Analyze This! Furman Opens a New Lab that Fuses Data with Depth of Inquiry

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This spring, Furman is set to open a new finance and business analytics lab located in Hipp Hall. The lab, named in honor of Joe ‘78 and Diana Hurley, who were major contributors to the creation, gives students hands-on, real-time training with “big data” in business analytics for a variety of applications—finance, marketing, health care, real estate, insurance, risk management, government, and supply chain management. Students not only have access to such data, but more importantly they also learn how to interpret them in order to make thoughtful business decisions.

The lab is in response to a growing popularity for Furman’s business administration major, and in particular its innovative “business core block,” which provides majors with an MBA-level experience by emphasizing an integrated working knowledge of accounting.

Furman opens a new lab that fuses data with depth of inquiry.

BY LINDSAY NIEDRINGHAUS ’07

Analyze This!

finance, marketing, and operations. However, consistent with Furman’s liberal arts philosophy to expose students to a variety of disciplines, the lab will also be available to non-majors.

“All students at Furman will have the opportunity to work in the lab and with the data platforms available to us,” says Kirk Karwan, John D. Hollingsworth professor of business administration. “A communications studies major, for example, may take a marketing course that uses the lab to determine how online ads can be better targeted to designated audiences. Access to the lab will not be limited to business majors, and that’s what makes it unique and true to a liberal arts education.”

“THIS LAB WILL HELP STUDENTS GAIN PERSPECTIVE ON THE WORLD.”

Jim Mabry, another supporter of the lab, as well as a Furman trustee and executive vice president of investor relations and merger/acquisitions at South State Corporation, agrees. “This will be a wonderful learning lab for all students at Furman. It’s my hope that the lab will open students’ eyes to things they haven’t been exposed to, leading them to pursue things that they don’t yet even know about.”

Mabry also envisions the lab connecting current students with successful business alumni, both through guest speakers who are brought to campus, as well as through the lab’s video conferencing capabilities. Students will have the opportunity to seek advice about the data they are studying as well as have the chance to ask broader questions regarding current events and pressing issues in the business world.
TRIPtych

Three glimpses of where Furman folk have gone, and why

When Kirby Fun ‘16 enrolled in Furman’s Fall in China Study Away, she didn’t realize she would also be given the opportunity to visit Tibet and Taiwan. “While each culture has unique differences, it is apparent that all three influence each other,” she says. Here are three moments in her self-described “trip of a lifetime” that capture that uniqueness.

1. Yakin’ Around: The landscape of Tibet will take your breath away (quite literally, as the altitude takes some getting used to). The rolling green pastures, snow-capped mountains, and clear blue lakes covered in Tibetan prayer flags make Tibet a very spiritual place. Yaks are a common sight throughout Tibet as the Tibetan people raise yaks for their livelihood.

2. Pieces of the Past: Taiwan is a culture that is still deeply influenced by mainland China, as one can see through the continued use of traditional Chinese characters throughout the country. This being said, Taiwanese culture also has a strong Western influence. The blending of these two cultures can be seen as you travel throughout the country. Within the modern and western-style buildings, beautiful, traditional temples can still be found.

3. Life on the Canal: Suzhou, China, also known as the “Venice of China,” is home to Suzhou University, the school that 15 Furman students come to call home. One can take a boat ride through the winding canals or walk the cobblestone streets tasting local cuisine and buying crafts from vendors. With beautiful gardens and monuments around every corner, Suzhou was a wonderful place to learn about, and experience, Chinese culture.