Middle Class Phenomenon in Emerging Markets 2013:
Multi-disciplinary and Multi-country Perspectives:
An International Conference
26-28 September 2013
GSU Buckhead Center, 200 Tower Place
Atlanta, GA
Dear Conference Attendee,

This landmark conference on the Middle Class Phenomenon in Emerging Markets brings together scholars from multiple disciplines and countries to examine this critical and fascinating topic.

We hope you enjoy the conference and your time in Atlanta.

Conference Co-Chairs:

S. Tamer Cavusgil
Executive Director
Center for International Business Education and Research

Hongmei Li
Assistant Professor
Communication

Leslie Marsh
Assistant Professor
Modern & Classical Languages

Ilke Kardes
Professor
International Marketing
University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf
Germany

Organized and hosted by:
venue map

5th Floor:
Elevator and Lounge for Welcome Reception on September 26, 2013

6th Floor:
Elevator, Lounge, & Rooms 601 and 610 on September 27-28, 2013
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Middle Class Phenomenon

Antecedents
- Market liberalization, reforms, productivity
- Political stability

Consequences
- Business and economic transformation
- Societal, political, and cultural transformation (Democracy, political consciousness, transparency, education, health care, urban design, environment, income inequality, etc.)

Inhibitors:
- Resources
- Environment
- Demographics

Rising wages → Substantial disposable income → Discretionary consumption
Nature and Scope of the Conference

The ascension of the middle class (MC) in rapidly transforming economies of East Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East is one of the most remarkable megatrends of recent decades. Given the magnitude of the changes felt by vast numbers of households across the globe, as well as the importance the issue holds in the realms of society, politics, business, economics and culture, examining the middle classes in emerging markets (EMs) has become a topic of investigation for years to come in multiple areas of academic inquiry.

While a consensus definition does not exist, the middle class generally refers to a growing number of households in EMs who have access to a substantial disposable income that they can now direct towards discretionary purchases – e.g. cars, home appliance, better housing, private education for children, leisure, etc. One benchmark is having at least 30 percent of total household income available for discretionary consumption.

Yet, the rise of the middle class households in EMs is a multifaceted phenomenon signifying changes beyond discretionary consumption. Other factors by which middle class status can be defined include educational and professional achievement, political attitudes and participation, lifestyles, cultural values, or simply self-identification. The evolution of middle class is also correlated with rapid urbanization -- along with its consequences (e.g., housing and real estate pressures, unequal access to infrastructure between Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities, etc.). Finally, the rise of middle class in EMs heralds profound changes in societal values. Examples are: savings vs. spending proclivity, attitudes toward borrowing, work-life balance, definition of success, religion, and individualism orientation.
Thus the business community is not alone in studying the MC phenomenon. Scholars from such disciplines as film, media, communication, sociology, anthropology, political science, literature, education, history, art, urban studies, geography, and architecture are also actively examining this topic. A special interest of some scholars is to contrast the contemporary developments in EMs with those already experienced by mature, post-industrial economies. Some also approach the middle class as a social phenomenon that derives meaning from social and cultural practices, while others treat it as political power with the capacity to shape a country’s social, political, economic and cultural landscape.

In addition to facilitating a multi-disciplinary, holistic understanding the middle class phenomenon, this conference aims to examine country variations, recognizing that each EM has exhibited a different trajectory in forming its middle class. Middle class households in different EMs may face different issues and embody a wide range of paradoxes regarding hope and anxiety, optimism and discontent, stability and change, and so forth. Therefore, a comparative perspective can lead to some common understanding of this remarkable global phenomenon.

**Specific Objectives**

By design, this conference will bring together scholars from *multiple disciplines and countries* to examine the middle class in emerging markets. Key objectives are to:

- Capture what we already know, and generate a holistic understanding, of the middle class phenomenon in emerging markets
- Formulate and advance a multi-disciplinary research agenda
- Facilitate the formation of collaborative research networks among scholars
- Prepare and disseminate an edited book, featuring select papers presented at the conference
# Program Overview:

## Middle Class Phenomenon in Emerging Markets Conference

### Thursday, September 26

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>4:00pm – 6:00pm</td>
<td>Conference Check-In</td>
<td>5th Floor Lounge</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00pm – 6:30pm</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
<td>5th Floor Lounge</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:30pm – 8:00pm</td>
<td>Reception</td>
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### Friday, September 27

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<td>7:30am - 10:00am</td>
<td>Conference Check-In – Continuous</td>
<td>6th Floor Lounge</td>
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<td>8:15am – 8:25am</td>
<td>Welcome Remarks</td>
<td>Room: 610</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am – 10:15am</td>
<td>Opening Plenary: Panel Session</td>
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*"The Meaning and Importance of the Middle Class in Emerging Markets Context"

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<tr>
<td>10:15am – 10:35am</td>
<td>Refreshment Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:40am – 12:10pm</td>
<td>Parallel Sessions</td>
<td>Room: 610</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session A: Business Perspectives</td>
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<td>Session B: Perspectives from China</td>
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<td>12:10pm-1:45pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1:45pm</td>
<td>Group Photo</td>
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<td>2:00pm – 3:30pm</td>
<td>Parallel Sessions</td>
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<td>Session C: Media, Race &amp; Ethnicity</td>
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<td>Session D: Political Science &amp; Rights</td>
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*Why is Middle Class Important for Western Business?*

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<td>Session E: Middle Income Trap, Urban Life</td>
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<td>Session H: Perspectives from Turkey</td>
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<td>1:00pm – 2:30pm</td>
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<td>Session I: Perspectives from Latin America &amp; Russia</td>
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<td>Session J: Education</td>
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<td>Room: 601</td>
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<td>2:30pm – 2:40pm</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>2:40pm – 4:10pm</td>
<td>Parallel Sessions</td>
<td>Room: 610</td>
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<td>Session K: New Communication Technologies &amp; Social Media</td>
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<td>Session L: Middle Class Sentiments</td>
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<td>4:20pm – 5:00pm</td>
<td>Closing session</td>
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*Conference Adjourns*
detailed program:

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**

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<td><strong>Welcome and Introductions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Special Remarks by:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr. Risa Palm, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</td>
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<td>Dr. Jun Liu, Associate Provost for International Initiatives</td>
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<td>Dr. Irene Duhaime, Senior Associate Dean of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business</td>
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<td>6:30pm – 8:00pm</td>
<td><strong>Reception</strong></td>
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**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

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<td><strong>Special Remarks by:</strong></td>
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<td>Dr. H. Fenwick Huss, Dean of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business</td>
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<td>Dr. James Weyhenmeyer, Vice President for Research and Economic Development</td>
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<td>8:30am – 10:15am</td>
<td><strong>Opening Plenary: Panel Session</strong></td>
<td>Room: 610</td>
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<td>“The Meaning and Importance of the Middle Class in Emerging Markets Context”</td>
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<td>Chair: Dr. S. Tamer Cavusgil, International Business, Georgia State University</td>
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<td>“The Meaning and Importance of the Middle Class in Emerging Markets Context”</td>
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<td>Panel members will address the following key questions from their disciplinary perspectives:</td>
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<td>1.) What is the meaning and importance of the middle class from your disciplinary perspective?</td>
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<td>2.) Can you provide an operational definition of the middle class from your disciplinary perspective?</td>
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<td>3.) What are three or four key questions that should be explored by future research?</td>
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<td>Panelists (and their disciplines):</td>
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<td>Dr. Carolyn Biltoft, History, Georgia State University</td>
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<td>Dr. Penny Prime, International Economics, Georgia State University</td>
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<td>Dr. Hongmei Li, Global Communication &amp; Chinese Media, Georgia State University</td>
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<td>Dr. Leslie Marsh, Latin American Film &amp; Media, Georgia State University</td>
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<td>Dr. Angela da Rocha, Int’l Bus &amp; Culture, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro</td>
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<td>Dr. Andrew Wedeman, Asian Studies, Georgia State University</td>
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<td>10:15am – 10:35am</td>
<td><strong>Refreshment Break</strong></td>
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### Parallel Sessions

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<td>Session B: Perspectives from China</td>
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**Parallel Session A: Business Perspectives**

*Chair: Dr. Penny Prime, International Economics, Georgia State University*

Presenters:

- **GSU-CIBER Middle Class Scorecard: Quantifying the Rise of Middle Class in Emerging Markets**
  *S. Tamer Cavusgil, Georgia State University & Ilke Kardes, University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf*

- **What Do We Know about China’s Middle Class Consumers?**
  *Jing Song, Southwest Jiaotong University, S. Tamer Cavusgil, Georgia State University & Ronghua Luo, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics*

*Discussant: Dr. Gary Knight, Global Management, Willamette University*

**Parallel Session B: Perspectives from China**

*Chair: Dr. Heechun Kim, International Business, Georgia State University*

Presenters:

- **Village Mentality: The Definition, Dimensions and Implications to Chinese Managerial Culture**
  *Jing Betty Feng & Leigh Anne Liu, Georgia State University*

- **The China in Microblogging**
  *Marjorie Perry, The Carter Center’s China Program*

*Discussant: Dr. Andrew Wedeman, Asian Studies, Georgia State University*

### 12:10pm – 1:45pm

**Lunch & Keynote Remarks**

*6th Floor Lounge*

- **Dr. Carol Winkler, Associate Dean, College of Arts & Sciences**
- **Dr. Tim Duvall, U.S. Department of Education**

**1:45pm**

**Group Photo**

*Room: 619*
2:00pm – 3:30pm  Parallel Sessions

Session C: Media, Race & Ethnicity  Room: 610
Session D: Political Science & Rights  Room: 601

Parallel Session C: Media, Race & Ethnicity  Room: 610
Chair: Dr. Gladys M. Francis, French & Francophone Studies, Georgia State University

Presenters:
Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism: Selling the Chinese Sportswear Brand Li Ning to Middle Class Consumers
Hongmei Li, Georgia State University

Social Representations and Working Classes: The Mediatic Concept of the New Brazilian Middle Class
Janaina Vieira de Paula Jordão, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Brazil

Producing and Consuming Images of the Middle Class in China’s Media
Xin Wang, Baylor University

Discussant: Dr. Leslie Marsh, Latin American Film & Media, Georgia State University

Parallel Session D: Political Science & Rights  Room: 601
Chair: Dr. William Nichols, Modern & Classical Languages, Georgia State University

Presenters:
Not in My Backyard! Middle Class Protest in China
Andrew Wedeman, Georgia State University

The Mass Political Consequences of Economic Reform in Latin America
Ryan E. Carlin, Georgia State University & Timothy Hellwig, Indiana University

Bridging the Middle – Help Wanted: Class, Gender and the Vanishing Domestic Worker in Brazil
Rosana Resende, University of Florida

Discussant: Dr. William Downs, Political Science, Georgia State University

3:30pm – 3:50pm  Refreshment Break

3:50pm – 5:20pm  Business Panel: Why is Middle Class Important for Western Business?  Room: 610

Chair: Ed Baker, Publisher, Atlanta Business Chronicle

Panelists:
Michael Shannon, Liquid Strategies Ltd.
Rahm Sitaraman, The Coca-Cola Co. (ret.)
John Riesenberger, Pharmacia & Upjohn (ret.)
Van Wilberding, The Coca-Cola Co.

Dinner on your own
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

8:30am – 10:00am  Parallel Sessions

Session E: Middle Income Trap, Urban Life  Room: 610
Session F: Perspectives from India  Room: 601

Parallel Session E: Middle Income Trap, Energy
Room 610
Chair: Dr. Ilke Kardes, International Marketing, University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf

Presenters:
Small and Open: How Economies Can Promote the Middle Class and Avoid the Middle Income Trap
Penny Prime, Georgia State University

How Can Nations Break out of the Middle Income Trap?
Ayse Ozturk, Georgia State University

Is A ‘New’ Middle-Class Being Forged in The Global South? A View of Contemporary Urban Life in Mexico City
Cristina Inclán-Valadez, World Health Organization

Discussant: Dr. Cathy Yang Liu, Public Management and Policy, Georgia State University

Parallel Session F: Perspectives from India
Chair: Tugba Kalafatoglu, Entrepreneurship, ESADE Business School

Exploring the Consumer Decision Making and Materialism in the Indian Adolescent World
Arpita Srivastava, XLRI Jamshedpur – School of Business and Human Resources

Understanding the Characteristics and Entrepreneurial Activities of Middle-Class Consumers: The Case of India
David Grossman, Goucher College & Rajshekhar G. Javalgi, Cleveland State University

Meaning of Money Among Middle Class Hindu Consumers In India
Altarf Merchant & Gregory Rose, University of Washington Tacoma

Discussant: Dr. Carolyn Biltoft, History, Georgia State University

10:00am – 10:20am  Refreshment Break
### Parallel Sessions

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<td>10:20am – 11:50am</td>
<td><strong>Session G: Consumption &amp; Lifestyles</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Session H: Perspectives from Turkey</strong></td>
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### Parallel Session G: Consumption & Lifestyles
Chair: Dr. Kim Reimann, Asian Studies Center, Georgia State University

Presenters:
- **Cultural Variations in Global Brand Consumption: A Study of Chinese Consumers**
  Jing Betty Feng, Georgia State University & Jing Song, Southwest Jiaotong University
- **Locating the Black Middle Class in South Africa**
  Roger Southall, University of the Witwatersrand
- **Social Economic Classes and Communication: Thinking the ‘New’ Brazilian Middle Class – From Consumption Practices to Media Representations**
  Marcia Perencin Tondato, University of Brasilia

Discussant: Dr. Alessandra Raengo, Communications, Georgia State University

### Parallel Session H: Perspectives from Turkey
Chair: Dr. Earl Picard, International Initiatives, Georgia State University

Presenters:
- **The Emerging Middle Class in Turkey: Some Perspectives**
  Ozlem Tuba Koc, Georgia State University
- **Unique Characteristics of Turkish Middle Class**
  Mithat Uner and Gokhan Yılmaz, Gazi University, Turkey

Discussant: Dr. Heying Jenny Zhan, Sociology, Georgia State University

### Lunch
6th Floor Lounge

### Parallel Sessions

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<td><strong>Session J: Education</strong></td>
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### Parallel Session I: Perspectives from Latin America & Russia
Chair: Prof. Pedro Carrillo, International Business, Georgia State University

Presenters:
- **Meanings Attached to Cruises by Emerging Consumers: A Study Using Participant Observation**
  Ana Raquel Rocha & Angela da Rocha, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro
- **Contextualizing the ‘Middle Class’ in Post-Socialist Russia and Beyond**
  Jennifer Patico, Georgia State University
- **Russia’s Middle Class Consumers and Their Evaluations of the Foreign Service**
  Ania Izabela Rynarzewska, Mercer University, Stetson School of Business and Economics

Discussant: Dr. Ryan E. Carlin, Political Science, Georgia State University
Parallel Session J: Education
Chair: Dr. German Torres, Modern & Classical Languages, Georgia State University

Presenters:

Education and the Emerging Middle Class in Brazil, China and South Africa
James E. Cofer, Missouri State University & and Patricia A. Somers, University of Texas at Austin

Middle Class Attitudes Towards Higher Education in the MENA Region
Mourad Dakhli & Ihsen Ketata, Georgia State University

The Rise of Reading Campaigns and Children’s Literature in Post-NAFTA Mexico
Hind, Emily, University of Wyoming

Discussant: Dr. Hongmei Li, Global Communication & Chinese Media, Georgia State University

2:30pm – 2:40pm Break

2:40pm – 4:10pm Parallel Sessions
Session K: New Communication Technologies & Social Media Room: 610
Session L: Middle Class Sentiments Room: 601

Parallel Session K: New Communication Technologies & Social Media
Chair: Dr. David Cheshier, Communications, Georgia State University

Presenters:

Virtual Economies: Discretionary Consumption, Online Gaming and the Rise of the Global Middle Class
Manuel (MJR) Montoya, University of New Mexico

Wu Shixian on Weibo: Changing Interactions between Filmmakers and Fans in Chinese Social Media
Munib Rezaie, Georgia State University

Citizens of CorpoNations? Corporate Investment in a New Global Middle Class
Erika Polson, University of Denver

Discussant: Dr. Shawn Powers, Communication, Georgia State University

Parallel Session L: Middle Class Sentiments
Chair: Tugba Kalafatoglu, Entrepreneurship, ESADE Business School

Presenters:

Alternative Financial Services in Emerging Markets: A Banking Bridge for the Middle Class
Les Dlabay, Lake Forest College

Middle Class Attitudes toward Sustainability in China
Yushan Zhao, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

The Upward Mobility of China’s Middle Class: Generational Differences
Jingting Liu, Georgia State University

Discussant: Dr. Gary Knight, Global Management, Willamette University

4:20pm – 5:00pm Closing Session Room: 610

Chairs: S. Tamer Cavusgil & Seyda Deligonul Participants: All

What have we learned? Where do we go from here? Plans for future conferences? Plans for publication.

CONFERENCE ADJOURS
overview: J. Mack Robinson College of Business

Mission

The J. Mack Robinson College of Business is committed to excellence in the creation and dissemination of knowledge in business. We prepare students to lead by pursuing ethical, innovative and value-enhancing strategies in a culturally diverse and technologically advanced world. We serve our community through complementary research, teaching and outreach activities, leveraging our proximity to multinational corporations, entrepreneurial enterprises, government agencies and not-for-profit organizations.

The J. Mack Robinson College of Business (RCB) marked its 100th anniversary in 2013. As we celebrate this important milestone we are mindful of our distinguished past, proud of our stature today, and looking ahead to how we will build on this outstanding legacy in the future.

Our history is in many ways the history of Georgia State University, which traces its roots to the 1913 establishment of the Georgia Tech Evening School of Commerce. The first commercially focused graduate school in Atlanta, it was created to counteract early 20th century “brain drain.” At the time, most local college graduates moved north to build their careers, unaware of business and industrial opportunities within the state.

In the century since Robinson was founded the college has continued to deliver on its original mission to prepare Georgia business leaders. According to Standard & Poor’s data, the Robinson College and Georgia State have produced more of Georgia’s top executives with graduate degrees than any other school in the Southeast.

While we remain committed to our roots, Robinson’s footprint and impact have greatly expanded. With 200 faculty, 8,000 students and 75,000 alumni, the Robinson College is one of the largest business schools in the nation. We have six locations throughout the Atlanta metro area and programs on five continents. As of Fall 2011, students from 88 countries are enrolled at the college here in Atlanta. Our student body is diverse not only in nationality, but also in business experience, educational background, and ethnicity, and, as such, is representative of the United States and the world at large. Our alumni hold leadership positions not only in Georgia, but also throughout the United States and around the globe. We truly are world-class and world-wide.

Robinson’s prominence is reflected by the standing of our programs in business school rankings.

- Our part-time MBA is ranked among the best by the Aspen Institute, Bloomberg Businessweek and U.S. News & World Report
- Our Executive MBA is on the Financial Times list of the world’s premier programs
- Our BBA is ranked among the nation’s best by U.S. News & World Report
- Our departments of risk management and insurance, computer information systems, real estate, and health administration are nationally ranked by U.S. News & World Report

Our faculty is a particular point of pride. Among our number are some of the world’s most prolific scholars and respected practitioners, whose quality as instructors is reflected by a well-earned “A” for teaching excellence bestowed by Bloomberg Businessweek.

An analysis conducted by the University of Texas at Dallas places the Robinson College among the world’s top business schools for research productivity. Also telling is the caliber of schools that hire graduates of our PhD program. In recent years, they have taken positions at institutions including Florida State University, Tulane University, University of British Columbia, University of Iowa, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Tennessee and University of Virginia.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the College committed itself to five strategic accelerators designed to increase the quality and reputation of its programs. The plan called for the college to increase research quality and reputation; increase student quality/recruiting; dramatically increase external funding; significantly improve facilities and technology; and dramatically increase executive education. These activities have provided a valuable focus for College decisions and allocation of resources, yielded strong results despite the challenging circumstances for higher education in recent years, and will continue to serve as the foundation upon which the College embarks on its next phase of growth.
Designated as a center of excellence by the U.S. Department of Education in April 2010, Georgia State University’s **Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER)** serves as a regional and national resource to businesses, students and academics. CIBER at Georgia State implements programs focused on improving American competitiveness and helping U.S. businesses succeed in global markets. Building on rich traditions of curriculum and faculty internationalization, strong ties to the corporate community, and exemplary programs such as the *Global Partners MBA* and the *MIB*, Georgia State University has been at the forefront of international business education, research and outreach.

Since its launch in 2010, Georgia State University (GSU) CIBER has been extremely active. Early in its establishment, this center of excellence adopted the following mission:

“GSU-CIBER strives to address 21st century needs for U.S. global business competence through a transformation of business school curriculum, assisting business faculty and practitioners acquire global competence, enhancing student opportunities for study and work abroad, and carrying out research to enhance U.S. business competitiveness in the global marketplace.”

Our prolific portfolio of activities includes several innovative projects focusing on the development of International Business (IB) teaching resources, research, export education and training for the business community, faculty development workshops, teaching of LCTLs (Less Commonly Taught Languages), and expanding the study abroad program. Based on unique assets, resources, and audiences, Georgia State CIBER distinguishes itself from other CIBERS by placing emphasis in the following areas:

1. **Acquiring and disseminating knowledge about Emerging Markets.**
2. **Providing innovative training and capacity-building programs for managers championing export expansion.**
3. **Providing pedagogical materials and serving as a source of professional development to business faculty in regional universities and colleges.**
4. **Promoting study of languages for business (e.g. Business Spanish) and less commonly taught languages (e.g., Mandarin).**
5. **Initiating interdisciplinary collaborations with other professional schools and area studies programs to prepare students for potential global careers.**
6. **Facilitating student study and work abroad opportunities in Emerging Markets.**

**Awards & Acknowledgements**

In September 2011, GSU-CIBER was recognized by the *Global Gateway Awards* Event of the *Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce* for **Outstanding Service and Leadership in International Education**.

Georgia State University CIBER won the **2010 Governor’s International Award** in the International Education Program category. The commendation, signed by Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue, praised CIBER for its “innovative and global approach to educating students”. In September 2011, GSU-CIBER was recognized by the *Global Gateway Awards of the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce* for **Outstanding Service and Leadership in International Education**.

Georgia State students are building a reputation as strong competitors in the annual national CIBER Case Challenge. Four students are selected each year from Georgia State to compete with other students across the US to analyze and present international business cases from a variety of functional areas. Three years in a row, Robinson student teams brought home awards, indicating their analytical and debating skills.
keynote speaker: Dr. Timothy Duvall

Dr. Tim Duvall joined the International and Foreign Language Education office after 15 years as a professor of political science and a small business owner. He earned his B.A. from The College of William and Mary, his M.A. from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), and his Ph.D. from the University of Arizona. He taught at the University of Arizona and at St. John’s University in New York City where he earned multiple teaching and research awards. With the Advanced Training and Research Division in the office of International and Foreign Language Education, Tim oversees the NRC/FLAS programs for the Russian/East European/Eurasian and African regions and oversees the Centers for International Business Education and Research. He also serves as the Evaluation Team Lead for IFLE.

conference rapporteur: Dr. Seyda Deligonul


special guests: W. Frank Blount

W. Frank Blount is currently Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of JI Ventures, Inc., which is based in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Blount has served in various executive positions for AT&T, including Group President of the Communications Product Group and President of the Network Operations Group. Mr. Blount served as Chief Executive Officer of Telstra Communications Corporation, Australia’s principal telecommunications company from January 1992 - March 1999. He served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Cypress Communications Corporation from June 2000 - October 2002. Mr. Blount also serves on the Boards of Caterpillar, Inc., Alcatel-Lucent and Entergy, Inc. and the Advisory Board for China Telecom. Mr. Blount joined the Board in April 2007. He is a member of the Audit Committee and the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee.

Dr. Irene Duhaime

Irene Duhaime is the Associate Dean for Administration of the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University. Internationally respected for her expertise in corporate strategy as well as entrepreneurship and family business, Duhaime has published research across the areas in the leading academic journals and presented at numerous national and international conferences. She has also coauthored a textbook, Strategic Management: A Managerial Approach. She has served on the editorial boards of top scholarly journals in management and in leadership positions in the Academy of Management and the Strategic Management Society as well as other professional organizations. Her affiliation includes H.J. Russell International Center for Entrepreneurship.
H. Fenwick Huss was named Dean of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business in July 2004 after serving as associate dean of the college for six years. He was previously director of the college’s School of Accountancy. He served on the faculty at the University of Maryland and as a visiting professor of managerial accounting and control at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.

Dean Huss has assisted universities in Russia, Ukraine and Sub-Saharan Africa in restructuring their business programs. He also directed Robinson’s USAID-funded development projects in South Africa, Ghana and Egypt, and has lectured extensively in the People’s Republic of China over the past two decades on business information needs in transitional economies. He currently serves on AACSB International’s Maintenance of Accreditation Committee and previously served on the Peace Through Commerce Task Force, and also on the Advisory Board of AACSB’s award-winning publication BizEd.

Dr. Jun Liu is Associate Provost for International Initiatives at Georgia State University. Prior to this position, Liu was Professor and Head of the English Department, Director of the Confucius Institute, and Assistant Vice-Provost for Global Initiatives at the University of Arizona. Dr. Liu has also held multiple leadership roles as an international educator. He served as Past President of TESOL International (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.), Vice President of ISCLT (International Society of Chinese Language Teaching), and Senior Advisor to "Hanban" (Office of the Chinese Language Council International). Dr. Liu has published extensively in the area of intercultural communication, communicative competence, and language education.

Dr. Risa Palm assumed the role of Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, beginning Sept. 1, 2009. Prior to that she served as Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the State University of New York. Palm received both a B.A. degree in history, with a minor in French, and a B.S. degree in social studies education from the University of Minnesota. She subsequently received an M.A. degree in geography from the same institution. In 1972, she was awarded a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Minnesota. She has held tenured positions at the rank of professor in departments of geography at the University of Colorado, the University of Oregon, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Louisiana State University. Her research interests are in urban geography, and she has done extensive work on the topics of natural hazards response and urban housing.

Dr. James Weyhenmeyer is the Vice President for Research and Economic Development at Georgia State University where he has responsibility for managing the university’s research portfolio and economic development activities. Immediately prior to joining the Georgia State community, he was the Senior Vice Provost for Research and Economic Development at the State University of New York and the Vice President for Research at the State University of New York Research Foundation.

Dr. Weyhenmeyer is also an accomplished scientist having published widely in the areas of cardiovascular disease and stroke. He has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the American Heart Association, the PHARMA Foundation and private industry. He is a Professor of Neuroscience and Biology at Georgia State University and continues to hold an appointment as Adjunct Professor of Cell Biology, Neuroscience and Pathology at the University of Illinois.
Dr. Carol Winkler

Carol Winkler is a scholar of presidential foreign policy rhetoric, argumentation and debate, and visual communication. Her recent book, won the outstanding book award in political communication from the National Communication Association. It traces the behind-the-scenes development of the leadership's public communication strategies since the Vietnam War in response to terrorism. Her research appears in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, Controversia, Argumentation and Advocacy, Political Communication and Persuasion, Rhetoric and Public Affairs, and Terrorism. She has won the National Communication Association's Visual Communication Commission's Award for Excellence in Research for her work on linkages between visual images and ideology.
business panel:

Ed Baker

A graduate of Georgia State University, Ed Baker has been Publisher of Atlanta Business Chronicle for 27 years, one of the country’s largest business journals with over 166,000 readers each week. In addition to his local responsibilities, Ed is Chief Strategic Officer of American City Business Journals, the parent company.

Ed grew up in Atlanta and is very active in the community. He serves on the boards of the Metro Atlanta Chamber, Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Public Broadcasting Atlanta, Junior Achievement of Georgia, Georgia State University’s Robinson College of Business, Atlanta Business League Foundation, Arby’s Foundation and the Atlanta Sports Council.

Prior to joining the Chronicle, Ed was a senior executive in the advertising agency business, having worked on the launch of cellular for BellSouth, The Weather Channel, and the Kawasaki Jet Ski at J. Walter Thompson and D’Arcy MacManus and Masius.

John Riesenberger

John Riesenberger spent most of his career in the pharmaceutical industry, most recently as Vice-President, Global Business Management, Pharmacia & Upjohn. He also served as Clinical Professor of Executive Development at the Thunderbird School of Global Management. His teaching and research activities center on leadership and global projects. He is an accomplished author, consultant and international executive with senior executive experience in major pharmaceutical firms, and with C-suite experience in biotechnology firms and pharmaceutical agencies. He received a Masters of Business Administration degree and a Bachelor of Science in Economics-Business degree from Hofstra University. He attended the Harvard Business School’s International Senior Management Program.

Michael Shannon

Michael Shannon founded and leads the US practice of Liquid Strategies Ltd. He established the US arm of Liquid Strategies Ltd because he wanted to use his experience and relationships to help businesses accelerate their growth using sophisticated business strategies and funding options. The firm works with clients from the planning stages through execution to ensure success.

Michael spent the first 30 years of his career as an operating executive, developing and deploying sound strategies and innovative financing to grow businesses on four continents. Before joining Liquid Strategies, he spent 18+ years at Equifax, the global information services company, as a senior executive.

Michael earned a BSBA from the University of Central Florida, graduating Magna Cum Laude, and earned an MBA in Finance from George State University (GSU). He serves on the advisory boards of the GSU business school and its Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER).
Rahm Sitaraman is a results oriented leader with a strong track record of bringing about sustainable change in multiple organizations facing a variety of challenges. These challenges have included brand turnarounds, new brand introductions, business turnarounds, new business entry, and functional transformations. In each instance Rahm developed the necessary vision and strategy, focused on organizational development, consistent execution, and continuous improvement to impact the bottom line via top line growth and/or significant productivity gains. Rahm has over 35 years of consumer packaged experience in leading organizations like General Mills, Inc. and The Coca-Cola Company. Rahm has an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology in Chennai, India and an MBA from the Graduate School of Management (Anderson) University of California, Los Angeles. He is currently an adjunct professor with the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University.

Van Wilberding is The Coca-Cola Company’s Global Threat Analyst. In this role, he analyzes political and security risk issues to support decision-making by corporate functions and business units. He is also responsible for delivering risk forecasts for key developing markets. Previously, Van worked in the U.S. intelligence community where he focused on sub-Saharan Africa. Van received an MBA from Georgia State University’s executive program, a Master of International Affairs degree from Columbia University, and BA from the George Washington University.
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