the Covid Pandemic emerged in Spring 2020. With much of Asia (China, Taiwan, Japan) still under severe travel restrictions, this year’s tour focused on cities (Ho Chi Minh, Ha Long, Hanoi, Singapore and Seoul) that are actively reopening to international trade and travel.

Program Focus

The objective of the six-credit Asian Field Study is to enhance student preparation for business careers in the Asia-Pacific region. This is accomplished by improving language skills, identifying Asian market opportunities, learning risk management techniques and adapting to unique cultures and business practices. Each city had a specific theme; Ho Chi Minh was the rise of Vietnam as a manufacturing hub and Vietnam’s real estate boom. Hanoi was digital banking (fintech) and expanding education opportunities. Singapore was sustainable tourism and the city’s development as a financial center for asset/wealth management in Asia. Of particular emphasis were industries where Hawaii has links with Asia and therefore students can seek career opportunities while promoting Hawaii as a business hub for the Asia-Pacific region.

Asian Company Tours

In total, AFS 2022 toured and engaged executives at 20 companies in the Banking, Hotel & Tourism, Securities, Education, Apparel Manufacturing, Fintech, Software, F&B, Vertical Agriculture, Supply Chain Management, Furniture, Real Estate Development and Sports Management.

Academics

Rigorous course work of twelve 3.5-hour classes led by Program Director Ben Bystrom complemented the 16-day field study travels. Pre-trip classes covered foreign exchange markets, Asian corporate equity analysis, management and marketing case studies, Economist

Intelligence Unit reports and culminated with student group presentations and analysis on Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam and Cambodia. Guest lectures by regional industry experts included Greg Stolt, VP Basketball Operations, NBA China in Shanghai, Michael Henderson, former Country Manager at Osprey Vietnam and Philip Sugai, Professor of Marketing at Doshisha University, Kyoto Japan.

Alumni and Scholarships

Alumni played an invaluable role in arranging site visits and hosting networking events in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and Singapore in which our students actively engaged business executives and UH graduates from across Asia. The Freeman Foundation Asian Fellowship Program generously provided \$45,000 in student fellowships without which this year’s program would not have been possible.

Cultural activities

Cultural visits kicked off with students exploring the Mekong Delta by boat, bicycle and canoe visiting local markets, farms and craftsmen. In Hanoi the focus was on history with visits to the Temple of Literature studying Confucianism’s roots in Vietnam and the Museum of Ethnology, tracing Southeast Asia’s strong ethnic diversity through time. Singapore visits shifted to modern societal trends occurring in a dynamic, world class Asian city. The Esplanade and Marina Bay development is 21st century urban design at its best. Finally, throughout the journey, students sampled local cuisine from Obama’s Bun Cha lunch menu with Anthony Bourdain in Hanoi to Hainanese Chicken Rice in the bustling street food markets of Singapore. The food culture is alive and well in Asia.

AFS Participants by Research Focus

Ho Chi Minh City

- Connie Chow – Opportunities and Barriers Investing in Vietnam’s Commercial Real Estate Market
- Daniel Kaanana – Evolution and Modernization of Vietnam’s Food Industry



Keppel Land, Real Estate Development, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam



Biking through the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

Hanoi

- Kiha Sai – MB Bank’s Digital Banking Initiatives: Applications for Hawaii
- Kevin Nishimoto – JV Opportunities for Hawaii and Vietnam in Computer Software Development
- Tina Chun – Ed Tech and Language Education Ventures in Asia



Amigo Technologies, Fintech Software, Hanoi Vietnam



MB Bank, Digital Banking Seminar, Hanoi Vietnam

Singapore

- Aly Wee – Singapore’s Sustainability Initiatives in the Hotel Industry: A Model for Hawaii to Follow
- Deran Yamada – Wealth Management Industry: Hawaii Should Follow Singapore’s Lead
- Nic Rogers – Bringing Singapore’s Vertical Farming Technology to Hawaii and China



Burnt Ends (Michelin Star Restaurant) Kitchen, Singapore



Royal Park Collection, Sustainable Tourism, Singapore

Korea

- Sammy Starbuck – Developing Mental Health Apps to Combat Rising Stress in Korea Youth

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA
SHIDLER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
• International Excellence •

UH Asian Field Study Program
Website: shidler.hawaii.edu/asian-field-study
Program Director: Ben Bystrom
Email: bbystrom@hawaii.edu