Executive MBA Summer & Fall 2024 International Seminars

Overview

The Executive MBA Programs at Columbia Business School offer several International Seminar course options in different locations. Because we will ask you to rank order your preferences from among these choices, we are providing preliminary information for your reference and planning.

Some quick facts:

- Seminar destinations include Tel Aviv, Israel; Cape Town, South Africa; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Munich, Germany.
- Each seminar is three credits and counts as one of your elective courses.
- **Class sessions, lunches, and company visits are only open to students registered in the seminar.**
- Single-occupancy accommodations, breakfasts and lunches, local guides, transportation to and from class, and official evening events are included.
- Students are responsible for airfare, any immunization and/or visa requirements, meals that are not included, and travel and health insurance.
- **Given the continued uncertainty of student group international travel due to COVID-19, we recommend booking a fully refundable flight if you choose to book your flight more than two months before departure. In the event of a trip rescheduling due to COVID-19, flight change fees will not be reimbursed.**
- Please make sure your passport has no significant damage, is valid up until six months after the end date of the trip and contains at least two blank pages (preferably more).
- Seminars meet in the block week format, which means that the course material is covered in an intense weeklong session at a specified location, often with a post-week deliverable.
- In addition to class sessions, there may be visits to cultural and business locations in the host city.
- **Plus ones** are welcome to participate in the city tours and evening optional social events, assuming they are officially registered as plus ones (paid the nightly double occupancy surcharge), but are not allowed to attend class sessions, lunches, or company visits. There will also be a separate fee for plus ones who want to attend Oktoberfest in Munich—assuming the Munich trip takes place during that timeframe.
- **Students who request changing their international seminar within 60 days of the start of the seminar for which they are already signed up, will be assessed a $1500 late cancellation fee to help cover penalties incurred through the hotel contract.** Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Permission can be granted only if a student pays the $1500 fee and the travel provider is able to procure hotel accommodations in the desired seminar.
- **Please note that International Seminars are scheduled so that they do not conflict with Friday/Saturday or Saturday courses. Missing class to travel before or after a seminar is not considered an excused absence.**
Dates, Locations, and Course Descriptions

Israel International Seminar: Summer 2024
(Open to 2025EMBA & EMBA-Global 2025)
Dates: Tuesday, July 2 – Saturday, July 6, 2024
(Check-in: Monday, July 1, 2024; Check-out: Sunday, July 7, 2024)
Professor: Gur Huberman
City: Tel Aviv, Israel
Add/Drop Deadline: Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Next to Silicon Valley, Israel is the best place for an on-site study tour of technology entrepreneurship. Much of Israel’s technology community is concentrated in a small area populated by engineers, scientists and business people who are energetic, hospitable and happy to share their experience. This international seminar offers an intense exposure to technology and technology entrepreneurship in a unique environment that has been a fertile ground to multiple successful ventures, with many more in the pipeline. The seminar may well be the EMBA class with the strongest impact on your career. The week in Tel Aviv will expose you to one of the world’s most vibrant tech communities which thrives although it is geographically distant from its main markets and funding sources. At the end of the week you will be able to form your own views about the drivers of Israel’s tech success and its likely future course. You will establish familiarity with that unusual culture with which you may find yourself doing business in the future. Moreover, you’ll take away invaluable general insights to guide you in your own career. Competing for your attention will be Tel Aviv itself. The town’s sidewalks are lined with crowded cafes. It has a lively night scene with pubs, bars and clubs that keep their doors open until the early morning hours. It stretches along the Mediterranean’s sandy beaches where the water is pleasantly warm, swimmable year round. In short, Tel Aviv is a young person’s heaven.

South Africa International Seminar: Fall 2024
(Open to 2025EMBA & EMBA-Global 2025)
Dates: Tuesday, August 27 – Saturday, August 31, 2004
(Check-in: Monday, August 26, 2004; Check-out: Sunday, September 1, 2004)
Professor: Stephan Meier
City: Cape Town, South Africa
Add/Drop Deadline: Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Africa’s consumer market has large potentials. Africa is the world’s second-fastest growing region – after emerging Asia according to the African Development Bank Report. About half of the growth of the continent's GDP growth is due to consumer-facing industries. 1.3 billion people live in Africa and according to the United Nations, the population is expected to increase to 2.5 billion by 2050. The working-class population in Africa is growing by 2.7 percent each year (compared to 1.3 percent in Latin America and 1.2 percent in Southeast Asia). McKinsey projects that by 2025 two-thirds of the estimated 303 million African households will have discretionary income and consumer spending will reach $2.1 trillion.¹ Not surprisingly, many firms and investors are trying to tap into Africa's consumer market.

This course aims to train students’ global intelligence, i.e. their understanding of specific cultural aspects of different consumer markets by analyzing the potential and challenges of Africa’s consumer markets – using South Africa as a case study. The essence of the course will be our guest speakers, through whom we will learn not only about their personal experiences, but also about Africa’s consumer market in general. Our guest speakers will all be South Africans hailing from a wide variety of business sizes and backgrounds. Through South Africa’s entrepreneurs, you will also learn about the state of the South African economy and its cultural and political issues.

Brazil International Seminar: Fall 2024
(Open to 2025EMBA & EMBA-Global 2025)
Dates: Tuesday, August 27 – Saturday, August 31, 2004
(Check-in: Monday, August 26, 2024; Check-out: Sunday, September 1, 2024)
Professor: Carlos Singer
City: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Add/Drop Deadline: Wednesday, June 26, 2024

This course is an in-depth examination of Latin America’s economy, finances and firm behavior and performance. The emphasis of the course is on Emerging Markets as a major element of the world economy. It focuses on some of the following questions: Why do countries grow? What causes disparities in income between countries? How relevant is the role of education and innovation in economic growth? What is the role played by foreign investment? What does it take to create first class firms and managers in Emerging Markets?

The class involves both an academic and on-site learning experience. The learning and value acquired from this course is based on class discussion and hands on experience visiting firms in Rio de Janeiro. It is also a case study, perhaps the most significant one of your graduate business education, bringing together many disciplines studied in your MBA program. The course structure will consist of morning class sessions, followed by company visits in the afternoons. The course grade will be calculated through in-class quizzes and/or presentations, participation in case discussions and a final assignment.

Germany International Seminar: Fall 2024
(Open to 2025EMBA & EMBA-Global 2025)
Dates: Tuesday, September 24 – Saturday, September 28, 2024
(Check-in: Monday, September 23, 2024; Check-out: Sunday, September 29, 2024)
Professor: Bernd Schmitt
City: Munich, Germany
Add/Drop Deadline: Wednesday, July 26, 2024

Prof. Bernd Schmitt’s course, Managing Brands, Identity and Experiences, focuses on the need for companies to understand the financial value of their corporate brand and products, to manage brands strategically and to deliver implementations to customers that are relevant, differentiated and powerful so as to build an emotional bond and loyalty. The course will focus on three topics: brand strategy and valuation; visual identity and experiential branding; and organizational branding issues. The course will familiarize you with the best practices in branding (e.g. Absolut Vodka, the launch of the Mini) and also explore successful branding initiatives in financial, pharmaceutical, consumer goods, entertainment and other industries. Drawing on the course location, you will meet with people from the branding industry from companies such as Siemens, BMW, Allianz, & Lowenbrau.

The course structure will be a mix of classroom sessions, corporate presentations and cultural events. You will be asked to complete a group project/presentation during the week as well as submit a final written assignment after the course.
International Seminar Selection Process

Registration Process: Friday, October 13 – Friday, October 27, 2023
The International Seminar Selection System (ISSS) will open on October 13, 2023 at 10:00am.

- To access the ISSS, log on to the International Seminar section of the EMBA Student Services website (http://www8.gsb.columbia.edu/emba-students/academic-essentials/classes/international-seminar), and click on the “International Seminar Selection System (ISSS)” link. Upon accessing ISSS, please rank all the International Seminar courses in order of your preference: first choice, second choice, third choice, etc.
- **Important:** after ranking all trips according to your preference, click ‘continue’ on that screen, and then click ‘confirm’ on the next screen.

To make the process as equitable as possible, the ISSS will systematically place students in seminars according to their first choice until each seminar is filled to capacity. If there is excess demand for a particular seminar, ISSS will randomly assign the seats to students who chose that seminar as their first choice. For students who do not get their first choice, ISSS will proceed through the choices until all students have a seat.

All selections will be processed by Friday, November 3rd. Students will be notified by email indicating which seminar they have been registered for.

*Please note: The ISSS process is separate from the Course Match process you will use to choose elective courses.*

Add/Drop Process
There will be several ISSS Add/Drop rounds following the Initial Selection period. If you register for an International Seminar course and are not able to attend, you will be able to drop the course and add a different seminar in which there is capacity. After initial selection, the first Add/Drop round will run Friday, November 17 through Wednesday, November 29.

Step 1: Access the ISSS system during an active Add/Drop round
Step 2: Complete form
Step 3: Receive confirmation of selections
Step 4: System runs looking for open spots or matches
Step 5: Results email sent at the end of each Add/Drop stage

If you are currently registered for a seminar, you have three options during Add/Drop:

1. **Keep your assigned seminar**
   If you do not wish to change, you do not need to participate in this add/drop process. (This option is for those who wish to revert to their existing Seminar if they previously submitted a change during the same active stage.)

2. **Drop your assigned seminar**

3. **Drop your assigned seminar ONLY if you are assigned one of your choices**
   - You must pick at least one other seminar.
   - You do not have to fill all choices.
   - You will only lose your assigned seminar if you get one of your choices.
   - Once you are assigned another seminar, your place on your original seminar will be given away.
Please note that you must participate in either Initial Selection or one of the subsequent Add/Drop rounds in order to become registered for a seminar. You will receive an e-mail confirmation from the ISSS system. We recommend that all students participate in the Initial Selection period. Seminars may reach capacity after Initial Selection, so participation increases the likelihood of getting your first choice. **Please also note that your Add/Drop requests do not automatically roll over to the next Add/Drop round; you must re-enter ISSS and place your request in the next Add/Drop round.**

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**FAQs**

**Can I tag along with another EMBA student on their Int’l Seminar and participate?**

Class sessions, lunches, and company visits are only open to students registered in the seminar. If you travel as an officially registered plus one and pay the daily double-occupancy surcharge you are welcome to attend any city tour or evening optional social event during the week.

**Do I need to apply for a visa to any of these locations?**

For US citizens, please refer to the [International Travel](https://example.com) website for the specific visa and/or passport requirements for each country.

For non-US citizens, please inquire with the consulate of your country of citizenship.

**Where will classes be held?**

This varies according to the seminar location. Note that each trip consists of a combination of company visits and classroom time.

**Can I take more than one International Seminar?**

We have capacity in the International Seminars for each of our students from the EMBA-NY and EMBA-Global programs to take one course. Opportunity for a second seminar may arise if there is excess capacity in a course after the Add/Drop deadline occurs. All students will be notified of any available seats by email, and a lottery will be held. If you are able to take a second International Seminar, you would be responsible for a second seminar fee of $4500, which covers expenses, in addition to the three credits of tuition for the course.

**May I bring a guest?**

Plus ones are welcome to participate in the city tours and evening optional social events as long as they are officially registered as plus ones and have paid the daily surcharge for double occupancy, but will not be allowed to attend class sessions, lunches, or company visits. Please note there will also be a fee for plus ones to attend Oktoberfest in Munich—assuming the trip take place during that timeframe.