

# BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS TAKING ENGLISH VII AT INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO DE COSTA RICA,

## Sede San Carlos visited the University of Florida, Gainesville, United States

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The academic field trip to the University of Florida (UF), located in Gainesville, Florida took place from February 21st to 27th, 2016. The main objective of this field trip was to achieve meaningful learning of social and academic interaction with Business Administration content and English linguistic knowledge. This field trip to Gainesville was helpful for the students of Business Administration, especially because they visited significant places and met important people in Florida, in the fields of education, culture, business, and entrepreneurship.

In this field trip, the students engaged in various activities during the week. Using English exclusively in all their interactions during those activities was mandatory. The activities started with a presentation about Real Estate development with James Alsbrook, Development Finance Asset Manager at The Collier Companies in Gainesville. The students also visited the Law School and met the Dean Dr. Laura Rosenbury. In the Law School, the students had the opportunity to visit part of the campus, especially the library that has vast amounts of texts and important documents of general law of the United States and many other countries.

The students had the opportunity to visit UF School of Business and learned about management including a variety of courses, benefits, and opportunities that students have in the school. Students from Instituto Tecnológico

de Costa Rica (TEC), Sede San Carlos shared with UF business students, heard about their abroad experiences as part of internationalization programs in the Business School. In that activity, the students met Dr. Brian Ray, Associate Dean and Director of Heavener School of Business and Warrington College of Business, and Jon Cannon, Executive Director of Development and Alumni Affairs at UF. They provided students with information about the importance of higher education, academic development, and access to infrastructure resources, as incentives to motivate students.

Business students from TEC attended a class of corporate cultural immersion with Mr. Nathan Collier, President and Founder of The Collier Companies. Then, they visited the Innovation Hub to meet Jane Muir, Director of Florida's Innovation Hub. There, students



Academic field trip to the University of Florida, Warrington College of Business. In the center, Mr. Nathan Collier, President and Founder of The Collier Companies, and Dr. Bryan Ryan, Associate Dean and Director of Heavener School of Business and Warrington College of Business.

learned about management issues regarding startups and the opportunities that are offered to UF students to work as mentors in the Innovation Center. The students attended several other classes, one in particular with Professor Dr. Eric Wild, Property Manager at Alligator Realty and Adjunct Professor in University of Florida, Warrington College of Business. The class was about recruitment, retention, and development of corporate personnel. The students were exposed, in very innovative and dynamic ways, to human resource management in a company. Furthermore, the students visited the University of Florida Health Shands Hospital and received a presentation about business and medicine with the CEO, Mr. Ed Jimenez, Affiliate Clinical Associate Professor at the College of Public Health and Health Professions.

International academic experiences, such as this field trip to UF, help students to open their minds to see and appreciate the world from other points of view in terms of business, culture, and socio-economic aspects. There are many realities outside Costa Rica that many people do not know about, and it is important for the community to apprehend that students must try to learn and get to know those realities before becoming part of the working market. These academic international experiences give more and better perspectives on how to become a more qualified professional. Students' comprehension of academic

differences and the working markets in another country is vastly improved. In this field trip, students were acquainted with how business administration is used in the real world and how business is properly combined with medicine, sports, and real estate. During the field trip, the daily interaction with staff from different enterprises and organizations contributed significantly to enrich business knowledge and language skills. Listening to native speakers for instance, helped sharpen the comprehension process. If you are surrounded by English native speakers, you are forced to communicate in English at all times, and it generates especial confidence on the language that makes the learning experience more enjoyable and meaningful.

Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica should continue doing and promoting these international academic field trips. Today, it is not only important but also essential for students to learn and practice English in real scenarios. It is also of extreme importance students to put content knowledge into practice. Nowadays the market is highly competitive and people must know how the world functions outside the classroom and the

textbooks' theory. One valuable lesson of this field trip is achieving by facing reality, which means, going out and socializing with people you do not know, stepping out of your comfort zone and being challenged by the context.

It is very important that Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica, as an institution of high prestige both nationally and internationally, continues to promote these kind of experiences for students. Visiting universities and companies, especially in other countries, allows students to gain experience in interacting and being involved with the real world as well as having a more realistic notion of what is happening outside Costa Rica. As part of this academic experience, the students of English VII truly encourage TEC's community to aim at organizing such field trips. This is not an easy task. Putting a field trip together implies significant hard work; yet it is within that "thinking outside of the box" and "stepping out of your comfort zone" students are faced with different world perspectives. Thus, they realize that learning is not exclusively to classrooms and textbooks, rather to the outside world scenarios where meaningful experiences take place and genuine learning comes alive.



Dr. Eric Wild's class on human resource management.