

# DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

## SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

### AT A GLANCE

Full-time students: **256**

**69%** of Dominican students are Net Impact members

**15%** of those members are “very active”

**50%** are “somewhat active”

This chapter in three words: **Initiative launch pad**

Chapter leaders: **Jonah Nisenson (jsnisenson@gmail.com)** and **Ryan Milani (theryan@gmail.com)**



The revolutionary curriculum and systemic thinking supplements create an unbeatable package.



n = 39

### CURRICULUM

Program’s strengths:

- 1. Environmental Sustainability**
- 2. Social Entrepreneurship**
- 3. Corporate Social Responsibility**

Regarding social/environmental themes in their curriculum:

**97%** think *students* are enthusiastic

**89%** think *faculty* are enthusiastic

The School of Business and Leadership at Dominican University of California is committed to educating students who will become socially responsible leaders of sustainable organizations. The school cultivates learners with a global perspective and incorporates the Dominican ideals of study, reflection, community, and service in support of social justice. The school believes that sustainable organizations result from ethical and socially responsible leadership, ecologically sustainable entrepreneurship or business practices, and a global mindset.

Dominican University of California’s MBA in Sustainable Enterprise is an engaging learning community where people with strong environmental and social values develop effective leadership capacities to advance economically successful, ecologically restorative, and socially just initiatives in any type of organization. A student remarks that the MBA program has a “highly focused curriculum on changing business from one driven by financial profit to one that recognizes human, financial, and natural capital.”

Dominican integrates the stewardship of financial, human, and natural capital – beyond the triple bottom line - into a world class MBA curriculum. Students learn how to apply practical skills, make better decisions using rigorous critical thinking methods, communicate and lead effectively, collaborate with others in designing and implementing successful initiatives, face challenges inherent in turbulent issues, and master methods and tools to analyze systemic factors.

Community events for students, alumni, faculty, and guests promote cross-pollination of ideas. These events expand collaborative networks and also optimize success in implementing new initiatives and models for enterprise. The

university regularly has guest speakers on topics ranging from renewable energy to employee-owned cooperatives and many more. The curriculum is based on experiential learning as students work with local Bay Area businesses and organizations. The university has a Center for Sustainability on campus, which is an important think tank for students. In addition, Environmental Finance Center for EPA Region 9 (EFC9) resides on the Dominican campus and works with faculty and students to develop and implement green business practices. EFC9 coordinates the Green Business Programs for California, Hawaii, Arizona, and Nevada. The office encourages businesses in those states to adopt source reduction, pollution prevention, and energy efficiency.

The MBA program also offers Systemics Thinking labs to meet the ever-increasing complexity of today’s challenges. These labs are not offered by any other MBA program in the country. Here, creative, in-depth student engagement allows opportunities for self-organizing. A student notes that “the topic of sustainability is woven throughout each course in the curriculum so that there is a foundation of understanding how the triple bottom line can benefit from our entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial actions.”

The program also cultivates a sense of place and belonging, as one’s network extends beyond the progressive social fabric of Northern California to global partners and a broad array of organizations who share a common purpose. The program mainly relies on student feedback to discern what changes it needs and holds a monthly feedback forum to solicit their comments. In addition, it holds a periodic town-hall meeting to poll ideas from teachers, students, and alumni.

Dominican has many faculty members who are leaders,

**CURRICULUM, *continued***

consultants, and entrepreneurs in social and environmental business. For example, Ed Quevedo is a professor as well as an environmental lawyer and sustainability consultant; Jane Lorand, who co-founded the program, also runs an educa-

tional consultancy called Green Your Management; and Julianne Maurseth teaches *Human Relations and Organizational Behavior* and runs her own consulting firm.

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Activity of Net Impact compared to other clubs:

**Above Average**

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Regarding social/environmental themes in *extra-curricular* events and activities:

**75%** think the *students* are enthusiastic

**69%** think the *faculty* are enthusiastic

The Dominican Net Impact Chapter has put on a number of events including a Sustainability Forum—in which 80 students, government representatives, and a local business were present. The event also featured a panel discussion on employee-owned cooperatives, a group talk on Venture Capital Funding, and networking activities.

In the area of community service, the chapter is forming relationships with local nonprofits, including one that focuses on the underserved Hispanic population near the school. The chapter has linked with The Idea Hive, a business consultancy developed by students and alumni, in co-hosting events, such as a competition called the Business Plan Jam. Finally, at least one student sits on the Hub Council, the committee

of faculty and administrators that helps steer the direction of the MBA programs.

Each semester, a series of speaker events are lined up to address current and relevant business issues. For instance, to address campus greening, a Greener Dominican task force has just completed an alternative transportation plan in conjunction with a class in the Green MBA curriculum called *Thriving Regenerative Enterprise*.

Students in all the MBA programs view Net Impact as an organization that can help them launch their initiatives, despite the chapter being less than a year old. The response has been extremely positive and continues to grow.

**CAREER SERVICES & ALUMNI**

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**16%** described their career services as very helpful

**17%** rated their alumni network as very helpful

Students who found work that completely utilizes their values:

- Job: **8%** - Internship: **7%**

Dominican has a career services center which offers workshops on resume writing, business etiquette, interview skills, etc. In addition, one of the career counselors is a core faculty member of the Green MBA. The program has a staff member dedicated to developing relationships with local businesses so students are exposed to a multitude of internship and job offers through an email list server. The Sustainability Forum, which began in the spring of 2009, will be held semi-annually and includes a career fair and opportunities

for mock or real interviews. The school has grant and scholarship funds available for a wide array of opportunities.

**Prominent alumni**

- Melinda Cheel (2008)** - Executive Director, Green Chamber of Commerce
- Sarah Isabel Pariott (2008)** - Chief Visionary Officer, Sustainable Emergence
- David Hodgson (2007)** - Co-Founder, The Idea Hive
- Lindsay Hassett (2003)** - Founder, The Betty Biodiesel Organization
- Shana Levy McCracken** - Principal/Co-Founder, Gigantic Idea Studio