



THE OBSERVATORY  
on Borderless Higher Education

# 2012 Global Forum

## New Players and New Directions:

The Challenges of International Branch Campus Management

**The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education**

Prince Hotel, Kuala Lumpur  
25-26 April 2012

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# Challenges in Staffing an IBC—A Case Study: The University at Buffalo Programs at the Singapore Institute of Management

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**April 25, 2012**



# Overview of UB-SIM Programs

- UB invited to deliver Executive MBA at the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) in 1996; program has been running continuously ever since with intakes of 30-40 students
- Singapore’s “Global Schoolhouse” initiative (2002) prompted an invitation for UB to deliver undergraduate degree programs at SIM
- Contract between UB and SIM signed at the US Embassy in Singapore in July 2003
- Resident Director on site at SIM since January 2004



## Overview of UB-SIM Programs

- Application to Middle States Commission in early 2004; formal approval followed site visit in September 2004
- First UG program—in Business Administration—launched in May 2004, with an enrollment of 50
- In the start up semester, one tenured UB faculty member on hand to teach ESL and General Education courses
- Local instructors hired to teach ESL and other lower division courses



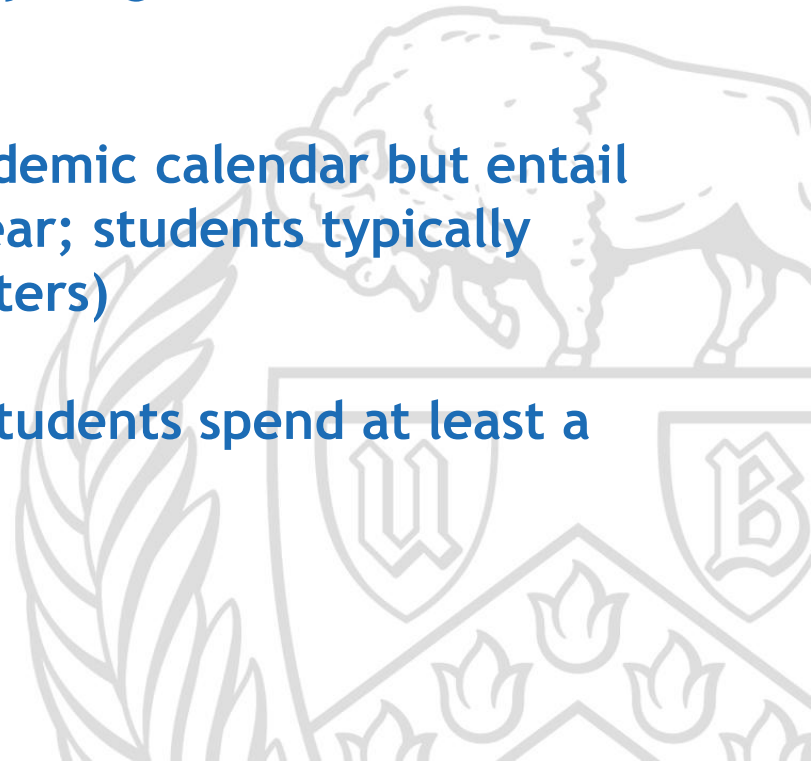
# Overview of UB-SIM Programs

- Meets growing demand for U.S.-style undergraduate programs
- Since launch, 4 additional UB B.A. programs have been added—Communication (2005), Psychology (2007), Sociology (2009), and Economics (2011)
- A 6<sup>th</sup> program—in International Trade—will launch in fall 2012
- Current UG enrollment is close to 1,500 students, 20 percent of whom are from 3<sup>rd</sup> countries
- More than 300 students will receive degrees in next annual commencement in July 2012; nearly half will earn Latin honors



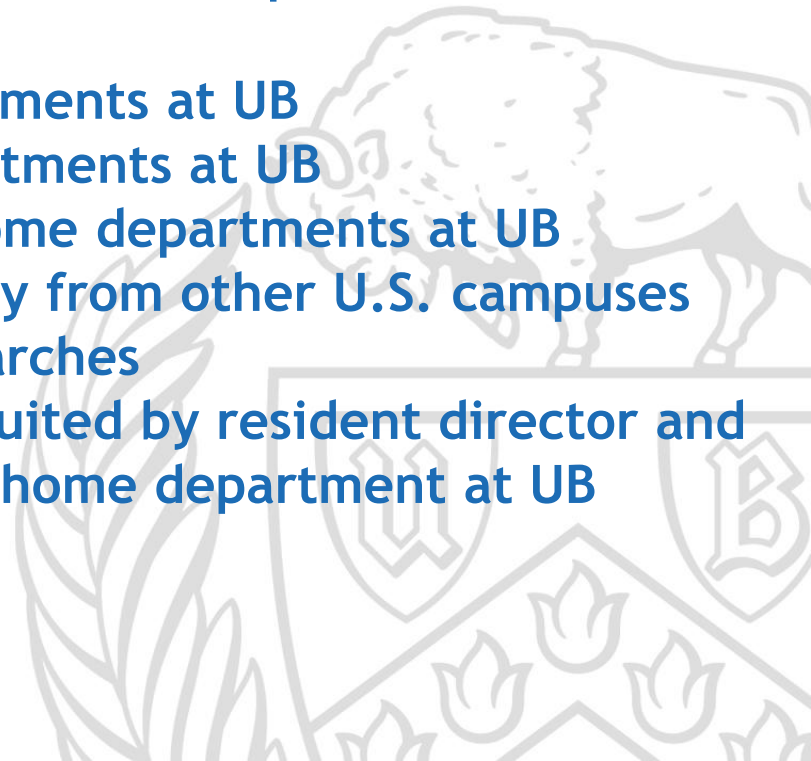
## UB-SIM Students

- Students meet all standard degree requirements for the UB degree, which is identical to the one conferred in Buffalo
- Students enroll as freshmen following A- or O-levels, following military service, or as transfers from polytechs or junior colleges; thus, students are generally younger and older than standard college-entry cohort
- UB UG programs at SIM follow UB academic calendar but entail 3 complete semesters per calendar year; students typically complete degrees in 3 years (9 semesters)
- An increasing percentage of UB-SIM students spend at least a semester at the Buffalo campus



## UB-SIM Programs: Staffing

- Administration handled by a combination of resident administrators (resident director, assistant resident director), SIM administrative staff including academic advisors, and faculty/administrators at UB
- Instructional staff are approved by the home department at UB and include:
  - Ladder faculty from home departments at UB
  - Adjunct faculty from home departments at UB
  - Advanced Ph.D. students from home departments at UB
  - Ladder faculty and adjunct faculty from other U.S. campuses recruited through competitive searches
  - A variety of local instructors recruited by resident director and SIM and interviewed/reviewed by home department at UB





## UB-SIM Programs: Staffing

- UB faculty paid on a “salary buyout plus” (academic year) or per-course (summer) basis, with fringes
- UB/U.S. faculty paid through the SUNY Research Foundation, which administers the contract with SIM
- Adjunct faculty and doctoral students paid on a per-course basis
- Those without the Ph.D. are paid at a lower rate
- Roundtrip economy airfare to Singapore provided; local accommodation in a serviced apartment provided





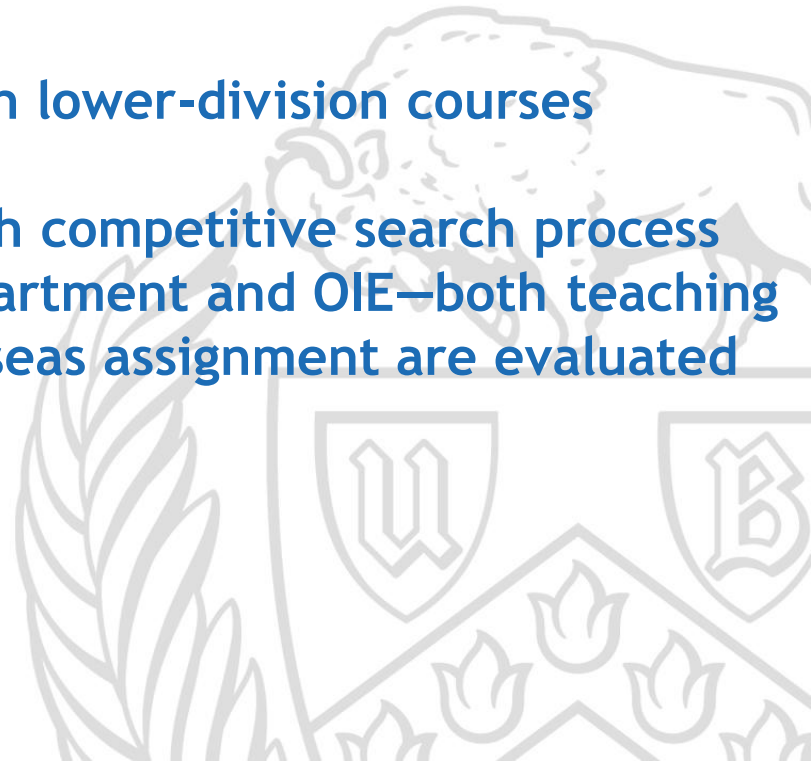
## Staffing—What do we look for?

- Highly experienced faculty who can adapt to new teaching environments
- Experience teaching or learning abroad or in cross-cultural situations
- Knowledge of Asian cultures
- Adaptability and flexibility in their approach
- Proponent of a U.S. student-centered pedagogical approach
- Collegial individuals willing to work with others



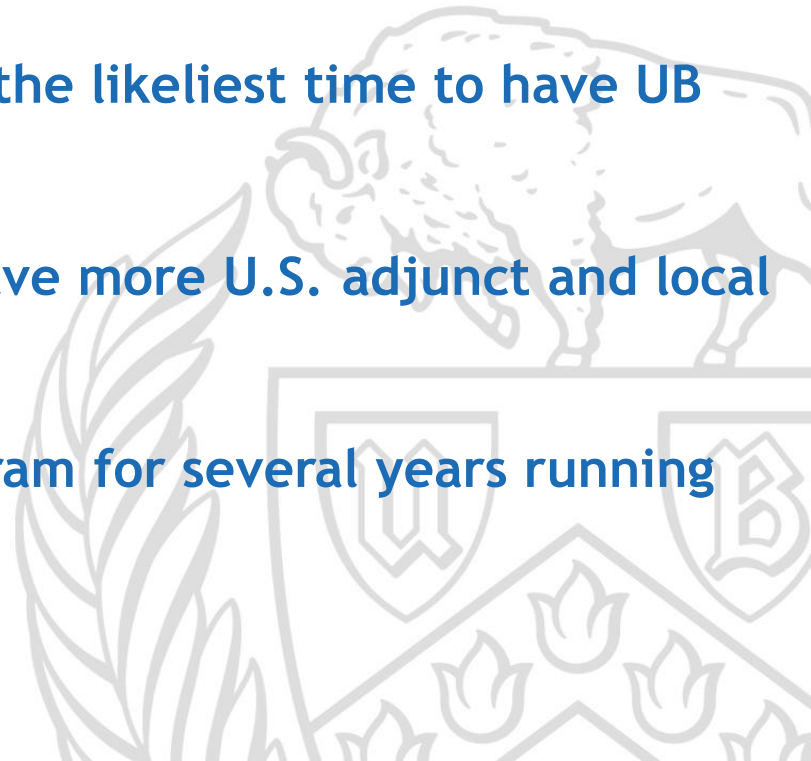
# Staffing Characteristics

- Depending on the course, UB, adjunct/Ph.D. student, or local faculty will be assigned
- Upper division courses usually handled by UB faculty or equivalently qualified adjunct faculty
- Ph.D. students and local faculty teach lower-division courses
- Non-UB U.S. faculty recruited through competitive search process come to UB for interviews by the department and OIE—both teaching credentials and readiness for an overseas assignment are evaluated



# Staffing Characteristics

- Program is flexible enough to accommodate varying approaches by different departments
- Some incentivize their own faculty to teach in fall or spring semesters by offering 6-week summer teaching opportunities
- Not surprisingly, summer semester is the likeliest time to have UB faculty teach in the program
- Fall and spring semester courses involve more U.S. adjunct and local faculty
- Some U.S. adjuncts teach in the program for several years running



## Staffing Process: UB Portion

- Central administrative office (Office of International Education or OIE) works with cognizant departments on instructional planning, including courses to be offered, materials (textbooks) to be used, and faculty to be hired
- Departmental coordinators take lead on course planning and faculty recruitment, both within and outside the department
- OIE works with department to finalize course selection and conduct searches for external candidates and appointment of all faculty selected to teach
- Faculty appointed to teach receive a pre-departure orientation



## Staffing Process: UB Portion

- Orientation addresses nature of program, profile of the students, background on Singapore and its education system, SIM and UniSIM
- Faculty receive a comprehensive Faculty Handbook for the program and access a website for other resource materials
- There are opportunities for mentoring by the departmental coordinator and faculty who've taught previously in the program



# Staffing Process: Issues arising at UB

- Salary and benefits; arrangements for summer salary in the context of research grants
- Size of classes and lack of TA's at SIM
- Scheduling of courses and final exams at SIM
- Travel arrangements; booking of tickets, routing
- Employment pass applications (paperwork and red tape)



## Staffing Process: Issues arising at UB

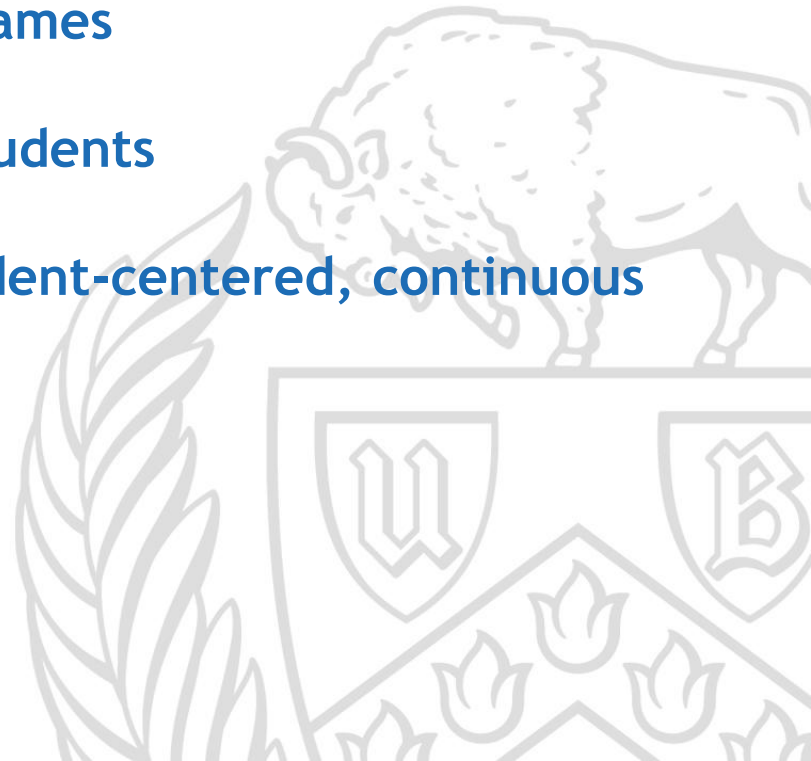
- Accommodations in Singapore—serviced apartment versus faculty-selected accommodation; provision for extra space
- Provision for spouses and children accompanying them (day care, schools)
- Health and diet issues
- Tax liability in Singapore (faculty teaching more than 2 months)





# Getting Accustomed to the Singapore Students

- Younger, less emotionally mature students (age 16 and 17)
- Apparently more homogeneous classes
- Keeping track of confusing student names
- Highly competitive, grade-focused students
- Less familiarity with interactive, student-centered, continuous assessment approach





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