

A look inside the International University in Geneva

The extraordinary MUN student experience in Seoul

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The International University in Geneva (IUG) has the goal to develop international professionals committed to serve a sustainable society, as it provides quality education for student success in business and international careers. In fact, IUG offers undergraduate and graduate programmes in Business Administration, International Relations, Media and Communications, International Trade, International Management, Computer Science, Entrepreneurship, Sales, and Marketing.

The University is dedicated to foster a balance of academic and practical

programmes through effective learning processes, personalised students services, and a faculty that is committed to teaching excellence. Students at IUG benefit from individual attention during interactive sessions, since classes are limited to a maximum of 30 students. Besides the top-notch education system, what distinguishes IUG from many others is the way it organises various social events such as excursions to cities throughout Europe as part of the exchange programme with partner Universities. For instance, a delegation of IUG students majoring in international

relations took part in the Harvard World Model United Nations (MUN) conference in Seoul, South Korea, in March 2015. The educational project was guided by Professor Goran Jovanovic, during which students met delegates from over 150 universities worldwide and had the opportunity to investigate and simulate diplomatic negotiations currently taking place. Professor Jovanovic and Ms. Wangui Kariuki – student and Head Delegate who helped prepare the whole trip in Geneva – took the time to share with Swiss Style Magazine this incredible experience in an exclusive interview.



“Students who attended the MUN in Seoul were following my Foreign Policy course and were invited to join the delegation,” said Professor Jovanovic and further explained, “during the three months of preparation at the end of the course we had exercises, discussions, and reviews, related to the country we were representing.” This incredible opportunity was granted to students thanks to the responsiveness of IUG in welcoming Ms. Wangui Kariuki’s proposition, as she explained: “At IUG we get many guest speakers, so that is what triggered me to introduce World MUN, since I previously studied in Canada, where they had such a programme, and before that when I lived in Kenya we had Model United Nation sessions every year.”

Furthermore, Ms. Kariuki was given the chance to involve the Secretary General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, in the MUN project. *“I’m Kenyan and so is Dr. Kituyi,” she said. “I informed him about the MUN Seoul trip and that I would have appreciated if he could come to speak at IUG, as someone who has represented his country at the UN. His speech was very engaging and charismatic: he described how countries get devastated by natural disasters and how our mission was to bring these issues to global attention. He also talked about trade and development from the UNCTAD point of view, about the difficulties of small countries to engage in international trade. I remember*

when he said ‘those who won’t trade with their neighbours will trade their neighbours’, that was very powerful because you realise how certain countries go to war simply because they have no links.”

The Model United Nations project to Seoul turned out to be a powerful eye-opener to students, who alternated discussions about the Post 2015 Agenda – concerning sustainable goals and reduction of poverty – with enlightening trips to the Royal Palace, the World Heritage site in the South of Korea and the Demilitarised Zone, that according to Professor Jovanovic was like “travelling back in time to the Cold War period,” whilst Miss Kariuki was impressed by the way the people living in a place of conflict were moving on with their lives despite the weight of the division, “It’s very interesting to read the social energy and ideas around it,” she commented.

This experience is so valuable to future generations that the next MUN – which will take place in Rome in March 2016 with Pope Francis as guest speaker – will be open to students of all faculties. “We live in a global era and besides having an individual personality we share a global personality,” said Professor Jovanovic, adding, “therefore it is a great practical exercise to participate in today’s remote international negotiations with different institutions, that you would usually read about in the press or see in the audio visual media broadcast. At

the MUN you have the possibility to work on the real topics as a student and discuss issues that you usually consume as audience and not as a player.”

As the MUN attests, the prodigious teamwork between faculty and students that occurs at IUG allows the future generation of leaders to channel their talents in this new digital age. According to Professor Jovanovic, technology will play an important role in the way students will enact foreign policy, “We will have a very different state of the world affairs by 2030-2040, when young people who are now in their twenties reach their forties or early fifties, and are faced with two realities: one offline and one online. As they socialise in the multimedia setting and the Internet driven information society, they will definitely create a different society from the one my generation has created. We can imagine how this world will be a place where instant communication will be part of everyday life, and reach all levels of society.” Student Wangui Kariuki is in complete accord with her mentor as she concluded, “I’m not sure how exactly global politics will change because of this, but I surely feel it will have an impact in moving faster, since we can organise virtual conferences and move on to implement what needs to be done more rapidly. We will wait and see how this quick and digital world will transform everything else.”