UMass Lowell and Raytheon: Education Partners in Kuwait

Undergrad and Grad Degrees Offered in First-of-Its-Kind Model

Through a unique academic-industry partnership with Raytheon Co., UMass Lowell is offering undergraduate and graduate degrees at Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in Kuwait starting this spring semester.

UMass Lowell is the first American university to offer its U.S.-accredited degrees in Kuwait through such a model, which is being funded by Raytheon as well as by tuition and fees paid by Kuwaiti students.

"UMass Lowell is honored to join Raytheon and GUST in this academic-industry partnership to provide the people of Kuwait with world-class educational programs that will in turn foster economic development," says Chancellor Marty Meehan. "Through the new academic, research and experiential education opportunities presented by this program, UMass Lowell's students and faculty will also benefit. In today's ever-shrinking world, a global perspective gives our graduates an advantage by ensuring they have the understanding of other cultures necessary for professional and personal success."

Undergraduate and graduate degrees in engineering and master's degrees in business, computer science, education and security studies overseen and taught by UMass Lowell administrators and faculty are being offered on the GUST campus in Kuwait City.

In addition, UMass Lowell and GUST will collaborate on dual-degree programs and, with Raytheon's support, a new engineering college will be established on the GUST campus that will serve students of both institutions.

Plans call for as many as two dozen undergraduate and graduate degrees to be offered by UMass Lowell at GUST with enrollment expected to reach 1,200 students when the programs are fully established. UMass Lowell students and faculty will also have the opportunity to study and conduct research on the campus.

The new partnership in Kuwait is another important collaboration between the university and the Waltham-based company, which employs approximately 1,000 UMass Lowell graduates. In October, the new Raytheon-UMass Lowell Research Institute opened on the Lowell campus with the goal of advancing innovative technologies in a state-of-the-art setting while providing students with valuable, real-world experience.

Since 2010, UMass Lowell has established international partnerships with more than 110 top educational institutions in 40 nations. An increase in international partnerships and enrollment is one of the priorities identified in UMass Lowell's strategic plan as the university strives to prepare students to be world-ready.
Helping Prevent Threats to Military Network Security

UMass Lowell, Commonwealth and Hanscom Partner on Training Program

Created by UMass Lowell’s award-winning Division of Online and Continuing Education specifically for Hanscom Air Force Base personnel, an online graduate certificate program in network security has completed its first successful year after its launch in January 2014.

“This partnership between Hanscom and UMass Lowell brings together two best-in-class institutions,” said MassDevelopment President and CEO Marty Jones. “This workforce training program will prepare our civilians and soldiers for our increasingly high-tech world and strengthen UMass Lowell in its role as a leading economic driver of the Merrimack Valley’s innovation economy.”

The program is designed to enhance the capabilities of Hanscom’s systems administrators, network managers and other information technology professionals. At Hanscom, the 37 employees taking these courses will complete four of five courses to receive a graduate certificate in network security from UMass Lowell. The courses cover network infrastructures, computer network security, digital forensics, secure mobile devices and cloud computing.
UMass Lowell Named to Obama’s Higher Education Honor Roll

University Recognized Nationally for Community Service and Engagement

UMass Lowell was recently named to the 2014 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, a prestigious recognition for colleges and universities committed to volunteering, service-learning and community engagement that produces measurable results. UMass Lowell has received the honor every year since 2009. The 2014 honor roll is the first to recognize institutions for outstanding contributions in specific types of engagement. UMass Lowell was chosen for the honor roll in the general community service, education and economic engagement categories.

“Service to our community and the region is a longstanding tradition at UMass Lowell, both by the entire institution and the individual efforts of our students, faculty and staff. We are honored to once again receive this national recognition for that commitment,” says Chancellor Marty Meehan.

The university received the commendation based on several factors, including exemplary initiatives, such as the UMass Lowell String Project, a program of Music Department that teaches local K-12 students to play string instruments.

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‘Bring Diversity to Nursing’ Graduates Reunite on Campus

New Endowment Launched

As a freshman nursing student, Chau Le worked at Walmart five days a week and regularly hit the books until 1 a.m.

“I just died from exhaustion,” says Le, who was born in Vietnam and grew up in Lowell.

Today, Le, who graduated in 2012, is a registered nurse at Lowell Community Health Center and is back at UMass Lowell pursuing a master’s degree in adult-gerontology primary care nursing to become a nurse practitioner.

While a student, she received support from the Bring Diversity to Nursing program, a state and federally funded initiative that recruits, retains and graduates students of diverse backgrounds to become professional nurse leaders in the greater Lowell and Lawrence regions.

“I am very thankful that the Bring Diversity to Nursing program supported me emotionally and financially so that I could concentrate on my academics and work in the community,” says Le.

Many of the 50 nursing students from a variety of cultural backgrounds who have graduated from BDN are working in local hospitals and clinics. Current students, alumni, faculty and staff gathered for a reunion on campus recently to celebrate the success of the Bring Diversity to Nursing program.

Students enrolled in the program receive scholarships, stipends, technology, tutoring, mentoring and leadership opportunities—all designed to help them graduate and work in local communities.

The university supports the goals of the program through the Bring Diversity to Nursing Endowment Fund.

Students Develop Prototypes and Business Plans

DifferenceMaker Winner: Innovative Hydraulic Walker

Students Develop Prototypes and Business Plans

Peter Klausmeyer and Ryan Andrews, third-year doctoral physical therapy students, captured top honors recently at the first College of Engineering Prototyping Competition. Their aluminum walker, designed with hydraulics to simplify movement for the injured or elderly, earned its inventors the top $1,000 prize.

Klausmeyer and Andrews emerged from a pack of 28 contenders who exhibited their inventions in two venues. They topped a duo whose Proto-Tooth offered dentures using 3D printing technology, a pneumatic tick-removing device, the Mayday anti-rape/personal safety device and the runner-up and People’s Choice winner, Kenders Body Armor.

The event, held at the Saab Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center, came on the second night of this semester’s DifferenceMaker College Competitions. The previous evening, sophomore accounting majors Joseph Baglio and Megan Foster, teaming as The Bears, took the top prize at the DCU Innovation Contest.

Their project, Subsection Budgeting for DCU Banking, would enable customers to divide their savings account into categories like rent, or new car fund, giving them a more visual representation—and hopefully better control—of their finances.

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Chau Le ’12, right, who works as a nurse at the Lowell Community Health Center, attended the Bring Diversity to Nursing reunion. Owen Scott, left, worked as a tutor and mentor to BDN students.
Brand Discusses Book on his Friendship with the Revolutionary

Christo Brand may have grown up in South Africa during the height of the apartheid government, but he didn’t know much about it until he needed a restroom in Cape Town.

“I grew up on a farm, and counted black boys among my friends. All media was censored by the government, so we didn’t know about the racism and protests in the cities,” said Brand, who spoke about his book, “Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend,” to a crowd of students, faculty, staff and community members last month at University Crossing.

Brand’s family moved to the city after his dad’s job loss, and one day, in need of a bathroom, he saw a sign warning black people not to use one restroom, and directing them to another.

“I had to go look at the other bathroom. I couldn’t imagine what the difference could possibly be between the two,” he said.

Brand ultimately learned about apartheid and its consequences firsthand, from one of the world’s most high-profile protestors, Nelson Mandela, who was first his prisoner, and later his unlikely friend.

Like all white males of the time, Brand was required to serve the government—either in the armed forces, or in the prison system.

At just 19, Brand was dispatched by ferry to the infamous Robben Island. The other guards warned young Brand against talking to the prisoners, telling him, “These men are terrorists and they are killing our children.”

Brand, though, experienced something very different with the prisoners to whom he was assigned.

“They were all old and polite, and they studied all the time,” he said.

His prisoners may have been old, but they were also well known—Nelson Mandela and his prison-mates were convicted at the famous Rivonia Trial during which leaders of the African National Congress were charged for their anti-apartheid activities.

In Brand’s first meeting with Mandela, the two shared their love of gardening.

“Mr. Mandela was respectful to me, his jailer, calling me Mr. Brand. He was that way with everyone,” said Brand.

Over the years on Robben Island, and then, later at Pollsmoor Prison, Brand and Mandela became close, like father and son. Mandela took an interest in Brand’s family, especially regarding academics—writing to Brand’s son about his college plans and Brand’s wife with the suggestion she pressure her husband to study and learn, too.

The two enjoyed a relationship that defies the normal jailer/prisoner model, with Brand often silently alerting Mandela to the bugs he wore to record the ANC leader’s conversations for the government, and, in an astounding act of compassion, allowing Mandela to hold the granddaughter whom his wife, Winnie, had smuggled onto the island against prison rules.

The relationship between Brand and Mandela remained solid even after his release, continuing until Mandela’s death.

Indeed, the day after Mandela’s release, Brand received a call at home from him.

“He called to thank me for how I treated him. I couldn’t believe that with the whole world wanting to talk to him, he took time to call me,” said Brand.

Before his death, Mandela encouraged Brand to write their story, sending an agent with a contract to move things along. Brand made good on his promise.