



9th ANNUAL RANKING

# KNIGHT SCHOOLS

A HIGHER DEGREE OF SUSTAINABILITY

EDITORIAL BY JEREMY RUNNALLS  
RESEARCH BY KATIE HOWARD & CHRISTIAN JUG

Universities have long been counted on to produce graduates equipped to build, defend and challenge the norms around them, including those related to growth in a world of finite natural resources. As we move through the 21st century, it's increasingly clear that sustainability can no longer be treated as a discrete area of interest; it needs to be woven into the fabric of higher learning. By providing students in all disciplines with concepts of sustainability, universities are taking on a more essential role – giving students a broader perspective for whatever profession they choose and helping to create a more inclusive, responsible society.

Understanding this, *Corporate Knights* set out nine years ago to highlight which programs are leading the pack within Canada. We looked south of the border to the Beyond Grey Pinstripes ranking conducted by the Aspen Institute, which had established criteria rewarding schools for emphasizing social responsibility, environmental sustainability and community engagement through institutional support, student initiatives and coursework. Along with the help of an advisory panel of experts, the Knight Schools Ranking was launched.

When *Corporate Knights* first began ranking Canadian MBA programs in 2003, we received a spectrum of responses from school administrators. Despite pockets of academic enthusiasm, the rising momentum for corporate social responsibility in business circles had yet to appear in the classroom in a systemic manner. Some were pleased to showcase individual programs, while others had little idea what their competitors and colleagues were focusing on. After receiving the survey, one school administrator even exclaimed, "You mean there is stuff (on sustainability) being done out there?" We understood then there was work to do.

The original MBA survey has been broadened to evaluate disciplines not typically associated with the concepts surrounding sustainability, including law schools, teachers colleges, industrial design programs, public policy schools and others. We will return to evaluating these disciplines in future years, but decided in 2012 to narrow the focus to MBA and engineering programs. The Canadian corporations most successful at displaying good corporate citizenship have done so largely due to the vision of the executives running the company. With 63 per cent of the executives for the top 10 TSX-traded companies by market capitalization having earned either an MBA or an engineering degree, determining the efficacy of the education tomorrow's business leaders are receiving in sustainability became the goal of this year's survey.

## MBA PROGRAMS

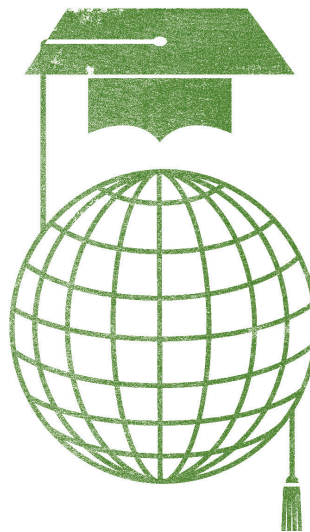
The results show how polarized business programs remain on the subject of sustainability. Only six MBA programs received a grade above 50 per cent, and these schools were located in four different provinces, showing no regional superiority. The Schulich School of Business at York University earned the top mark of 86 per cent, receiving a high grade in all three evaluated categories that continues a nine-year reign on top of our rankings (see the next page for a profile on Schulich).

The Master of Environment and Business (MEB) program at the University of Waterloo placed second. We continue to rank the program, despite it not representing a traditional MBA, as it presents the comprehensive fusion of business and environment we wish to encourage. Prominence is given to sustainability from the onset of the program, with students brought in two weeks before classes begin for an orientation that includes seminars on "the business case for sustainability." The John Molson School of Business at Concordia University placed third, allowing students to specialize in numerous categories: corporate governance and business ethics; business sustainability and environmental management; or community development.

With the United Nations celebrating 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives, we also looked into which MBA programs champion cooperative business management as an alternative to a more traditional business structure. L'Université du Québec à Montréal, which came in seventh overall, was the

only faculty presenting a multifaceted approach – offering a specialization in cooperatives and social organizations, emphasizing cooperatives management during orientation activities and maintaining an endowed faculty chair on the subject.

Despite this impressive performance by the top-ranked schools, the average grade for MBA programs remained below 30 per cent. Improvements are needed most in the institutional support and coursework sections. In particular, greater opportunities for students to partake in sustainability-oriented internships and consulting programs are needed; more than 50 per cent of programs failed to provide any. A serious commitment to sustainability also needs to be evident in coursework, as few business schools include sustainability-themed courses in their core curriculum; 34 per cent failed to include any, with another 31 per cent only offering a "professional ethics" course. For an American perspective on how best to incorporate sustainability into MBA programs, read our interview with the head of Cornell University's Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise later in this section.





## ENGINEERING PROGRAMS

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The survey produced similar divisions among engineering schools, with just eight ranking above 50 per cent. The University of Toronto's engineering program received the top grade of 72 per cent, powered by a perfect grade in the student participation section and a 96 per cent score for institutional support (turn to the ranking page for a more detailed profile of the program).

The University of Western Ontario was second, guaranteeing students a number of streams entirely dedicated to social and/or environmental impact management: green process engineering, environmental engineering, and biochemical and environmental engineering, among others. L'Université Laval came third, providing the students with multiple endowed faculty chairs specializing in a variety of topics including materials for renewable energy, modelling for water quality and planning sustainable forest value networks. It also maintains several institutes and research centres that focus on issues related to social and environmental impact management.

One notable addition to the list is the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), which is in the process of expanding its engineering faculty to keep up with the extensive economic development and resource extraction efforts occurring in B.C.'s north. It offers a joint degree in environmental engineering with the University of British Columbia, helping UNBC land an overall ranking of eighth, supported by top marks in both required and elective courses dedicated to social or environmental impact management.

The lack of sustainability education in engineering faculties lies mainly in the coursework and curriculum offered. Students are given few opportunities to focus on pertinent subjects, with only 43 per cent of schools providing relevant specializations. Joint degrees suffer a similar fate, despite their potential for improving the social and environmental sensitivity of the Canadian engineering profession; 70 per cent of schools failed to provide any. The number of mandatory courses is also scant, with just six schools achieving a perfect score in this category by offering at least five relevant and required courses.

## TAKING THE FORK IN THE ROAD

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There are hopeful signs that the poorest performing programs in both MBA and engineering programs, which still comprise the majority of faculties in Canada, are growing more comfortable with the notion of sustainability, even if they have not yet moved to integrate theory into their curriculums.

Student initiatives such as Engineers Without Borders, Environmental Chemists and Net Impact not only provide students with experience-based learning, but also demonstrate their overwhelming desire for a change in curriculum. Many professors are engaged in environmental or social research initiatives – despite a lack of significant faculty support – because they understand the underlying trends in the business and engineering communities. They are waiting for a transfer of these resources to formal training, which their respective faculties have yet to do.

We're waiting, too. 

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*To collect information for the 2012 ranking, surveys were distributed to programs selected for evaluation. If a school did not complete the survey, CK used public information to collect data, unless a specific request for exclusion – made by several MBA schools, including the Richard Ivey School of Business – was received. The survey was used to collect pertinent information within the timeframe of September 2011-August 2012. For a full description of the methodology, including a complete list of school performance, visit [corporateknights.com/knightschools](http://corporateknights.com/knightschools).*

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# KNIGHT SCHOOLS RANKING 2012

## MBA SCHOOLS

Rank	School	Province	Overall Score
1	Schulich School of Business: York University	ON	86%
2	School of Environment, Enterprise & Development: University of Waterloo	ON	78%
3	John Molson School of Business: Concordia University	QC	63%
4	Alberta School of Business: University of Alberta	AB	60%
5	Desautels Faculty of Management: McGill University	QC	58%
6	Sauder School of Business: University of British Columbia	BC	52%
7	École des Sciences de la Gestion: L'Université du Québec à Montréal	QC	45%
8	School of Business Administration: Dalhousie University	NS	36%
9	Sobey School of Business: Saint Mary's University	NS	36%
10	Rotman School of Management: University of Toronto	ON	34%
11	HEC Montréal: L'Université de Montréal	QC	34%
12	Beedie School of Business: Simon Fraser University	BC	33%
13	Faculté des Sciences de l'administration: Université Laval	QC	29%
14	School of Business and Economics: Wilfrid Laurier University	ON	27%
15	Ted Rogers School of Management: Ryerson University	ON	27%

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### Schulich School of Business: York University

MBA students at Schulich are required to take an ethics course in the context of social responsibility and sustainability in business, and are exposed to "triple bottom line" thinking through the Responsible Business Dialogue speaker series. The York Sustainable Enterprise Consulting program encourages MBA candidates to team up with Environmental Studies MA students to advise local organizations on sustainability.

## Business Sustainability Leaders

These leading schools require core courses focused on social and environmental issues.



**JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, CONCORDIA**



**JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, CONCORDIA**

Waterloo is home to a Master of Environment and Business (MEB) degree, which replaced its original MBA program.



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**63%: Number of executives with an MBA or Engineering degree at Top 10 TSX-traded companies**

**ENGINEERING SCHOOLS**

Rank	School	Province	Overall Score
1	University of Toronto	ON	72%
2	University of Western Ontario	ON	69%
3	Université Laval	QC	60%
4	University of Guelph	ON	55%
5	University of Waterloo	ON	54%
6	University of Calgary	AB	51%
7	Queen's University	ON	51%
8	University of Northern British Columbia	BC	50%
9	University of Manitoba	MB	49%
10	Carleton University	ON	47%
11	Université de Montréal	QC	47%
12	Concordia University	QC	36%
13	Ryerson University	ON	33%
14	University of Regina	SK	32%
15	University of Alberta	AB	32%

**Leader of the Pack**



**University of Toronto**

*The 5,000-strong University of Toronto Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering is a clean energy research hub, home to The Centre for Sustainable Energy and BioZone, among others. Students are encouraged to take minors in environmental engineering or sustainable energy, and the faculty offers seven relevant specializations such as materials processing and sustainable development.*

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Photos: Above, courtesy of University of Toronto. Bottom right to left, courtesy of Theworldbeckons, Colin Rose, University of Guelph.

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# Donor Dollars

*Philanthropists are trying to influence how their money is being spent at Canadian universities. Is this a boon for innovation and collaboration, or a threat to free inquiry?*

BY JEREMY RUNNALLS



The program looked like a perfect fit for the university. Calgary petroleum magnate Clayton H. Riddell, at the urging of former federal Reform Party leader Preston Manning, was offering to donate \$15 million for Carleton University to set up a school in political management. The largest donation in the school's history quickly received enthusiastic backing from university chancellor Herb Gray, a former longtime Liberal MP, and the school opened in 2010. Yet the governance structure was kept under wraps, with Carleton battling freedom of information requests for more than a year before finally acquiescing this June in the face of privacy commissioner arbitration. What was discovered is becoming an increasingly common phenomenon: philanthropic donations to post-secondary institutions that allow donor influence over the program's budget, academic hiring and curriculum, in this case through a steering committee majority-appointed by the Riddell Foundation.

The university quickly announced

in July that the agreement it itself had agreed to did not fully reflect Carleton's policies and procedures on staff selection and budget allocations and was being renegotiated. It pointed out that "donor participation at Carleton is not unusual, but there is a difference between participation and decision-making and it's an important distinction." Where does that distinction lie? Is it possible for Canadian universities to find that middle ground in public-private partnerships without compromising academic freedom?

Up until 20 years ago, large-scale philanthropic donations to Canadian academic institutions were unusual. In fact, the first business school in Canada to be named after a donor occurred in 1995, when the Richard Ivey family donated \$11 million to the University of Western Ontario. Today, 18 business schools have changed their names to reward large-scale donors.

Ken Wyman, program co-ordinator in the post-graduate fundraising and volunteer management program at Hum-

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ber College, believes that federal and provincial tax changes in the 1990s encouraged private gift-giving to post-secondary institutions, including various provincial matching grants for funds raised privately by universities. Between 1997 and 2007, according to Statistics Canada, philanthropic activity as a source of revenue grew at an average rate of 11 per cent per year. As schools expanded their fundraising departments, large donors began to command a greater share of attention. In 2007, the head of fundraising at the University of Ottawa, David Mitchell, foreshadowed the increasing importance of philanthropy in an interview with the *Globe and Mail*. "It's become a permanent feature of how universities do their job. The machinery of fundraising has come of age at universities in the last generation. I don't think it is about to end."

Financial pressures stemming from the economic downturn have resulted in university funding being capped or cut at the federal and provincial level, pushing universities to court large donors more openly. Although thousands of donations are made every year with little or no restrictions involved, philanthropists understand that increasing financial constraints are forcing universities to consider different forms of donor involvement on academic decision-making and hiring decisions. The funding of endowed chairs and the establishment of institutes, large-scale scholarship programs, research programs and new buildings have all resulted from these agreements over the past five years, with 16 to 18 of these agreements now in place across the country. With substantial public funds supplementing these donations, the private funding of programs and schools has developed into an increasingly contentious battle over academic freedom.

The Clayton H. Riddell Graduate Program in Political Management at Carleton University is only the latest in a string of public debates over donor involvement at public universities. In 2010, Barrick Gold founder Peter Munk gave \$35 million to the University of Toronto to expand the Munk School of Global Affairs. Although university president David Naylor assured the public that academic freedom would not be compromised as all donors are required to sign an agreement that they will not interfere with research

and teaching policy, the university is required to present a report on activities every year to a board appointed by Munk. The purpose of the report is "to discuss the programs, activities and initiatives of the School in greater detail." Munk has withheld \$15 million of the donation until 2017, allowing him to express his discontent with the direction of the school with the threat of a withdrawal of funds.

Former Research in Motion co-CEO Jim Balsillie donated \$50 million to set up the Balsillie School of International Affairs out of the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) in 2007, in partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo. At the time, it received little fanfare, but subsequent attempts to set up a home for its school of international relations at the University of Ottawa and York University were rejected over fears of academic interference. The agreement stated that CIGI would appoint two of the five members of the steering committee, which needed to achieve unanimous approval for any decisions reached. Two hundred faculty members signed a letter to the York University senate, arguing that it gave the think tank an "unprecedented voice in matters of academic governance."

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), representing about 65 000 faculty members and other professionals at 120 universities and colleges, has become the leading opponent of what it views as growing threats to academic freedom. It has threatened Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo with censure starting this November if they do not cancel previous agreements involving the Balsillie School of International Affairs. James Turk, CAUT's executive director, believes that academic independence is being slowly eroded in a scramble for limited donor dollars. While speaking at a conference in February, he declared that "once you've allowed people to buy decision-making power through their donations, the public's trust in the unique role that universities play will be eliminated.... Donors should have no sway over academic affairs in the community."

Even with CAUT becoming increasingly vocal in its criticism, in the hours after York University rejected the partnership, according to CIGI, three different universities called up the think tank

*Financial pressures stemming from the economic downturn have resulted in university funding being capped or cut at the federal and provincial level, pushing universities to court large donors more openly.*


to outline their interest. When releasing a statement on the York University rejection, Waterloo professor Tad Homer-Dixon, who was heavily involved in drafting the agreement, criticized CAUT for being out of touch. "These public-private partnerships are the wave of the future. My response to the CAUT is get used to it, folks. We need to figure out how to do this in a way that protects academic freedom and allows for institutional innovation and creativity in universities across the country."

Homer-Dixon notes that although free inquiry at universities is a bedrock of our liberal democracy, the federal government already wields significant control over research priorities. Through its \$3 billion a year in research funding for post-secondary institutions, it is able to set "priority areas" in which research proposals are more likely to receive funding.

American universities have also been struggling with the question of donor influence for over a decade, with more brazen attempts to influence academic priorities on display in a variety of faculties. Yet for the most part the conversation has remained muted, due to the majority of top U.S. schools existing as private institutions not receiving direct taxpayer subsidies.

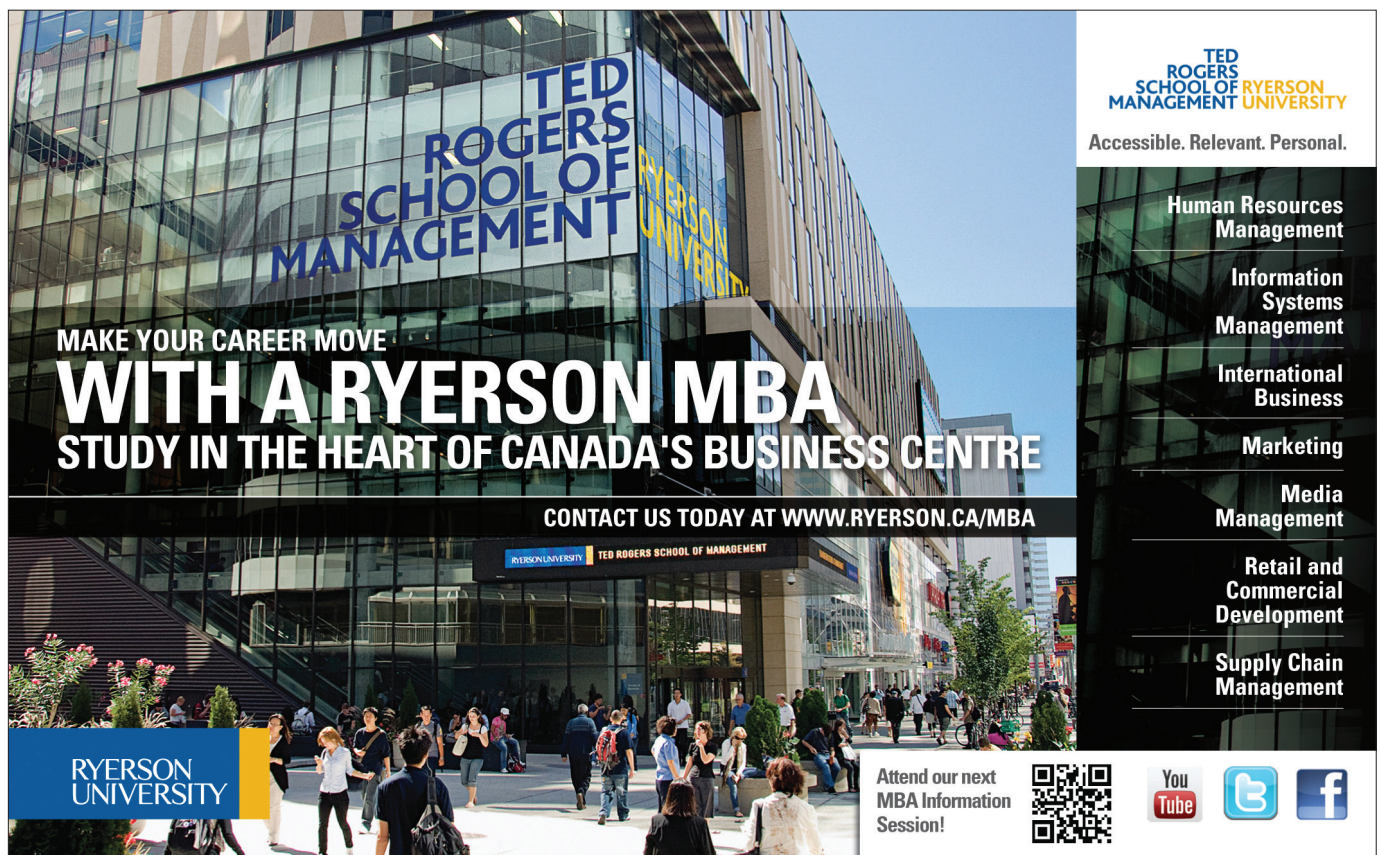
In the wake of the push-back over the Riddell School governance model, there has been institutional movement to set up guidelines for future deals. The Council of Ontario Universities announced in July that it has set up a working group with senior administrators to establish policies that protect academic freedom when making these agreements. One simple step would be to require full disclosure. These deals involve millions of provincial taxpayer

dollars, which governments could compel administrators to release information about. It was difficult to judge what the exact details were in the CIGI-York University proposal, with the CAUT and CIGI each releasing conflicting documents to the media. Carleton University fought disclosure of its agreement with the Riddell Foundation for over a year, at one point even offering up a heavily redacted version that failed to satisfy anyone.

In recent years, university administrations have shown a willingness to flaunt their own rules that are meant to preserve academic freedom, so it's unclear what effect guidelines like those to be proposed by the Council of Ontario Universities will have. Agreements will have to be scrutinized on a case-by-case basis, debated in the court of public opinion. What's clear is that after decades of publicly funded universities, the dynamics at our post-secondary institutions are changing for good. We just have to make sure it's in the public interest. 

*The author is the son of David Runnalls, former acting director of the Environment and Energy Program at CIGI.*

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# SUSTAINABILITY PICKING UP STEAM IN MBA PROGRAMS

*Head of Cornell University's sustainable enterprise center reflects on history – and weighs the future – of green thinking in business schools*

BY TYLER HAMILTON

Mark Milstein lives and breathes sustainable business. As director of the Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise at the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University, Milstein teaches and conducts research on strategy, decision-making, technology management and innovation within the context of sustainability. His research focuses on how and why firms generate new business growth opportunities by treating social and environmental challenges as unmet market needs. Within these parameters, he looks closely at how the private sector can help alleviate poverty and the role that technology commercialization strategies can play to catalyze sustainable innovation. *Corporate Knights* recently spoke with Milstein about current trends around sustainability in MBA programs. What follows is an excerpt from that discussion:

*CK: Our magazine does an annual ranking of MBA schools in Canada by measuring the degree to which sustainability is integrated into their respective curriculums. It's an insightful, but also challenging exercise given the different approaches schools take. What does the landscape look like in your view?*

MILSTEIN: There's no single standard for what ought to be done. You have stand-alone programs like Presidio Graduate School or Bainbridge Graduate Institute that focus entirely on sustainable management. You have programs at Michigan, Yale and Duke (with similar approaches), and you've got programs like ours and Berkeley's where you have substantial content in sustainability offered in different ways. There's a real variety out there.

*CK: This must create some confusion, in terms of what both students and faculty are looking for.*

MILSTEIN: One of the challenges to the area is that sustainability itself is a term that can have a lot of meanings. The challenge academically for schools that want to develop a program is, do they really know what they want to develop? They can cover labour issues, cleantech, impact investing – there are so many different terminologies now that can apply. And at the end of the day you need faculty members and staff who are going to put programs together. Part of the struggle I've watched is people never being clear on what they want a program to focus on.

*CK: How would you categorize the approaches or learning opportunities?*

MILSTEIN: From our perspective at Cornell, we think the business and sustainability space is divided into three

main content areas. (One is) environmental management, where you define sustainability as something more akin to a regulatory problem. You can follow regulations or try to influence regulations as they're played out. How are (regulations) going to impact your operations, the materials you use and the design of your products? A second area that's gained a lot of currency in the last 10 years is corporate social responsibility. CSR includes environmental management but also sustainability as public opinion. The third component is what I call sustainability enterprise, and that's looking at sustainability as a business opportunity. If (the drivers behind sustainability) are a long-lasting and chronic problem, what are the businesses and technologies and products we can commercialize around it? Our program is focused on that last piece, emphasizing sustainable enterprise. Our students want to lead a company, know what to invest in, know what to commercialize. Here you're focused on business growth opportunities, and that's very different than many programs focused on ethics or CSR.

*CK: So a school and prospective students really need to know what they want their strengths to be.*

MILSTEIN: In my mind, most programs have not thought this stuff out, and that's a problem for the space. The dynamic you end up with inside programs is you have a lot of committees, people making decisions about courses, and you're going to have a group of faculty of different areas weighing in on whether that makes sense for the school.

*CK: What's the job market today for MBA graduates drawn to the business of sustainability?*

MILSTEIN: There are plenty of jobs for folks in the environmental management domain, but our MBAs don't want those. There are probably not enough CSR jobs in the world to satisfy the demand of our business graduate students. Sustainable enterprise jobs are a little bit trickier. Sometimes it means you're just going after a normal straight-line job, but we've armed our students with a deeper knowledge of what those sustainable opportunities are. A lot of our graduates end up taking straight-line jobs in consulting or Wall Street or consumer products firms. They're getting into those roles and applying a different lens to problems and building solutions that will tap into sustainability without making it a front-and-centre goal of what they're trying to accomplish.

*CK: Should sustainability continue to be its own silo within the MBA curriculum or more broadly integrated across entire MBA programs?*

MILSTEIN: If you go back 20 years, people were arguing it's a complex multidisciplinary subject and you can't compartmentalize it; that it has to be diffused among everything. Getting that in practice has been tricky. What's the right answer? We have this debate internally. Must you have sustainability in the core? On the one hand, I say, it would make a lot of sense to have a sustainability course in the core. Then again, I don't want it as its own standalone subject and I want to integrate it across all the courses. I

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think it's about thinking through how a program is structured, what students want to do, what kind of decisions do they want to participate in, and how do we make sure we've prepared them for that. What we're saying is we shouldn't be graduating anybody from the Cornell program who doesn't have a fundamental understanding of what the sustainability domain looks like, what their options are, and how they can move forward on different decisions.

*CK: Are more students seeking sustainability in their business school studies? Are there a growing number of applicants in this area?*

MILSTEIN: I don't have enough information to say conclusively across the board there's growth. I know what's going on in our school. In 2004 we had only a handful of students. Now we grapple with the fact that half our (business school) applicants are citing our program as the reason they applied to Cornell. That's pretty big growth for us. When I talk to colleagues, they tell me those are big numbers for a program or content area.

*CK: Is the growing interest a generational thing?*

MILSTEIN: Look at the trend. The millennials are coming up. Those students coming to our programs, on average 27 or 28 years old, have been socialized on social and environmental issues from a very early age in a way we never were. They are more involved in some ways – volunteering is something they grew up with. Environmental consciousness is something they grew up with. There is a shift in the

interests that students have. Now, we have no lack of people who want to get an MBA and just go to Wall Street and make as much money as they can. But increasingly there are people who are concerned about social issues, concerned about environmental issues, and believe the private sector should have a role to play in addressing these issues. That's a trend that's growing and it's not going to go away anytime soon. There are not good, viable solutions to how we sort out growing to a population of nine billion or more, and supporting a population of that size. We're seeing it even now from the NGO community. They are turning to entities like us, turning to our students, and explaining how they've been working on these problems for decades and things are only getting worse; that they'd like to work increasingly with the private sector.

*CK: So more students want their livelihood to be a reflection of who they are and the values they hold?*

MILSTEIN: People want to demonstrate they work for places that care and are involved. When we walk into an interview room now, people (applicants) are asking us questions about social problems, how we can reconcile products in the marketplace with these other problems we face. It is something companies themselves recognize has come to their doorstep in a large way, which is a big contrast to about eight years ago. HR people eight years ago said sustainability is important but what does it have to do with HR? Now they say it's important to them – if companies don't demonstrate they're good corporate citizens they can lose strong candidates right off the bat. 🌱

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